



**SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR**

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**M. A. Part-I**

Semester-I (Group-I : Paper E-1)

**British Renaissance Literature**

Semester-II (Group-I : Paper E-2)

**British Neoclassical and  
Romantic Literature**

(Academic Year 2018-19 onwards)

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## **PREFACE**

Dear Students,

This book of Self Instructional Material (SIM) on Elective Course on British Literature – E1 (Sem.- I) and E2 (Sem.- II) viz. ‘British Renaissance Literature’ and ‘British Neoclassical and Romantic Literature’ contains four units for each semester. The units for the first semester are prescribed on Essays, Drama (Tragedy), Epic and Poetry; while for the second semester on Drama (Comedy), Fiction, and Poetry. The SIM covers all the topics prescribed for this course on British Literature.

All the units are written by the teachers keeping in mind the students who are seeking education through distance mode. The units are structured as per the SIM structure given by CDE, Shivaji University, Kolhapur. Each unit begins with Objectives and followed by the sections like Introduction, Check Your Progress, Exercises and Key to Check Your Progress. The language used in the units is simple as the units are meant for the students. The students are expected to read the SIM units on their own and solve the questions given in the sections ‘Check Your Progress’. You may take help of the section ‘Glossary’ during your study if you have difficulty in understanding certain words/concepts. If you have any problems while reading regarding the understanding of the contents in the units, you may ask the queries during contact sessions in the Study Centre allotted to you. We hope these units will prove helpful to you performing better in the examinations.

As the Editors, we are thankful to the BOS in English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur and, the officials and staff of the Centre for Distance Education for their constant support and unconditional cooperation.

**The Editors**

Centre for Distance Education  
Shivaji University,  
Kolhapur.

**British Renaissance Literature**  
**British Neoclassical and Romantic Literature**  
**M. A. Part-I English Group-I, Paper-E1 & E2**

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Each Unit begins with the section objectives -

Objectives are directive and indicative of :

1. what has been presented in the unit,
2. what is expected from you, and
3. what are you expected to know pertaining to the specific unit, once you have completed working on the unit.

The self-check exercises with possible answers will help you understand the unit in the right perspective. Go through the possible answers only after you write your answers. These exercises are not to be submitted to us for evaluation. They have been provided to you as study tools to keep you in the right track as you study the unit.

Dear Students,

The SIM is simply a supporting material for the study of this paper. It is also advised to see the new syllabus 2017-18 and study the reference books and other related material for the detailed study of the paper.



## Unit-1

# British Renaissance : Intellectual Background

## Francis Bacon's *Selected Essays*

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### Contents:

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- 1.1 British Renaissance: Background
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- 1.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
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### 1.0 Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to understand:

- The meaning, features and background of the Renaissance.
- Francis Bacon and his bio-literary profile.
- Bacon as an essayist with morality, philosophy and practical wisdom.
- Bacon as glorious product of the Renaissance.

- Bacon's views regarding truth, death, revenge, adversity and prosperity, married life and single life, parents and children, love, envy, nobility, unity in religion, goodness, traveling, atheism, superstition, simulation and dissimulation etc.
- Features of Bacon's Essays.

### 1.1 British Renaissance: Background

The Renaissance was the whole process whereby Europe passed from a medieval to a modern civilization. The Renaissance represented the fructifying of the human mind through contact with the classical world of Greece and Rome. It was the 'revival of learning', and especially of the study of Greek, which first weakened the rigid convention of the middle Ages. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the invention of printing have each been chosen as the decisive event marking the transition.

The Renaissance is a French word which means *re-birth, revival, flourished* or *re-awakening*. The Renaissance was both a revival of ancient classical mythology, literature and culture as well as re-awakening of the human mind, after the long sleep of the Middle Ages. In the words of M.H. Abrams, 'the birth of modern world out the ashes of the dark ages'. With the capture of Constantinople by Turks, the Greek scholars fled for safety. Most of them came to Italy and started their studies afresh. This is known as 'New Learning or Renaissance'. The movement spread over European countries. England also came under the impact of Renaissance. Renaissance movement broadened the outlook of the people. It influenced works of 'University Wits', Shakespeare, Ben Johnson, and reached its climax in the works of Spenser and Sidney. Francis Bacon incorporated the Renaissance culture in his works. Thomas More's *Utopia* shows us a clear picture of the renaissance.

The Renaissance was an era of striking accomplishments in painting, sculpture, architecture, music, literature, philosophy, science and technology. It was an age of change in the economics as in the basic structure of European society. Renaissance also affected the Christian Church. Renaissance stressed humanist ideas. It made classic literature and art the main pillars of the new literature and art. It began a new worship of beauty, a worship of knowledge and a new statesmanship. The salient features of Renaissance are: the curiosity about more knowledge, desire for unlimited wealth and power, love of adventure, love for classical learning, love for beauty and

the sensuousness, love for travel, exploration and regional conquests, use of figures of speech, the spirit of inquiry and individualism, the spirit of adventure and discovery, and humanism.

The influence of the Renaissance reached England much late - as late as the end of the 15th century. Henry VII was, an able king, a strong monarch, who restored political and social order, limited the powers of barons. Caxton's press, which was established in 1476 in London, was the earliest forerunner of Renaissance in England. King Henry VIII, who took the charge of the throne of England in 1509, began an era of significant and purposeful changes. He encouraged trade and manufacturers, and increased the wealth of the country. He hastened the decline of feudalism by allowing men of low birth to high positions. Men of talent and learning found honorable place in his court. Edward VI ruled from 1547 to 1553. The reign of Queen Mary from 1553 to 1558 was spoiled by religious conflicts. Both the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods in the history of English literature are known as the Age of Shakespeare. This span of time is the golden age of literature.

The Renaissance in England showed almost all the features which it had in Italy, France and Germany. Thought was liberated and broadened. A rebellion against the spiritual authority was first aroused by the Reformation. Men looked with wonder at the heavens and the earth as a result of the discoveries of the navigators and astronomers. Scholars found superior beauty in the literature of ancient Greece and Rome. At the same time, the Renaissance in England had certain additional characteristics, and it was a consequence of these characteristics that a truly national literature was developed. The Renaissance affected literature in England later and more slowly than in other European countries as the national language was still immature, and the best humanists still made use of Latin. Consequently English literature had its flowering season later than the literatures of Italy and France. Secondly, English literature continued to be more nearly medieval than that of either Italy or France. There was tendency in England to adapt the learning that came from Italy to native tradition and to preserve far more than the Italians of the medieval outlook. Though the Renaissance and the Reformation invited men to new paths, England was faithful to the cult of the past longer than the continent.

Actually, in England, the 16<sup>th</sup> century marked the beginning of the English Renaissance with the works of the writers like William Shakespeare, Christopher

Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, Sir Thomas More, Sir Philip Sidney, John Milton and Francis Bacon.

## **1.2 Subject Matter:**

### **1.2.1 Francis Bacon: Bio-literary Profile**

Francis Bacon, an English Renaissance statesman and philosopher, was born in London on January 22, 1561. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth. His mother, Lady Anne Cooke Bacon, was his father's second wife and a daughter to Sir Antony Cooke, a humanist. His mother was also a sister-in-law of Lord Burghley. The younger of Sir Nicholas and Lady Anne's two sons, Francis Bacon began attending Trinity College, Cambridge, in April 1573, when he was 12 years old. He completed his course of study at Trinity in December 1575. The following year, Bacon enrolled in a law programme at Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, the school his brother Anthony attended. Finding the curriculum at Gray's Inn stale and old fashioned, Bacon later called his tutors "men of sharp wits, shut up in their cells if a few authors, chiefly Aristotle, their dictator." Bacon favoured the new Renaissance humanism over Aristotelianism and scholasticism, the more traditional schools of thought in England at the time. After the death of his father, he resumed the study of law and became a barrister in 1582. Two year later, he entered the House of Commons, and began to take an active part in politics. Bacon held his place in Parliament for nearly four decades, from 1584 to 1617, during which time he was extremely active in politics, law and the royal court.

From an early age, Bacon had been interested in science, and it was in the pursuit of scientific truth that his heart laid. He conceived, however, that for the achievement of the great results at which he aimed, money and prestige were necessary; and he worked hard for both. He was a candidate for several offices of state during Elizabeth's reign, but gained no substantial promotion, and was often in hard straits for money. He received aid from influential patrons, notably the Earl of Essex; and his desertion of this nobleman, with the part he took in his prosecution for treason, is regarded as one of the chief blots on his personal record.

Shortly after the accession of James I, Bacon was knighted; in 1606, he married the daughter of an alderman; and in the following year he received the appointment of Solicitor-General, the first important step in the career which culminated in the Lord Chancellorship in 1618. In the latter year he was raised to the peerage as Baron

Verulam, and in 1621 he became Viscount St. Alban. In the same year, he was accused of accepting bribes and impeached by Parliament for corruption. Some sources claim that Bacon was set up by his enemies in Parliament and the court faction, and was used as a scapegoat to protect the Duke of Buckingham from public hostility. Bacon tried and found guilty after he confessed. He was fined a hefty 40000 pounds and sentenced to the Tower of London, but, fortunately, his sentence was reduced and his fine was lifted. After four days of imprisonment, Bacon was released, at the cost of his reputation and his longstanding place in Parliament; the scandal put a serious strain on 60-year-old Bacon's health.

Bacon was called a philosopher of science. After the collapse of his political career, he focused on his other passions in life; the Philosophy of science. From the time he had reached adulthood, Bacon was determined to alter the face of natural philosophy. He strove to create a new outline for the sciences. Bacon's new scientific methods involved gathering data, prudently analyzing it and performing experiments to observe nature's truths in an organized way. He believed that science could become a tool for the betterment of humankind. Bacon himself claimed that his empirical scientific method would spark a light in nature that would "eventually disclose and bring into sight all that is most hidden and secret in the universe". According to Bacon in *Novum Organum*, the scientific method should begin with the 'Tables of Investigation'. It should then proceed to the 'Table of Presence', which is a list of circumstances under which the event being studied occurred. 'The Table of Absence in Proximity' is then used to identify negative occurrences. Next, the 'Table of Comparison' allows the observer to compare and contrast the severity or degree of the event. After completing these steps, the scientific observer is required to perform a short survey that will help identify the possible cause of the occurrence. However, unlike a typical hypothesis, Bacon did not emphasize the importance of testing one's theory. Instead, he believed that observation and analysis were sufficient in producing a greater comprehension that creative minds could use to reach still further understanding.

An experiment which was an anticipation of the modern process of refrigeration caused Bacon's death. In March 1626, he was performing a series of experiments with ice. Driving one day near Highgate and deciding on impulse to discover whether snow would delay the process of putrefaction, he stopped his carriage, purchased a hen and with his own hands stuffed it with snow. As a result he caught a

chill and was taken to the house of the Earl of Arundel, where on 9<sup>th</sup> April, 1626, he died of bronchitis. In the year after Bacon's death, his theories began to have a major influence on the evolving field of 17<sup>th</sup> century European science. British scientists belonging to Robert Boyle's circle, known as the 'Invisible College,' followed through on Bacon's concept of a cooperative research institution, applying it toward their establishment of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge in 1662. The Royal Society utilized Bacon's applied science approach and followed the steps of his reformed scientific method.

Bacon's most important writings in science and philosophy are parts of a vast work which he left unfinished, his *Magna Instauration*. The first part of this, the *De Augments*, is an enlargement in Latin of his book on *The Advancement of Learning*, in which he takes account of the progress in human knowledge to his own day. The second part is the famous *Novum Organum, or New Instrument*; a description of the method of induction based on observation and experiment, by which he believed future progress, was to be made. The later parts consist chiefly of fragmentary collections of natural phenomena, and tentative suggestions of the philosophy which was to result from the application of his method to the facts of the physical method. Bacon's own experimentations are not of slight scientific value, nor were he very familiar with some of the important discoveries of his own day; but the fundamental principles laid down by him form the foundation of modern scientific method. Besides, Bacon's writing is by no means confined to the field of natural philosophy. He wrote a notable *History of Henry VII*; many pamphlets on current political topics; *The New Atlantis*, an unfinished account of an ideal state; *The Wisdom of the Ancients*, a series of interpretations of classical myths in an allegorical sense.

But by far, his most popular work is his *Essays*, published in three editions in his lifetime, the first containing ten essays, in 1597; the second, with thirty-eight, in 1612, and the third, fifty-eight, in 1625. Bacon's essays have been rightly described as counsels, civil and moral. They frequently reveal acuteness of observation, acumen of intellect, and breadth of worldly sense. They represent Bacon's ideal of conduct. They are rather a collection of shrewd observation as to how, in fact, men do get on in life; human nature, not as it ought to be, but as it is. In his essays, Bacon examines and seeks to guide man (i) in his relation to a supreme being, (ii) in his relation to himself, and (iii) in his relation to society and the world. They reveal common sense, crisp suggestiveness, planned elaboration of contents, luminous

wisdom, intellectual elevation, knowledge of human nature. They are noteworthy for frequent Biblical and classical quotations, apt illustration, brilliant aphorisms, extreme conciseness, and balanced structures. When he wrote them, he described them in his own words as *they come home men's business and bosoms*. The *Essays* have won him a place apart, and are the source of his fame with the world at large. They introduce a new form of composition into English literature. They are also, in a sense, a record of Bacon's outlook on the world throughout the years of his active life.

The times in which Bacon lived and worked were conducive to the formation of his principles. Being alive during the Renaissance period, exposed Bacon to the idea that one could question established norms of thought and learning. Bacon, as a result, participated in the intellectual awakening. He was popularly known as the "*father of Empiricism*". Empiricism was a movement in philosophy, which believed that experience was the source of all human knowledge, and not innate ideas (creationism) or a result of the mind's capacity to reason (rationalism, which was largely championed by Rene Descartes). Bacon, who believed in intensive scientific enquiry, championed the cause of the Empiricists.

Today, Bacon is still widely regarded as a major figure in scientific methodology and natural philosophy during the English Renaissance. Having advocated an organized system of obtaining knowledge with a humanitarian goal in mind, he is largely credited with ushering in the new early modern era of human understanding.

### **1.2.2. Francis Bacon's *Selected Essays*:**

#### **Of Truth:**

The essay shows Bacon's keen observation of human beings with special regard of truth. In this essay, Bacon says that truth is the supreme good for human beings. He describes the inquiry of truth as the wooing of it, the knowledge of truth as the presence of it, and the belief of truth as the enjoying of it. Here, he has presented objective truth in various manifestations. In the beginning of the essay, Bacon rightly observes that generally people do not care for truth as Pilate, the governor of the Roman empire, while conducting the trial of Jesus Christ care little for truth, 'What is truth? Said jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer'. Bacon refers to Pontius Pilate, who occupied a position of influence in Emperor Tiberius's court. For his

involvement in the persecution of Jesus Christ, Pilate was not looked upon favourably by Christians. He enjoyed a somewhat sullied reputation. Here, Bacon takes Pilate's name to express how humans, in general, avoid truth. They find truth inconvenient and difficult to imbibe.

Bacon explores the reasons why the people do not like truth. First, truth is acquired through hard work and man is ever reluctant to work hard. Secondly, truth curtails freedom. Besides, the real reason of man's disliking truth is that man is attached to lies which Bacon says, 'a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself'. He says that man loves falsehood because truth is as if the bright light of the day and would show what men, in actual, are. They look attractive and colourful in the dim light of lies. In this respect, Bacon rightly observes: 'A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasures'. Bacon talks about truth and falsehood in this essay. For him, truth is the supreme good for human beings. Truth is like the clear day-light in which the shows and spectacles on the stage of a theatre are seen for what they are, while lies are like candle-lights in which the same shows and spectacles appear to be far more attractive. Truth gives greater pleasure when a lie has been added to it. If man were to be deprived of his false opinions, false hopes and false judgments, he would feel miserable, because these false opinions, hopes and judgments keep him happy. Falsehood gives people a strange kind of pleasure. For him, it is the fact that man prefers to cherish illusions which make his life more interesting. Having the deep observation of man's psychology, Bacon states that if deprived of false pride and vanities, the human mind would contract like a deflated balloon and these human beings would become poor, sad and ill. However, the poetic untruth is not gone unnoticed by Bacon. He says that as early writers of the church described poetry as the wine of the devils. But the poetry tells lies which are received by the mind and then forgotten. Such lies do not settle down in the mind. The much harm is done by the lies sink into the mind and settles down there. However, truth is the supreme good for human beings. The poet Lucretius rightly said that the greatest pleasure for man was realization of truth. All reasoning of human beings should be based upon truth. Truth is important not only in theological and philosophical fields, but also in the sphere of ordinary life. Falsehood brings nothing but disgrace. It degrades and lowers human beings. Montaigne rightly said that in telling a lie, a man was brave towards God but a coward towards his fellow-men. Falsehood is wicked and such



wickedness will duly receive its punishment on the doomsday when a trumpet will blow to announce the judgments of God upon all human beings.

The essay is written in a didactic tone. The object of the writer is to instill into mind and his readers a love of truth. Being a moralist with moral idealism, Bacon asserts that the earth can be made paradise only with the help of truth. Man should ever stick to truth in every matter, do the act of charity and have faith in every matter, and have faith in God. His strong belief in truth and divinity is stated as: 'Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind more in charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of truth'. The essay ends with didacticism with a tinge of Christian morality. Bacon refers to the Bible to express his thoughts. He concludes the essay with a quotation from the Bible and with a reference to the doomsday when God shall judge the actions of all human beings.

The essay is full with vivid similes and metaphors which are used to illustrate the ideas. Bacon, in this essay, compares truth to the naked and open day-light which does not show the masques and mummeries and triumphs of the world as half so grand and attractive as candle-lights show them. He says again that truth may claim the price of a pearl which is seen to the best advantage in day-light; but truth cannot rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle that shows best in varied lights. He compares falsehood to an alloy in a coin of gold or silver. The alloy makes the metal work the better, but it lowers the value of the metal. In the same way, falsehood may be useful from the practical and business point of view, but it lowers the dignity of the individual who tells falsehood. Again, Bacon compares dishonest and crooked ways of life to the movements of the serpent 'which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet'. Bacon is simple, natural and straightforward in this essay. The synthetic brevity, conversational style and Aphorism are the special features of the essay.

### **Of Great Place:**

The essay *Of Great Place* is a brilliant masterpiece of Francis Bacon. It deals with some contents which are full of information and expression focusing on the meaning and nature of life. It represents a lot of interesting philosophical ideas which can be easily related to the present day principles and concepts. The essay appeals chiefly to men in high places. The main idea of the essay is to show the position of men in great places. Bacon discusses the life, duties and behaviour of

those people who occupy high position in the society. He says that all the people who live in great places are 'thrice servants'. They are servants of the sovereign or state, fame and business. Moreover, they have no freedom although they enjoy power. It is very interesting idea that powerful people have no liberty, but is true. They have power over other people who occupy a lower position in the society but they 'lose power' over themselves.

The essay contains many moral principles to guide men in high positions. Through this essay, Bacon is seen as a great moralist and philosopher. As a great philosopher, Bacon not only knows a lot about human nature but also tries to teach others to share his knowledge with people around him. In this essay, he explains the problem of other people's opinion concerning 'great men'. He says that the great persons should 'borrow other men's opinion' because they can get a lot of interesting and important things for them. The great men cannot judge themselves. They should learn what other people think of them in order to remain on the top of the ladder. In this essay, Bacon has given some guidelines to human being in high authority. He says that a man should work hard to attain a high position; he should work still harder because every high position involves a heavy responsibility and demands continuous labours. Sometimes, a man has to suffer humiliation in order to raise a high position. He has to pocket insult to raise a position of high dignity. He also asserts that if a man has good thoughts, God will appreciate him; but man's good thoughts have no meaning for other men if they are not translated into good actions. He also says that a man should follow the best examples.

For him, the position of authority offers scope for doing good and evil. He says that a man holding a high position finds much scope for doing good and for doing evil. The power to do evil is surely a curse. It would be better for a man not to have any power at all than to have power which permits him to do evil. However, the power to do well is the true and proper aim of all endeavors. The purpose of a man's efforts should be to perform noble and meritorious tasks. In the performance of the official duties, a man should place before himself the best examples of the past. Bacon also warns a man of authority against the vices which are likely to beset him. He mentions the four chief vices of authority which must be avoided: delays, corruption, roughness and facility. A man should avoid the errors of his predecessors. He should keep scrutinizing his own performances from time to time to make sure that he is not deteriorating. He should be consistent in his policies and procedures.

He should exercise his authority silently rather than a noise about it. He should not feel too self-important in private conversation and should not remind others too often of the position he is holding. Indeed, this is one of the finest essays as regards the moral precepts that it contains.

In nutshell, through this essay, Bacon not only shows the strengths and the weakness of the great men of the society but also gives them some recommendations concerning their way of life, their behaviour and their principles. He is interested in investigation of the human nature. His natural philosophy is greatly appreciated because he represented absolutely new philosophical ideas concerning the essence of life.

### **Of Death:**

The essay *Of Death* is a didactic one. It is intended to drive out the fear of death from men's mind or to diminish this fear. It is the fruit of Bacon's ripe wisdom and vast experiences of the world. Bacon illustrates and reinforces his ideas and arguments with appropriate similes, metaphors and quotations. As an undecivable analyst of human nature, Bacon startles his readers with the very beginning of the essay as: 'Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark'. Means he seems to suggest that it is childish to fear death. He tries to give us the courage to face death by pointing out the terrors of death.

Bacon says that there is a religious side to our fear of death; such a fear is not to be deplored because it is holy and religious fear and it is connected with the feelings that death as a punishment for the sins one has committed. The Bible tells us that death was imposed as a penalty upon mankind for the sins of Adam and Eve in having disobeyed God. But the fear of death is to be deplored when it is not connected with religious feelings. Such fear is totally undesirable and unjustified. Bacon tells us that the pains of death have been unduly exaggerated by monks who used to mortify their flesh as a form of penance. The monks describes in their books as the tortures are means of our self-chastisement and self-purification. As the highly religious people inflict physical sufferings upon themselves as a form of penance, the circumstances surrounding death make it more terrible than it really is.

According to Bacon, there are some people who deliberately seek death under the stress of some strong feelings such as revenge, love, the sense of honour and grief.

*Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honour aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupatheth it; nay, we read, after Otho the emperor had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers.*

It means that when the popular emperor Otho killed himself, his subjects were devastated with grief. The way of sympathy for the departed emperor drove some of his subjects to suicide as their burden of sorrow became unbearable. When someone takes revenge and succeeds to kill his victim, he feels he has won. Death is considered to be spiteful to love as it severs the link between the victim and the person whose heart is filled with love. Death is considered as a vindication of Honour. On the other hand, a dying man's mind is preoccupied with thoughts of death. There are certain brave people who remain totally unaffected by the approach of death. There are the names of ancient emperors who died willingly and cheerfully. They are Augustus Caesar, Tiberius, Vespasian, Galba and Septimius Severus.

At the end of the essay, Bacon tries to convince us that there is no need to feel terrified of death: it should be accepted as the natural end of life and as a kind of blessing. It is inevitable and it is as natural as the birth is. Death has a bright side to it. Death paves the way for a man to become famous. In other words, is only when a man dies that people begin to admire the virtues which he possessed and the good deeds which he had done? People who used to feel jealous of him when he was alive feel no longer jealous of him when he is dead. Thus, death puts an end to jealousy and becomes blessing.

The essay has a tonic effect on our mind. It reduces our fear of death. The proper attitude towards death is to regard it as the natural end of life in this world as the beginning of a life in another world. The essay is written in a highly condensed style of which Bacon is a master. He refers to several ancient Roman emperors who met their deaths without in the least feeling afraid. He also dwells upon the redeeming features of death. Bacon's fondness for illusions, quotations, and the use of Latin phrases is amply illustrated in this essay. He quotes from such ancient authors as Seneca, Tacitus, and Juvenal. He also cites the case of the ancient Stoics. Indeed, the essay is loaded with ideas and illustrations. The essay is the model of succinct and lucid prose like his other essays.

## Of Revenge:

The essay is a handbook of practical wisdom. The main focus of Bacon in the essay seems to be the downside of revenge. Bacon believes that revenge is against God's moral and man's justice. Bacon is convincing that revenge hurts more than it helps. The essay starts from the very first sentence criticizing revenge as: '*Revenge is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to; the more ought to law to weed out*'. It means that revenge is uncivilized and leads to anarchy. Revenge is out of place where the rules of law most prevail. For Bacon, revenge is ignoble and forgiveness is noble, but in certain circumstances, revenge is tolerable.

Arguing in the favour of forgiveness, Bacon says that to forgive an enemy shows moral superiority. By taking revenge, a man can settle a score with his enemy. But if he refrains from taking revenge, he shows a moral superiority over his enemy. To forgive an enemy is a sign of an exalted heart. A man does a wrong in order to make a financial gain or for the pleasure of it or in order to win a higher position or some other similar reason. Therefore, there is no point in feeling annoyed with a man just because he is selfish. And if a man does a wrong merely because of his malicious nature, it is best to ignore him because he is like the thorn or briar which can only prick and scratch but serve no useful purpose.

It is very interesting to note that in one breath, Bacon forbids avenging and in the other, he starts advising how is to take revenge. This type of morality is typical. Bacon says that '*the most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there are no law to remedy*'. However, he advises that this revenge should be taken with great care i.e. that avenger should not be caught by law, otherwise, his enemy would have double advantage over him. He suggests that in taking revenge it is generous on the part of avenger to reveal his identity to the victim because the pleasure of revenge lays not so much in causing pain than in making the enemy realize to repent of his mistake. Bacon does not approve of the people who are crafty cowards; they do not reveal their identity to their victim and the purpose of the revenge is not served. He says '*but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark*'. To reveal another aspect of taking revenge, Bacon compares the views of Cosmus and Job. According to Cosmus, a wrong done by a friend is more unpardonable than that the wrong done by an enemy while Job is of the view that if we expect benefits from friends, we should also be ready to forgive any injuries we

receive from them. So, it is generous to forgive our friends that are implied by Bacon and this behaviour will strengthen the bonds of society.

At the end of the essay, Bacon differentiates between public and private revenges. Revenges taken for the murder of certain public figures have resulted in prosperity. Bacon asserts rightly that Augustus who avenged the assassination of Julius Caesar, Septimius Severus who avenged the murder of Pertinax, and Henry IV, who avenged the death of Henry III, all prospered and flourished. Besides, their nations have won honour in this respect. However, Bacon is not in the favour of private revenge. For him, a revengeful person who spends his lifetime contemplating and doing harm, is like a witch. A witch comes to an unfortunate end and a revengeful person certainly meets sad fate.

The essay is the indicative of Bacon's wide learning. He uses a number of historical and Biblical allusions to illustrate his ideas. It is full with illustration, similes and metaphors. Men of ill-nature are here compared to the thorn and briar which prick and scratch. Cowardly persons who take revenge in a secret manner are compared to the arrow that flieth in the dark. Revengeful persons are compared to witches who, being mischievous, meet a sad fate. There is no any obscurity of thought. Sentences are short but loaded with meaning. The style is compact having sentences with notable quality.

### **Of Adversity:**

The essay deals with the pros and cons of adversity and prosperity. Bacon draws our attention and keeps our interest alive through the technique of references and quotations. He gives reference of a Roman philosopher named Seneca: *The good things that belong to prosperity are to be wished; but the good things that belong to adversity are to be admired.* In this essay, Bacon deals with the familiar idea of adversity which is the blessing in many ways. For him, the prosperity is easy to handle, but adversity is too hard. Prosperity is certainly desirable, but adversity is not to be condemned, deplored or despised. Prosperity enables man to enjoy material benefits and worldly pleasures, but adversity nourishes a man's moral and spiritual personality, and strengthens his inner resources. Bacon refers another statement of Seneca: true greatness in a human being is to have all the weaknesses of the human, but the fortitude (strength, sureness) of God. The chief blessing of the adversity is that adversity brings out all the potential and talent, courage and fortitude of a man.

When a person is blessed with prosperity, he will spend his resources mindfully because he knows that he is going through a good time, on the other hand, fortitude means patience, and adversity teaches us fortitude.

Throughout the essay, Bacon contrasts prosperity, which leads to easy decisions about how to live one's life, and adversity, which requires strength of moral character that prosperity does not. For example, Bacon compares Hercules, who sailed in a strong vessel to free Prometheus from his chains, to the Christian '*that sailed in the frail bark of the flesh, through the waves of the world*'. In other words, Hercules was sailing in relative prosperity, which made his voyage easy; the Christian, on the other hand, faces the world in a frail body; in Bacon's view, the Christian has more fortitude—strength and bravery—because he must take on the world with the adversity created by his frail body. According to Bacon, in Christian context, prosperity leads to comfort and therefore to vices, but adversity, because it requires moral strength, leads to the creation of virtue. Bacon says that '*virtue is precious odours, most fragrant when they are—crushed*', by which he means that virtues become stronger when they are 'crushed' by adversity. Here, Bacon compares a man's virtue to spices, and then to flower. The scent of spices becomes stronger as we grind or crush them. Similarly, the fragrance of the incense becomes stronger when it is burnt. In the same way, the virtue or inner strength of a man shows itself more effectively when it is crushed by adversity or when he burns in the fire of misfortune. The example of flower tells us that if we really want to make our life worthy then we have to face hardships because a flower's fragrance can be felt only if it is crushed. In short, Bacon takes the side of adversity and proves it to be a positive virtue. For him, adversity is a greater blessing than prosperity; it can teach us something in our life. In adverse circumstances, a man learns the lessons of hard work and honesty, and shows his inner power of endurance. He wants people to think about adversity in a positive way.

### **Of Parents and Children:**

The essay deals with parents and their anxiety about their children. It also deals with pros and cons of parents. Every parent likes to know how he should bring up or deal with his children. For Bacon, the joys, sorrows and fears of the parents about their children are personal and private, because they are not shared with others. Through this essay, Bacon has pointed out the faults of parents towards their children like unequal favouritism, illiberality, and encourages a spirit of rivalry; and he has

also tried to some give advice for parents. For example, parents are taught not to discriminate between in their love for their children and it is not desirable. It is not proper for children to show their preferences in respect of their children. In a large family, the eldest child gets some attention and the youngest is often spoilt. The ones in the middle are ignored but often prove themselves to be the best of the lot. Bacon also pointed out that parents should not be misery in giving their children pocket allowance. This is harmful as it will lead them into crooked and dishonest ways and open to over indulgence if they come into plenty in later life. Authority should be exercised but there should be liberality in pocket allowance. Another bad practice is to encourage a spirit of competition among children. Bacon says that parents should not encourage the spirit of rivalry between brothers because rivalry is bound to lead to jealousy and then develops into hatred. This act would develop disharmony in the family when they are older. Bacon gives an example of Italians as: The Italians make no distinction between their near relations such as nephew and their own children. This is justified because a nephew sometimes bears a greater resemblance to a person than his own child.

Bacon says that parents should choose a suitable profession for their child. The choice should be made early when the child is yet pliable. Any initial aversion felt by child for the profession will be overcome by custom. If, however, the child's inclination is markedly opposed to the profession of parental choice, then he may be allowed to make his own choice. Younger brothers generally come to good as they have a strong incentive to hard work. This incentive is withdrawn if the elder brother is disinherited and the younger child hopes to be the beneficiary of a lot of wealth.

Bacon makes certain interesting observations at the very outset of the essay. These observations have the merit of being true. Parents are certainly unable to express their joys about their children. Similarly, they cannot give expressions to the grief's fear that they experience with references to their children. Indeed, children do sweeten the labours of parents, and they do make misfortunes bitter. However, it is difficult to agree with Bacon when he says that the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men. The essay is remarkable for its brevity. It is written in condensed style. It belongs to the category in which Bacon views man in relation to the world and society. The subject is of the common and widespread interest which contains some indisputably sound advice regarding the bringing up of children. This speaks for the keen insight Bacon possessed. Though the subject could



easily involve sentimentality, Bacon considers it in the clear light of unsentimentality. He prepares, as usual, a balance-sheet of advantages and disadvantages which are the lot of parents. Apparently, Bacon did not consider people with children an asset to society.

### **Of Simulation and Dissimulation:**

The essay *Of Simulation and Dissimulation* throws light on the advantages and disadvantages of simulation and dissimulation. For Bacon, dissimulation is a poor substitute for policy or wisdom. Only the weaker kind of politicians resort to dissimulation. Telling the truth demands a strong mind and a strong heart. Weak persons dare not tell the truth and have therefore to dissemble. Bacon argues that both simulation and dissimulation are useful but their successful use requires both intelligence and "a strong heart," that is, confidence. *Dissimulation* Bacon defines as "when a man lets fall signs and arguments, which he is not, that he is." In other words, *dissimulation* allows others to misunderstand what he is doing and thinking--he fails to correct misconceptions about his behaviour. *Simulation*, on the other hand, is much more active: a man takes actions that disguise what he is really thinking and doing. Bacon dwells upon three kinds of concealments—secrecy, dissimulation and simulation. The first is secrecy when a man does not give any hint of what is in his mind. The second is dissimulation when a man pretends not to feel and not to be what he actually feels or what he actually is. The third is simulation when a man pretends to feel or to be what he does not feel or what he is not. Bacon gives us a sound analysis of human nature by saying that a man confesses his secrets to unburden his heart and those secrets should certainly be confided to persons who can keep them. But once again he dilutes morality by suggesting that a man should not be altogether open-hearted because complete self-revelation is an undesirable as complete physical nakedness. He describes the habit of secrecy as *both polite and moral* and then goes to say that a man should not betray by the expression on his face what he has tried to hide by the words of his mouth. Simulation is more blame-worthy and less diplomatic than the other two forms of secrecy. Generally, simulation arises from a natural tendency to falsehood or from a natural timidity of mind, or from a consciousness of one's defects which one must hide.

Bacon concludes the essay by balancing the three advantages of simulation and dissimulation against the three disadvantages. As advantages, the first is that one can, by these means, lull oppositions. The second is that one can reserve for oneself a fair

means of retreat. The third is that one can in this way better discover the mind of another. As disadvantages, the first is that a man, resorting to simulation and dissimulation, will have on his face signs of fear, and these signs of fear are likely to diminish the chances of success in any undertaking. The second is that the use of simulation and dissimulation by a man will puzzle others and will therefore lead him to withhold their cooperation from him. The third is that a man using these methods will no longer be regarded as trustworthy.

For Bacon, simulation is less positive and is a vice because it requires active falsehood—that is, taking actions and saying things that disguise what is really thinking and doing; it is the sign of a deceptive nature and is not just a way of creating secrecy so that one can act freely. The essential difference between the two is that *dissimulation* is passive ways of letting people think what they may about a person's actions, but simulation requires the person to actively deceive, which, according to Bacon, is a sign of a bad character. In this essay, Bacon admits that honesty of expression and frankness of manner are the mark of the great man. The essay is full of worldly wisdom. It offers practical guidance to men in their day to day life.

### **Of Unity in Religion:**

Francis Bacon wrote the essay *Of Unity in Religion* at a time when England was undergoing a religious change under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. It was the time when Protestantism was being established as the main religion in England under the Church of England. But there was much controversy surrounded the reformation and within the Church of England itself. Bacon as an astute politician realized the necessity of a unified church for the stability and the progress of the English empire; and from this necessity he wrote the essay to convey the message of unification of the protestant religion.

*Of Unity in Religion* was first published in 1612, but stretched out to its present form in 1625. The essay gains importance mainly from the situation existed at the time of its composition. However, it has some relevance even today. In this essay, Bacon formulates the idea of religion as the chief bond which keeps human society united because at the time when this essay was written, there were plenty of religious controversies, plots, intrigues, persecutions and attempts on the lives of ruler. He

demands the pagan religion as free from conflict and division because it consisted of rituals and ceremonies rather than fixed beliefs.

The central point of this essay is that the religious dissensions are harmful to faith, charity, and peace, and therefore it should be avoided. Religion is expected to keep human society united. So, it should be itself a united force. Bacon says that Christians should remain united where fundamental principles of their religion are concerned. He sees no harm in differences over matters of details or over inessential points. Means, the variety of opinion upon inessential points can be tolerated. For example, different forms of church government and different forms of ritual and worship are permissible, since no definite rule with regard to these has been laid down in the Bible. But when Bible explicitly lays down a rule or a doctrine, it must be accepted without division. In other words, unity as to essential points is consistent with differences as to unessential point. *The coat of Christ was seamless, being made of one piece; but the garment of the Queen, who represents the church, was of various colours.* Bacon's advice is certainly of great value and can benefit people of other religions as well. Not only Christianity, but followers of any religion would do well to maintain a sense of unity as regards the essentials of their religion while tolerating differences over minor matters.

According to Bacon, in order to preserve unity in religion, men must not defy the laws of human society and human charity. Christians have two swords to protect their Church—the spiritual sword represented by the authority of priests, and the temporal sword represented by the secular authority of the government when summoned by the Church to defend it. But Christians should not use the third sword – Prophet Mohammed's sword which meant recourse to violence and war in order to convert people to a particular religion. Besides, persecution and rebellion are not justified in the interest of the unity of the Church. Persecution violates the rights of others, while rebellion is directed against the institution of the government which has been ordained and decreed by God. Man's duty to God should not nullify man's duty to man.

In this essay, Bacon asserts the importance the unity of the Church as the best way of securing religion. He mentions three advantages of religious unity those include to please God and fulfill the required objects of religions. Secondly, to suppress the ridicule about the Church; and at last by religious unity, members of the Church can bring peace, strengthens faith, and promote charity. He has also given

suggestions: The church should not to accept the unity which is based on the ignorance of the inconsistencies, and patchwork of unity which is artificial or false unity. He makes a proposition to both church and state not to be rebellious to one another because it violates the principles of man's duty towards God and duty towards mankind. One should not be as a devil that has an ambition of attaining the height of God. He says that with great firmness that those who convert people through force are serving private ends and not the religion.

Through this essay, Bacon is seen as an astute observer and practical thinker who was aware of the danger of religious controversies. In this essay, he seems to condemn prejudices and makes a forceful appeal for tolerance and liberal outlook on religion—attitudes which are necessary even now in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Of Marriage and Single Life:**

The essay deals with the most common experience of human life. Sir Francis Bacon explores the themes of *independence*, *liberty*, and *marriage* throughout his essay. Bacon comments on the liberty that being single provides individuals who wish to live free from the restraints and responsibilities of marriage. He also mentions that single men have the time and money to give back to society in charitable ways. Bacon believes that single men are often "best friends, best masters, best servants." However, Bacon also writes that being single can make a man "cruel and hardhearted" because he does not enjoy the tenderness and love that married men often experience. Bacon proceeds to explain that he believes that only middle-aged men should get married at the right time and discusses why wives choose to marry bad husbands. Bacon recognizes that independence gives single men liberty which provides them the opportunity and capital to help society, but can also make them callous in certain situations. He also explores the positives and negatives of being married throughout the essay. The essay also reflects the reasons for not getting married and qualities of married and unmarried persons. It also throws light on advantages and disadvantages of being married and of remaining single.

The essay also throws light on advantages and disadvantages of being married and of remaining single. Bacon writes that unmarried or childless men tend to provide the greatest benefit for public life, as they bestow their kindness on the public instead of on their families. However, married men who are fathers are far more careful when thinking about the future, as they know their progeny will have to

deal with it. Bacon writes, "*Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects.*" Some professions are proper only for unmarried persons. For example, a clergyman should not get married. If he has a family, he will not save any money or affection to offer to others. Unmarried men can devote themselves with greater freedom to others, but they don't make the best subjects because they can run away and don't have to subject themselves to other people's rule for the sake of their families. Having a wife and children develops the softer feelings of a man. An unmarried men may be relatively more wealthy, and, thus, capable of making larger donations to charity. However, they are deprived of the soft touch of feminine companionship. As a result, they tend to be more brutal, vengeful and cruel in their conduct. They do not get to engage in introspection to examine their deeds from a moral standpoint. Women who are faithful to their husbands are often proud of their chastity. If a wife thinks her husband to be wise he will command her loyalty as well as obedience. A wife does not respect a jealous husband: "*For a young man a wife is a mistress. For a middle-aged man she is a companion. For an old man, she serves as a nurse. This means that a man may marry at any age.*"

In short, Bacon, in this essay, weighs the pros and cons of marriage chiefly from the point of view of society, with only a nod to the personal benefits or detriments.

### **Of Love:**

Francis Bacon's essay *Of Love* details questions and answers regarding the very complicated concept of love. The essay begins by comparing love to the stage. According to Bacon, love mirrors the stage because it is filled with comedy, tragedy, mischief, and fury. Like the plays produced on the stage, love is multidimensional.

In this essay, Bacon speaks of the negative side of love. He dwells mainly on the disadvantages of love. He says that love does much mischief in life. It sometimes plays the role of a Siren and sometimes that of a Fury. Love plays a great role in the theatre than in the actual life of man. Love has always provided material for comic plays and sometimes, for tragic plays. But, in actual life of man, love causes much mischief. It may wreck the career of a man as it did that of Antony, or it may drive a man mad with jealousy as it did Othello. Speaking like a moralist and a puritan, he observes that no great and worthy person of ancient or modern time has ever been transported to the mad degree of love. He says that man is created to contemplate

noble and grand objects. It does not behove a man to fall on his knees before a woman. He accuses the lover of employing exaggeration while speaking of his love; and he warns a lover that even the woman may be scoffing at his exaggerated and extravagant manner of speaking. He also says that the lover may sacrifice both riches and wisdom.

It is difficult to agree with Bacon views and remarks regarding love as the child of folly. Here, one sided treatment to love is seen. The passion of love is at its height when a man is either in a state of great prosperity or in a state of great adversity. If a man cannot resist love, he should, at least, keep it within limits. He should not allow his love to interfere with the business of his life because it can play havoc with his fortune. It may be a wise policy to keep love within limits and not to allow it to interfere with business. A lover certainly has to made sacrifices for the sake of his love. But the fact remains that love is something grand and sublime. Love is a many-splendoured thing. It is one of the most inspiring and ennobling passions of mankind. Bacon does not speak of the raptures of love.

Loving others is a natural tendency in a man. It is natural desire to love others. If man does not concentrate his love on one individual, his love will naturally spread itself over a large number of people. If that happens, a man will become more kind-hearted and charitable, as is the case sometimes with monks. Monks are kind-hearted and charitable because they spread their love over many people. Married love is noble and has beneficial results for society in general. Love of friends is also noble and it serves to raise mankind to a high position. Love of friends is sublime and has an elevating effect. But immoral love, the kind of passion that a man feels for prostitutes, has a corrupting and degrading effect upon human beings.

In nutshell, the essay discloses the philosophical thoughts of Bacon on love. For him, love plays rather a great role in the stage than in real life. But love causes more trouble in real life. It may drive a man away from his career; it can also drive a man with jealousy. Bacon says that it is foolish to kneel before a lady for the sake of love. Love distorts men's judgment of things. In spite of all the sacrifice, love may defeat its own object. Paris lost everything for Helen. Love is directly proportional to both prosperity and adversity. Love is the child of folly. If it cannot be resisted that should be kept within limits. It may ruin one's life. The purpose of the essay is to explain love and its effects on all kinds of people. The essay informs the people that no

matter what type of person you are, love will have an effect on you. There is no escaping.

### **Of Envy:**

The essay is of the great psychological value. It is practical essay which provides much information about the motives behind the feeling of jealousy and the ways in which one may save oneself from other people's envy. Bacon has analyzed in detail the most common feelings of mankind. Bacon throws light on the human feelings like envy and jealousy. He expresses the view that a man in love or who is jealous of another can deeply influence. In this essay, the word 'envy' is used in the sense of 'jealous'. If 'envy' is used to mean 'the spirit of emulation' it is not a bad feeling; but jealousy is certainly a bad feeling which has destructive effects upon both those who feel it and those who are its objects. The envious man may wish to equal the achievement of the man whom he envies, but the jealous man wants to do damage to the man of whom he is jealous.

At the beginning of the essay, Bacon states one of his beliefs, namely that the feeling of love and envy show themselves in the eyes of the person who experiences these feelings, and that when these feelings do appear in the eyes of the person who experiences them, they will deeply affect of these feeling, especially if the objects of these feelings are present before the person in whose eyes the feelings of love and envy have appeared. But this belief is somewhat abstruse and may not be understood by most persons. Bacon also proceeds to tell us what kind of persons feel jealous of others, what kind of persons become the objects of jealousy, and what is the difference between public jealousy and private jealousy. Envy is depicted as an unworthy passion. No envy is felt by people when a man possessing high merit or virtue gains promotion and advancement in life.

Envy or jealousy is one of the common weaknesses of human life and everyone experiences it. Some people begin to feel obsessed by this feeling. Perhaps the most significant aspect of this feeling is stated at the end of the essay by Bacon. He tells us that, of all the feelings, envy is the most pressing and continual which makes a man pine or languish. For him, envy is a morbid feeling.

### **Of Travel:**

The essay deals with Bacon's ideas about travelling. Through this essay, Bacon gives very practical advice and hints on the subject of travel that would be useful to

an inexperienced traveller. According to him, the travelling is a part of education for the younger people and an additional experience for the older people. He advises people who want to go to a foreign country as: first to learn language of the country which they to visit. Young people should travel under the supervision of a tutor or of a trustworthy servant who knows the language of the country concerned and who has visited that country before. The tutor or servant should be able to tell the young man what things are worth seeing in that country, what kind of acquaintances he should make, and what other benefits can be derived from travelling in that country.

Bacon also tells that when young people go for sea-voyages, they should keep and write dairies because during these voyages as there is nothing to see except the sky and the sea. But they should not maintain dairies in land-travel, because there are many things to do and see. Bacon tells us what places and scenes one should visit when travelling in a foreign land. The most important things to visit in foreign countries are: the courts of princes, the courts of justice, the churches, the monasteries, the monuments, the walls and the fortifications, harbours and shipping, houses and gardens, arsenals and other store-houses, exchanges and warehouse the libraries, the colleges and treasuries of jewels and rarities. A traveller should carry a guide-book describing the country which he is visiting. He should not stay long in the same city. He should change his lodging from one part of the town to another. When abroad, he should not stay in the company of his own countrymen, but in the good company of the people he is visiting. He should get in touch with the people where he goes, so that they can help him and know the things that he likes. In this way, he does not waste any time. He should avoid the company of choleric and quarrelsome people. When he returns home, he should not forget the places and manners of the people where he stayed, but should maintain a contact with them by writing letters to some of the acquaintances he made there. He tells that travelling would be fruitful if it appears in a man's talk rather than in his clothes or gestures. In talking about his travels, a man should appear thoughtful rather than over prompt to tell his experiences. He may borrow some foreign manners, but he should not completely discard the manners of his own country. It is not right for him to replace his native manners by foreign manners.

There is nothing irrelevant in this essay. No digression is found. Each and every sentence is related to the subject. It is packed with matter. Only advice is seen, no sign of the learning which other essays have. It is completely free from Latin phrases



and expressions, classical quotations, biblical and historical allusions and anecdotes. No figures of speech and it is written in very simple language and tone. The style is accessible; almost anyone can read this essay, understand it, and profit from it.

### **Of Superstition:**

Bacon, in this essay, throws light on his views on superstition. According to him, superstition means Catholicism. It is a corrupting influence in society. He says that even atheism is better than superstition because, for him, it is 'better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him'. Atheism at least leaves open the possibility that a man might embrace philosophy, law, and other avenues for critical thought, whereas superstition blunts these things. He argues that Superstition is a corrupting influence on the minds of men, leading them to shape their observations and theories about the workings of nature around already held beliefs, rather than the other way round.

Bacon, in other words, sees the superstition as antithetical to the process of inductive reasoning and critical thinking, he so valued. Untimely, superstition actually deformed the very religious belief it was supposed to buttress. In the view of Bacon, superstition actually was destructive to man's intellectual, religious and civil life. His counter argument, such as it is in eliminating superstition from religion, people should be careful not to quash belief itself. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition., when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore, care would be had that (as if fareth in ill purging) the good be not taken away with the bad; which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

The superstition Bacon refers to is not the belief in black cats bringing bad luck but really Roman Catholicism, even though he refers to it in an indirect way. He claims that no religion is better than superstition; quoting Plutarch who said he'd rather people believe there was no such man as Plutarch than if they said he ate his children like Saturn. Atheists can be still moral people because of the common sense, philosophy, fearing law or for their reputation but superstition is like an absolute monarchy, annulling all of these. The causes of superstition, enumerated by Bacon, are quite standard in Protestant polemic: too much love of outer show and ceremony, a mistaken fidelity to tradition, the intrigues of priests. Superstition to religion is like an ape towards a man – its similarity to the real thing makes it even uglier.

## **Of Atheism:**

As a background of the essay, Bacon was critical in the development of the scientific method, and, thus, being a philosophical giant in his time, atheists have attempted to recruit him as a supporter of unbelief. He made his religious views quite clear in some of his works, and they are clearly reflective of Christian beliefs. Ironically, he also expressed his disdain for atheism; Bacon neither believed in the view of atheism nor the existence of atheists.

Bacon says, “It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion.” He claims, in the philosophical aspect of his essay, that atheists clearly have a narrow mind in logical interpretations due to that they do not consider the existence of an unexplainable. Then he says that without a doubt that the only reason why any philosophy would incline men to religion is because such philosophy confirms religion.

On the facet of politics, Bacon shared his view as “Nay more, you shall have atheists strive to get disciples, as it fareth with other sects. And, which is most of all, you shall have of them that will suffer for atheism, and not recant; whereas if they did truly think, that there was no such thing as God, why should they trouble themselves?” He points out the need of atheists to “spread their word”, why they need to counteract the establishment of the Church in their era.

Bacon, on religion, says “The causes of atheism are: divisions in religion, if they be many; for any one main division, addeth zeal to both sides; but many divisions introduce atheism. Another is, scandal of priests; when it comes to that which St. Bernard saith, ‘One cannot now say the priest is as the people, for the truth is that the people are not so bad as the priest.’ A third is custom of profane scoffing in holy matters; which doth, by little and little, deface the reverence of religion. And lastly, learned times especially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men’s minds to religion.” Divisions in religion, scandals of the clergy, and ill-manners against rituals are listed down by Bacon as the reasons for the existence of atheism. In fact, Bacon acts as a psychologist. Instead of arguing against Atheism, he creates an explanation as to why people believe it, and yet he leaves out many critical reasons. Understanding religion, knowing what it preaches, knowing its dogmas and superstitions, its bigotry and ignorance, has produced innumerable people who detest religion. Critical thought and skepticism have also produced

Atheists. Yet instead of relying on these philosophical reasons, Bacon excuses Atheism as something that is created by current events, rather than admit the fact that Atheism has existed as long as doubt, that it has existed as long as there have been men who are defiant to authority, men who want the truth, men who are rational. Albert Einstein, in addition, articulates: “With or without religion, you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.” Hence, furthermore rebutting the insufficiency of Bacon, there is no need for humanity’s reliance for an organized religion. Morality is not entirely limited to the existence of deity, but also on varied ways of life of people; as where culture does not only base itself on an organized religion, but also on beliefs. Belief cannot be confused with organized religion, as the former is about the understanding of the world and the latter is compromising or even repressing one’s belief in favour of a deep-seated need-to-believe institution. Thus, Atheism favours the exercise of free thinking as it does not limit the person to one specific view on morality.

Statements by atheists are enumerated in order to rebut Francis Bacon’s claims on his essay “Of Atheism”. Atheism offers a view that there is neither a need for a belief in God nor religion, as previously discussed, generally because of the fallacies by propagandas against atheism, oppressions caused by religion, and negates freethinking for humanity. Bacon, moreover, did not really attack Atheism in this essay. Instead, his arguments and apologetics were bent on denying its existence. An Atheist certainly would not be convinced that Atheism was wrong from this essay. Only the most credulous of Atheists would believe the thesis of this statement: those Atheists do not existence. The reasoning offered by Bacon was non-exclusive. Even beyond denying the existence of Atheists, he argued that an Atheist would have no reason to defend Atheism.

Like a psychologist, he offered excuses for Atheism, but only from a believer’s perspective. Bacon also offered the argument of Appeal to Belief. He contended that since everyone believed in the gods – and since we should do what everyone else does – that Atheists should believe in god. However, the truth is that Atheists are only more courageous and bold for denying what is commonly believed on the basis of truth. One of the arguments brought up by Bacon was that Atheism brings man and non-human animal together, equal. He states this as a reason against Atheism,

but this is only a reason against established religion: it's cruel and torturous creed concerning those who can feel as much as man, but does not grant them a soul.

### **Of Nobility:**

Bacon throws light on the types and the qualities of nobility. They are 'monarchy' and 'democracy'. He uses the word 'nobility' to mean both 'nobleness of character' and 'the aristocracy'. For him, a monarchy without nobility is an absolute tyranny. The nobility works as a check on the sovereign, but it also shields the sovereign from insolence. In Switzerland, and the Low Countries, both utility and equality are more important than honour. Switzerland is not united by respect, and not by religion, but by their mutual utility. The Low Countries have great government. They have equality which makes paying taxes more enjoyable. The nobility brings majesty to a monarch, at the cost of some power. The nobility brings spirit to the people, at the cost of some wealth. The best nobility is one under the sovereign and under justice, but above the common people. In this position, they are a buffer between monarch and subjects and their insolence. There should not be too many nobles, for to maintain nobility is expensive. Also, once some nobles become poor, wealth and honour are no longer proportionate.

Additionally, the nobility seldom works, but envies those who do. In order to rise up into the nobility, one needs to be both good and evil. But over time, their virtues will be remembered, their faults forgotten. New nobles are the result of power, but old nobles can only be the result of time. There is something beautiful about an old noble family which survived the centuries. A monarch with able noble persons should make use of them. People usually follow the nobility; it is as if they were born to command. But the matter is different in a democracy. Here, the nobility is unnecessary, while it brings some spirit, it is quite costly. In a democracy, people consider less the other person and their status than they do business, and if they consider the other person it is primarily with regard to business. Bacon says, 'A monarchy, where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny; as that of Turks'. He means that if you are going to have a monarch, you must have an aristocracy to balance that powerful individual or they have no restraints. 'But for democracies, they need it (noble class) not; and they are commonly more quiet, and less subject to sedition, than where there are strips of nobles'.

### **Of Goodness and Goodness of Nature:**

The essay deals with several marks of goodness. Bacon appears as a moralist or preacher who teaches us to exercise goodness or charity without limit. He points out that goodness or charity is the character of the Deity. Goodness aims at the welfare of men. *Goodness* consists in performing charitable actions, while *goodness of nature* means the inclination or desire to perform such actions. Goodness or charity is the highest of all human virtues. For Bacon:

*The desire of power, in excess, caused the angels to fall: the desire of knowledge, in excess, caused man to fall; but in charity there is no excess; neither can angel or man come in danger by it.*

The angels in heaven revolted against god because they became jealous of God's unlimited power. The result was that these angels were expelled from paradise. Man ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of defiance of the command of God and man too was expelled from the Garden of Eden. In this case, man's excessive desire for knowledge led to his downfall. But, Bacon says that there can be no excess in charity. No matter how charitable a man may be, we can't accuse him of excess in the matter. Nor can men suffer any punishment as result of what be regarded as excessive charity. Bacon shows thorough understanding of human nature. He says that the spirit of goodness is deeply rooted in human being. If a man is not good to his fellow human beings, he will show kindness to animals like the Turks. The Turks are cruel people. They do not show any goodness or charity to fellow human beings. But even they are kind of beasts, and out of this spirit of kindness they feed dogs and birds. Means, in the exercise of charity, one should give to others what they really need. However, there are persons who are by nature malicious or spiteful. Malicious persons take pleasure in aggravating the miseries of others. They like the flies which tormented Lazarus by setting down on his wounds. Malicious man strives only to hurt others. Men of this type are fit to become politicians who have to face all kinds of uncertainty and danger. Bacon mentions several marks of kindness. They are kindness and courtesy to strangers, a cosmopolitan outlook, and sympathy towards the sufferings of others, spirit of forgiveness, and a desire for salvation of others.

The essay has a popular appeal. What Bacon wants to teach from this essay is practical though provoking. It is too familiar and ethical. The subject matter is impressive. The essay appeals to our mind. Bacon tries to reason us into goodness

and argue us into charity. He speaks like a logician. However, the reasoning is sound and flawless. The most remarkable quality of the essay is the economy of words employed to convey ideas. It is a marvel of condensation. The moral percepts are made interesting and entertaining by means of allusions, quotations and illustrations. The effective use of rhetorical sentences is found in the essay.

### **Of Seditions and Troubles:**

The essay throws light on a political subject. It also deals with man in his relations to the world and society. It contains advice for kings and rulers. He says that kings or government should understand the signs which indicate that an agitation or revolt is brewing in the country. Defamatory and irresponsible speeches attacking kings or government and circulation of false news are among such signs. When political quarrels and discontentment become too open, it is a sign that the authority of the government has become weaker. A king should realize that, if some of the powerful persons in the country seem to be edging away from him, there is danger ahead. The chief pillar of support for a king is the respect which he receives from the people, especially the important and powerful people. The four pillars of a government are religion, justice, counsel and treasure. When anyone of them is shaken, the government should become alert.

There are two things which generally lead to sedition, one is much poverty and other is much discontentment. Those who have become impoverished because of certain actions of the government are sure to become the enemies of the government; and if such persons are joined by those in poor circumstances from among the lower classes, the danger to the government becomes great. As for discontentment, there is always a danger of its developing into an active revolt. It does not matter whether a discontentment is based on a valid or invalid reason. So, it is necessary that a king or government should make sure of the goodwill of the common person. Sedition are mainly caused or motivated by the changes in laws and customs, breaking of privileges, greater oppressions, advancement of unworthy individual, shortage of commodities, demolished soldiers, political groups which have become desperate, and so on.

Bacon has given some general remedies against seditions. Firstly, king or government should remove want and poverty from the country. It can be done by promoting industry and trade, preventing wasteful expenditure, proper cultivation of

the land, and similar measures. The population of a country should not be allowed to grow beyond certain limits. The limits are to be determined by the capacity of a country to provide the necessities of life to be increasing numbers. A country can become prosperous by increasing its agricultural produce, increasing its industrial output, and expanding its transport. Besides, the care should be taken to see that money does not accumulate among a few people. Like manure, money should be spread over the widest possible area. The most important thing is that usury and monopolies should be curbed. It is essential that to arouse some kind of hope in discontented persons. The arousing of hope in the hearts of people is the best remedy against the sedition and the poison of discontentment. In short, the essay is addressed to kings and governments, which have hardly any popular interest. The essay is, more or less, a political sermon which has no real importance today. However, there are certain observations in this essay which deserve attention today. Bacon is seen right here when he says that monarchs or governments should make sure of the goodwill of the common people.

### **Of Empire:**

This essay, like *Of Seditions and Troubles*, is political. It has a touch of history which enriches our historical knowledge also. Bacon says that a man would be miserable if he has nothing to wish for and if he is afraid of many things. Having little to desire and many things to be afraid of will make a man most unhappy which is generally case with kings. Kings occupy the highest position in their respective kingdoms; so they have hardly any desires. Having everything, there is nothing that they can wish for. As a result, they feel melancholy or sad; their heads are full of dangers and apprehensions; they became confused and unable to think properly and clearly. For giving advice to kings, and to support his arguments, Bacon has used many historical references. There are many cases of kings who made many conquests in war and, who, having been unable to go on winning military victories, became superstitious and melancholy. He says that Alexander the Great, Dioclesian, and Charles V belong to this class of kings. A king, who is accustomed to win battles, feels disappointed or frustrated on finding that he cannot continue his career of conquests. For Bacon, it is very difficult for a king to attain the state of mind in which he can govern his kingdom successfully. A king must learn to blend the qualities and methods necessary for ruling. A king must combine harshness with

mildness. Not to make abrupt changes in his mood from harshness to mildness or vice versa. Nero was an emperor who met his downfall because of his fault.

Bacon, in this essay, tries to offer some valuable advice and suggestion to kings who are dealt with their dealings with their neighbours, their wives, their children, their clergymen, their nobles, their merchants, their common people and soldiers. Concerning with neighbouring countries, a king should be serious, watchful and alert. He should not allow any neighbouring country to become more powerful than before through territorial expansion or through the expansion of trade. A king has the right to go to war with another king if the latter tries to become more powerful than before. E.g. King Henry VIII of England, Francis I of France, and Charles V of Spain maintained the balance of power among themselves in such way that none of them could become a source of danger to other. Besides, kings themselves have to beware of their wives. There were wives who did great cruelties to their husbands and some kings have suffered a lot due to the hostility of their wives. Bacon has given such cases as Livia who was responsible for the murder of her husband, Emperor Augustus. She poisoned her husband to promote the ambition of her lover, Sejanus. Roxolana brought about the destruction of the household of her husband, Solyman the Magnificent. Edward II of England was murdered as a result of an intrigue in which queen played a major role. Generally, there are two reasons for which the wives of kings intrigue against their husbands. Either they want to promote the chances of their own children to ascend the throne; or they develop illicit love affair with other men under whose influence they turn hostile to their husbands.

A king also becomes victim of his suspicion about his sons as his sons are traitors. This suspicion leads to disastrous consequences. Constantinus the Great destroyed his son, Crispus, with the result that his other sons also met violent deaths. King Philip of Macedonia destroyed his son Demetrius, but he himself subsequently died of repentance. However, there have also been cases of sons openly revolting against their fathers. In such cases, the fathers were justified in taking suitable action against their sons. Selymus I openly revolted against his father, the Sultan Bajazet II, and dethroned him in 1512. Similarly, the three sons of Henry II, King of England, openly revolted against him. These sons were Richard, Geoffrey and John. King also faces danger from priests. Kings should be on their guard against them if they are proud or powerful. Anselmus and Thomas Beckett, Archbishops of Canterbury, came



into open conflict with their kings. This danger to kings becomes greater when the priests get the support of some foreign power.

Besides, Bacon says that a king should keep the nobles at a distance though they should not try to take away all their powers. A king will lose the goodwill of the merchants if he imposes too many taxes on them. Excessive taxation leads to the stagnation of trade, and a consequent loss of the public revenue. Soldiers pose a danger to a king if they are united and if they are used to receiving monetary gifts like those received by the bodyguard of the Roman emperors. Soldiers should be placed under the command of several generals and they should not be spoilt by being given monetary rewards. At the end of the essay, King is compared to a planet which keeps constantly moving and therefore gets no rest. Planet is also held in high respect because its movement influences human affairs for better or for worse. A king too is held in high respect; he also gets no rest, and he too can do good as well as evil to the people. A king should remember that he is a man; and he should also remember that he is god or in the place of God. In other words, a king should also not forget that he is human and can make mistakes. But he should not forget that he is divine in as far as he can do a lot of good.

Though the essay is concerned with kings and the policies which they should follow, it certainly throws light on human nature and enables us to appreciate the motives which prompt the actions and policies of kings as also the actions of various categories of people.

### **1.3. Characteristics of Bacon's Essays:**

#### **Appealing:**

Bacon's essays especially appeal to high as well as common people. The essays like *Of Sedition and Trouble*, *Of Empire* written on popular interests related to the benefits of Kings and rules; but the essays *Of Truth*, *Of Death*, *Of Revenge*, *Of Adversity*, *Of Parents and Children*, *Of Marriage and Single Life*, *Of Travel* deal with familiar subjects which make an immediate appeal to us. Bacon illustrates and reinforces his ideas and arguments with appropriate similes, metaphors and quotations which naturally add the popular appeal. Bacon frequently speaks as a moralist through his essays. Although people do not like too much of preaching, yet they are positively welcomed by the readers. Moral percepts and maxims embodying wisdom give the readers a feeling that they are becoming wise and morally nobler.

### **Aphoristic Style:**

Bacon's style of writing is most remarkable and convincing. It displays a great talent for condensation. Every sentence in his essays look loaded with various meanings. Means, it is pregnant with meaning. Many sentences appear to be proverbial saying by virtue of their gems of thoughts expressed in a pithy manner. His essays combine wisdom in thought with great brevity. Terseness of expression and epigrammatic brevity are the most striking qualities of Bacon's style. Bacon possessed a marvelous power of compressing into a few words an idea which ordinary writers would express in several sentences. Many of his sentences have an aphoristic quality. They are like proverbs which can readily be quoted when the occasion demands.

An aphoristic style means a compact, condensed and epigrammatic style of writing. An aphorism is a short sentence expressing a truth in a few possible words. An aphorism is a live proverb which has a quotable quality. His aphoristic style makes Bacon an essayist of his distinction. He achieves the terseness of style often by avoiding superfluous words and by omitting the ordinary joints and sinews of speech. His essays are replete with aphorisms. There are so many examples which found in his essays illustrate aphoristic style of writing. Aphoristic sentences in his essays are:

- He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune.
- Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants, but not always best subjects.
- Revenge is a kind of wild justice.
- Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark.
- A mixture of lie doth ever add pleasure.
- Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability.
- Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.
- Virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.

### **Blend of Philosophy and Morality:**

Bacon is seen clearly in his essays both as a philosopher and a moralist. So, he is called a philosopher-cum-moralist. A philosopher is broadly speaking, a person who is deeply interested in the pursuit of truth, while a moralist is a person who teaches human beings the distinction between what is right and what is wrong and urges them to tread the right path only. Bacon appears in this dual role in many of the essays like *Of Truth*, *Of Great Place*, *Of Marriage and Single Life*. Bacon is certainly a moralist and he appears in that role. His essays abound in moral percepts. He lays down valuable guidelines for human conduct. He urges human beings to follow the right path in every field of life—political, social, and domestic. His essays are didactic in tone. However, it has been pointed out that Bacon is not a moral idealist. He does not preach morality, but deals with morality. The morality which he preaches is tinged with what is known as worldliness. It is said that his guiding principle is expediency, while morality is a secondary consideration. So, it cannot be claimed that he was certain of the existence of moral principles of absolute validity. His essays seem to be in the work of an opportunist. In *Of Truth*, he certainly admires truth but then he also points out that falsehood is like alloy in gold and silver which makes the metal work better even though it lowers the value of the metal. By pointing out this, he dilutes all that he has said in this essay in the praise of truth. It happens in his other essays like *Of Great Place*, and *Of Simulation and Dissimulation*.

### **Pertinence:**

Bacon selects a subject and then writes an essay on it without in the least losing sight of that subject. In other words, whatever he writes in a particular essay is strictly relevant to the subjects he has chosen. He never deviates from subjects. There are no digressions in any of his essays. His manner of writing is not loose, discursive or rambling. In *Of truth*, all his ideas are relevant and he dwells upon the value of truth with its opposite, falsehood. The same is true of the essay, *Of Marriage and Single Life*. It is concerned with the married state and the state of celibacy. Bacon deals with the advantage and disadvantages of marriage, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the single life, adding a few remarks about chaste wives, about bad husbands having good wives, and serious-minded men who generally prove to be steady and loving husbands. Similarly, the essay *Of Great*

*Place*, deals with people occupying high positions, the good which they can do the evils which they should avoid, and so on.

### **Practical Wisdom/Suggestiveness:**

Bacon's essays are nothing but a handbook of practical wisdom. His essays contain valuable guidelines for human conduct. His essays also called a compendium of knowledge. They reveal Bacon's wide experience of the world. e.g. in, *Of Truth*, Bacon urges us to develop a love of truth because falsehood will only bring disgrace, frustration and degradation to us. He admits that lies are often attractive; but he warns people against the punishment which is likely to descend on us for the falsehood which we practice.

No doubt, the essays of Bacon are a treasure-house of what is called worldly wisdom. Worldly wisdom means the kind of wisdom that is necessary for achieving worldly success. Worldly wisdom does not imply any deep philosophy. It simply means the technique that a man showed employ to achieve success in his life. It, therefore, implies shrewdness, sagacity, tact, foresight, judgment of character, and so on. Through his essays, Bacon teaches us the art of how to get on in this world, how to become rich and prosperous, how to rise to high positions, how to exercise one's authority and power so as to attain good results, how to gain influence, etc. It is true that Bacon is a philosopher and a moralist, but it has rightly been pointed out by critics that, in his essays as in his own career, he treated philosophy and morality as being subordinate to worldly success.

### **1.4 Summary:**

Renaissance means the revival of learning and an absolute change in every occupation. In its broadest sense, it denotes the gradual enlightenment of human mind after darkness of Middle Ages. The influence of Renaissance spirit is obvious on Bacon in his essays. He lays emphasis on self-advancement. He has a love for classical learning and natural beauty, which are the qualities of Renaissance. Bacon's essays bear the pragmatic spirit. He deals with the practical advantages of the things in the new intellectual atmosphere created by the Renaissance. His essays are replete with what is known as worldly wisdom. The Machiavellian approach to life, an emphasis on self-advancement, a love of classical learning, advocacy of empire-building and of war, are the characteristics of the Renaissance found in the essays of Bacon.

As a Renaissance man, Bacon has the sense of curiosity and love for travel. The lists of things that are worth seeing are typical spirit of the Renaissance. It exhibits the tendency to know more and more about everything and place. It is said that Bacon has Faustian urge of curiosity and love for travel. Renaissance age was accompanied with the great spirit of humanism. Bacon's essays are the proper study of humanism. He directed his gaze inward and became deeply interested in the problem of human personality. All his essays deal with 'man' as their subject matter. Bacon's morality governed by the knowledge that man is not perfect and that he can be expected to adhere to the ethical standards only to a certain extent. Overall, we can say that Bacon is a writer who represents the most salient feature of his age, which is the age of revival of learning and study of ancients, the spirit of inquiry and individualism. He is the real product of the Renaissance glory and reveals the thoughts, philosophy and true features of the Renaissance spirit.

### **1.5 Check Your Progress:**

#### **A. Fill in the blanks:**

1. Francis Bacon was born in London in-----.
2. Bacon was fined ----- pounds.
3. Bacon died in-----.
4. Bacon's first edition of essays published in ---- with ten essays,
5. Bacon's third edition of essays published in 1625 with ----- essays,
6. Renaissance especially began in -----.
7. Thomas More's ----- shows a clear picture of the renaissance.
8. Caxton's press was established in ----- in London.
9. ----- was the earliest forerunner of renaissance.
10. A rebellion against the spiritual authority was first aroused by -----.
11. ----- s the supreme good for human beings.
12. ----- gives people a strange kind of pleasure.
13. The physical suffering upon themselves as -----.
14. According to Bacon, human being should accept death as -----
15. A revengeful person is like -----.

16. A man of ill-nature is compared to -----.
17. Virtue, by Bacon, is compared to -----.
18. Italians make no distinction between -----.
19. Dissimulation is a poor substitute for -----.
20. The essay *Of Unity in Religion* was first published in -----.
21. The spiritual sword is represented by -----.
22. Bacon believes that single men are often -----.
23. Women who are faithful to their husband are -----.
24. For middle aged man, a wife is -----.
25. Bacon remarks that love is -----.
26. Bacon says that the travelling is a part of ----- for the young people.
27. At the cost of power, the nobility brings majesty to -----.
28. Goodness is the character of the -----.
29. Man's excessive desire of anything leads to -----.
30. Turks show goodness or the spirit of kindness to -----.

**B) Answer in one word/phrase/sentence.**

1. When did Bacon become a barrister?
2. What is the period of Bacon in Parliament?
3. Why was Bacon accused?
4. What are the reasons of Bacon's releasing from imprisonment?
5. What is the belief of Bacon about Science?
6. How did Bacon describe his essays?
7. What does Renaissance mean?
8. According to Bacon, what is the real reason of man's dislikes for the truth?
9. How do early writers of the church describe poetry?
10. What is the view of Bacon about truth as a moralist?
11. To which thing, Bacon does compare falsehood?
12. What are the guidelines of Bacon to people in high authority?

13. What are the chief vices of authority, according to Bacon?
14. What are the feelings under which people deliberately seek death?
15. What is the belief of Bacon about revenge?
16. What is the chief blessing of adversity?
17. Why does Bacon say that 'adversity is a greater blessing than prosperity'?
18. What are the faults of parents?
19. When did Bacon write the essay *Of Unity in Religion*?
20. What are the advantages of the unity of the Church?
21. Why does Bacon say love mirrors the stage?
22. Why are the Monks called kind-hearted and charitable?
23. Why should people keep and write dairies during sea-voyages?
24. What are the important things to visit in foreign countries?
25. What are the causes of superstition?
26. What are the causes of atheism?
27. What are the four pillars of a government?
28. Which are the things that lead to sedition?
29. Sedition is mainly caused by?
30. What are the general remedies against Sedition?
31. What, according to Bacon, kings must learn for ruling?

### 1.6 Terms to Remember:

- **Giddiness:** unsteadiness
- **Pilate:** Roman Governor of Judaea, who presided over trial of Christ and sentence of death against Christ.
- **Vinum daemonum:** Latin expression meaning the wine of devil.
- **Aphorism:** a short phrase that expresses in a clever way that is true.
- **Penance:** a punishment that you give yourself to show you are sorry for doing the wrong.
- **scapegoat:** a person who is punished for things that are not his/her fault.

- **Lucretius:** The poet, born about 95 BC., wrote poems on the nature of things, explaining and defending the atomistic philosophy.
- **Simulation:** pretending to have or to feel.
- **Dissimulation:** pretending not to have or to feel.
- **Dioclesian:** an emperor from 284-305 A.D.
- **Charles V:** King of Spain and Emperor of Germany.
- **Seneca:** The Roman Philosopher and dramatist of the first century, A.D.
- **Augustus Caesar, Tiberius, Vespasian, Galba, Septimius Severus:** These are the names of ancient Roman emperors who died willingly and cheerfully.
- **Livia:** the name of the wife of Roman emperor, Augustus Caesar.
- **Prometheus:** He was a Titan or a giant who stole fire from heaven and gave it to mankind for their use, because he was a great well-wisher and benefactor of mankind. But the supreme god, Zeus, felt annoyed with Prometheus for having acted in a manner contrary to his wishes, Zeus, in order to punish Prometheus, chained him to rock and set two vultures to eat into the heart of Prometheus.
- **Defamatory:** intended to harm by saying or writing bad.
- **detriments:** harming/damaging
- **Stoics:** The Stoics were the followers of a Greek Philosopher by the name of Zeno who lived during the 4th century B.C. According to the Stoical philosophy, happiness consists in liberation from the bondage of the passion and appetites. The Stoical philosophy teaches people to become indifferent aspect to both joy and sorrow. Here, however, Bacon refers to a different aspect of the philosophy. According to Bacon, the Stoics gave too much importance to death by making great preparations for it.
- **seditions:** the use of words or actions that are intended to encourage people to be or act against a government.
- **profane:** showing lack of respect for holy things.
- **scoff:** ridiculous



- **insolence:** lacking respect
- **defiance:** open refusal to obey
- **exalt:** to praise a lot
- **arsenals:** a collection of weapons
- **atheism:** the belief that there is no god.

## 1.7 Answers to Check Your Progress:

### A. Answers:

1. 1561
2. 40000
3. 1626
4. 1597
5. 58
6. Italy
7. Utopia
8. 1476
9. Caxton Press
10. the reformation
11. Truth
12. Falsehood
13. a form of penance
14. the natural end of life/a kind of blessing
15. a witch
16. the thorn and briar
17. crushed spices and flowers
18. their near relations
19. policy/wisdom
20. 1612
21. the authority of priest

22. best friends, best masters and best servants
23. proud of their chastity
24. a companion
25. the child of folly
26. education
27. Monarch
28. Deity
29. his down fall
30. animals/dogs and birds

**B. Answers:**

1. 1582
2. From 1584 to 1617
3. For accepting bribes
4. His reputation and longstanding place in Parliament
5. Science could become a tool for the betterment of humankind.
6. They come home men's business and bosoms.
7. Re-birth, revival, re-awakening
8. Man is attached to lies; man loves falsehood.
9. As the wine of devils
10. Truth is the supreme good for human beings; and the earth can be made paradise with the help of truth.
11. To an alloy in a coin of gold or silver
12. They should work hard and take a heavy responsibility
13. Delays, corruption, roughness and facility
14. Revenge, love, the sense of honour and grief.
15. Revenge is against God's moral and man's justice.
16. Adversity brings out the potentiality, talent, courage and fortitude of a man.

17. In adverse circumstances, a man learns the lessons of hard work and honesty, and shows his inner power of endurance.
18. Unequal favouritism, illiberality, encouragement for rivalry among the children.
19. When England was undergoing a religious change under the reign of Queen Elizabeth.
20. To praise God and fulfill the required objects of religions; to suppress the ridicule about the church; bring perch, strengthen faith and promotes charity.
21. Because it is filled with comedy, tragedy, mischief and fury.
22. They spread their love over many people.
23. Because there is nothing to see except the sky and the sea.
24. The court of princes and justice, the churches, the monasteries, the monuments, the harbours and shipping, treasures of jewels and rarities.
25. Too much love of outer show and ceremony, a mistaken fidelity to tradition and the intrigues of priests.
26. Divisions in religion, scandals of priests, custom of profane scoffing in holy matters, ill-manners against rituals.
27. Religion, justice, counsel and treasure.
28. Poverty and discontentment.
29. Changes in laws and customs, breaking of privileges, greater oppression, advancement of unworthy individual, shortage of commodities, demolished soldiers and political groups.
30. To remove poverty from countries, promote industry and trade, to prevent wasteful expenditure, proper cultivation of the land etc.
31. Kings must learn to blend the qualities and methods for ruling.

### **1.8. Further Exercises:**

1. Explain the salient feature of Bacon's essays with reference to essays that you have studied.

2. Comment on the aphoristic style of Bacon, illustrating your answer from the essays you have studied.
3. “The essays of Bacon are a blend of philosophy, morality and practical wisdom”, Discuss.
4. The essays of Bacon constitute a handbook of practical wisdom. Discuss
5. Write note on Bacon, the moralist with special reference to the essays that you have studied.
6. Illustrate the chief qualities of Bacon's essays.
7. What contribution did Bacon make to the development of English prose?
8. Bacon’s essays are the expression of a life-time of experience in the world of men and affairs. Elucidate.
9. Illustrate from Bacon’s essays how they reveal his wide experience and knowledge of the world.
10. The essays ‘Of Empire’ and ‘Of Seditions and Troubles’ are political. Discuss.
11. Francis Bacon is a glorious product of Renaissance. Elucidate.
12. Bring out the influence of the Renaissance on Bacon with special reference to his essays.
13. Bacon’s essays are the expression of a life-time of experience in the world of men and experience. Illustrate with reference to essays prescribed.

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**Unit-2**  
***King Lear***

**William Shakespeare**

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## 2.1 Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand British Renaissance Age
- Find renaissance relevance to Shakespeare
- Learn Shakespears' biography
- Summarize the plot of *King Lear*
- Explain Act-wise summary
- List and analyze the characters in *King Lear*
- Study the Shakespearean Tragedy
- Learn about Shakespearean audience and theatre

## 2.2 Introduction:

In the previous unit, you studied Francis Bacon's *Selected Essays* which was a form of literature popular during the Renaissance literature. In the present unit, you will study British Renaissance Tragedy/ Shakespearean Tragedy, *King Lear*. It begins with the British Renaissance Age and life sketch of William Shakespeare. Further, it discusses Shakespearean tragedy, theater, *King Lear* and its sources, theme, act-wise summary etc.

### 2.2.1 British/ English Renaissance Age:

The Elizabethan Age was a time of great prosperity and wealth in England. Furthermore, it was an era that was marked by significant scientific discoveries, explorations, and inventions. Scientists like Copernicus (1473-1543), for example, revolutionized Western thought by demonstrating, for the first time, that the planets revolve around the sun rather than the earth. Although many people at first hesitated to accept such startling new ideas. Shakespeare's time, a period also known as the English Renaissance (1500-1650), saw a decreased interest in the outdated ideas inherited from the Middle Ages and a growing fascination with new ideas that emphasized the importance and potential of each individual human being. People like Martin Luther, Leonardo Da Vinci, and John Milton initiated significant changes in religious beliefs, politics, and the arts, and stood as examples of the "Renaissance Man" who accumulates skills in a vast variety of subject matters and areas of study

while actively participating in public life. Several of the groundbreaking ideas that characterized the English Renaissance find their way into Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

This was a new age, a time that required a shift in power from old to new, from old to young. This idea is evidently vital to the story of *King Lear* and centers on Lear's abdication of power and his struggle to find a place as an aging man in a changing world.

This age saw a turn away from the idea of the "Great Chain of Being," a belief that every being occupies a predetermined place in the hierarchy of the universe. This notion of the "Great Chain of Being" that could not be influenced or changed, because it was divinely preordained, invited human passivity, despondence, and a lack of initiative. A strong belief in the power and influence of the stars, fate, and the gods was closely related with the "Great Chain of Being" theory. The English Renaissance saw a shift away from the ideas associated with human passivity and the unquestionable influence of the gods and fate toward an emphasis on human self determination, independence, and responsibility. This idea finds its way into a number of Shakespeare's characters. Gloucester, for example, adheres to an antiquated world view focused on a passive belief in the stars and gods, whereas Edmund displays a growing belief in human responsibility.

This was an age in which marriages were arranged, and women occupied a lower social status than men. Shakespeare's play picks up on the idea of arranged marriages in the opening scene where Lear divides his kingdom among his daughters. The play implies that power and the accumulation of wealth were the deciding factors that had joined Regan and Goneril with their husbands. Cordelia's suitors, too, have been selected based on the political and monetary advantages each potential union could offer. Shakespeare's play, however, complicates the notion of female power. The development of the plot demonstrates that, while women did not have the power to make political decisions for the kingdom and were expected to agree with their husbands in every decision. Many women did, indeed, influence politics and social relations, hidden from public view, through their ability to scheme and privately impact their husband's attitudes. In that sense, Shakespeare's play attempts to draw a more realistic, less black-and-white image of the role women played.



Humans had potential for development. Shakespeare's play traces the interior development of a number of characters and suggests that human identity is not static and unchangeable.

### **2.2.2 Life and Work of William Shakespeare:**

Details about William Shakespeare's life are sketchy, mostly mere surmise based upon court or other clerical records. His parents, John and Mary (Arden), were married about 1557; she was of the landed gentry, and he was a yeoman—a glover and commodities merchant. By 1568, John had risen through the ranks of town government and held the position of high bailiff, similar to mayor. William, the eldest son and the third of eight children, was born in 1564, probably on April 23, several days before his baptism on April 26 in Stratford-upon-Avon. Shakespeare is also believed to have died on the same date, April 23 in 1616. It is believed William attended the local grammar school in Stratford where his parents lived, and studied primarily Latin rhetoric, logic, and literature. Shakespeare probably left school at age 15, which was the norm, to take a job, especially since this was the period of his father's financial difficulty. At age 18 (1582), William married Anne Hathaway, a local farmer's daughter who was eight years his senior. Their first daughter (Susanna) was born six months later (1583), and twins Judith and Hamnet were born in 1585.

Shakespeare's life can be divided into three periods: the first 20 years in Stratford, which include his schooling, early marriage, and fatherhood; the next 25 years as an actor and playwright in London; and the last five in retirement back in Stratford where he enjoyed moderate wealth gained from his theatrical successes. The years linking the first two periods are marked by a lack of information about Shakespeare, and are often referred to as the "dark years."

At some point during the "dark years," Shakespeare began his career with a London theatrical company, perhaps in 1589, for he was already an actor and playwright of some note by 1592. Shakespeare apparently wrote and acted for numerous theatrical companies, including Pembroke's Men, and Strange's Men, which later became the Chamberlain's Men, with whom he remained for the rest of his career.

In 1592, the Plague closed the theaters for about two years, and Shakespeare turned to writing book length narrative poetry. Most notable were "Venus and

Adonis” and “The Rape of Lucrece,” both of which were dedicated to the Earl of Southampton, whom scholars accept as Shakespeare’s friend and benefactor despite a lack of documentation. During this same period, Shakespeare was writing his sonnets, which are more likely signs of the time’s fashion rather than actual love poems detailing any particular relationship. He returned to playwriting when theaters reopened in 1594, and did not continue to write poetry. His sonnets were published without his consent in 1609, shortly before his retirement. Amid all of his success, Shakespeare suffered the loss of his only son, Hamnet, who died in 1596 at the age of 11. But Shakespeare’s career continued unabated, and in London in 1599, he became one of the partners in the new Globe Theater, which was built by the Chamberlain’s Men. Shakespeare wrote very little after 1612, which was the year he completed *Henry VIII*. It was during a performance of this play in 1613 that the Globe caught fire and burned to the ground. Sometime between 1610 and 1613, Shakespeare returned to Stratford, where he owned a large house and property, to spend his remaining years with his family.

William Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616, and was buried two days later in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church where he had been baptized exactly 52 years earlier. His literary legacy included 37 plays, 154 sonnets and five major poems. Incredibly, most of Shakespeare’s plays had never been published in anything except pamphlet form, and were simply extant as acting scripts stored at the Globe. Theater scripts were not regarded as literary works of art, but only the basis for the performance. Plays were simply a popular form of entertainment for all layers of society in Shakespeare’s time. Only the efforts of two of Shakespeare’s company, John Heminges and Henry Condell, preserved his 36 plays (minus *Pericles*, the thirty-seventh).

### **2.2.3 Literary Work:**

Shakespeare is renowned as the English playwright and poet whose body of works is considered the greatest in history of English literature. Shakespeare headed to London sometime in 1586, there already was an established community of playwrights. By 1595, Shakespeare was sufficiently successful to be named as one of the more senior members of the Lord Chamberlain's men, an acting company that performed frequently before court. This was no small honour; this prominent theatre

company later became the royal company called the King's Men, making Shakespeare an official playwright to the King of England.

Shakespeare's works are often divided into four periods beginning with what is referred to as an experimental period starting around 1591 and ending around 1593 which includes *Titus Andronicus*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. The second period ending around 1601, marks the establishment of Shakespeare and includes the tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, the comedies, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the history plays, *Henry IV, Parts I and II*, *Henry V*, *Richard II*, *King John* and *Julius Caesar*. The third period ending around 1610 marks perhaps the apex of Shakespeare's work with the tragedies, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* but also comedies such as *Twelfth Night*, *All's Well that Ends Well* and the epic history play, *Antony and Cleopatra*. The final period ends around 1611 with the plays, *Cymbeline*, *Henry VIII* and romances such as *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.

The Shakespeare we read today comes from *The First Folio* of 1623 written by fellow actors John Heminge and Henry Condell to preserve Shakespeare's legacy. Amazingly, no original manuscripts survive reflecting the fact that many of these manuscripts were written purely for performance and were not regarded as pieces of literary work. There is also no general consensus on when all the plays were first performed. It might surprise readers to know that many of Shakespeare's plays, especially in the experimental period were hardly original, borrowing plot features from earlier plays. Likewise with his history plays, Shakespeare compresses events and does not follow history too closely to add to the drama. However borrowing plots and taking liberties with historical facts was not uncommon in Shakespeare's time and his skill for language, imagery, pun and his creative adaption of myth and history have set Shakespeare apart as arguably the greatest playwright of all time.

#### **2.2.4 Shakespearean Tragedy :**

Shakespearean tragedy is the designation given to most tragedies written by a playwright, William Shakespeare. Many of his history plays share the qualifiers of a Shakespearean tragedy, but because they are based on real figures throughout the History of England, they were classified as "histories" in the First Folio. The

Roman tragedies—*Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*—are also based on historical figures, but because their source stories were foreign and ancient they are almost always classified as tragedies rather than histories. Shakespeare's romances (tragicomic plays) were written late in his career and published originally as either tragedy or comedy. They share some elements of tragedy featuring a high status central character but end happily like Shakespearean comedies. Several hundred years after Shakespeare's death, scholar F.S. Boas also coined a fifth category, the "problem play," for plays that don't fit neatly into a single classification because of their subject matter, setting, or ending. The classifications of certain Shakespeare plays are still debated among scholars.

The English Renaissance, when Shakespeare was writing, was fuelled by a renewed interest in Roman and Greek classics and neighboring renaissance literature written years earlier in Italy, France, and Spain. Shakespeare wrote the majority of his tragedies under the rule of James I, and their darker contents may reflect the general mood of the country following the death of Elizabeth I, as well as James' theatrical preferences. Shakespeare, as was customary for other playwrights in his day, used history, other plays, and non-dramatic literature as sources for his plays. In Elizabethan England there were no copyright or protections against plagiarism, so characters, plots, and even whole phrases of poetry were considered common property. The majority of Shakespeare's tragedies are based on historical figures, with the exception of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*, which are based on narrative fictions by Giraldi Cintio.

The historical basis for Shakespeare's Roman plays comes from *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans* by Plutarch, whereas the source of Shakespeare's Britain based plays and *Hamlet* (based on the Danish Prince Amleth) derive from *Holinshed's Chronicles*. Furthermore, the French author Belleforest published *The Hystorie of Hamblet, Prince of Denmarke* in 1582 which includes specifics from how the prince counterfeited to be mad, to how the prince stabbed and killed the King's counsellor who was eavesdropping on Hamlet and his mother behind the arras in the Queen's chamber. The story of Lear appears in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regium Britanniae* 1135, and then in John Higgin's poem *The Mirror for Magistrates* in 1574, as well as appearing in *Holinshed's Chronicles* in 1587. Some events that happen in Shakespeare's *King Lear* were inspired by various episodes of Philip Sydney's *Arcadia* (1590), while the nonsensical musings of

Edgar's "poor Tom" heavily reference Samuel Harsnett's 1603 book, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*.

Tragedies from these eras traced their philosophical essence back to Senecan tragedy, grounded in nobles who have a tragic flaw or commit a grave error (*hamartia*) which leads to their reversal of fortune (*peripeteia*). (However, some critics have argued that the "pseudo-Aristotelian" concept of the tragic flaw does not apply to Shakespeare's tragic figures. Revenge tragedy was also of increasing popularity in this age, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is one example of this. Plays of this age were also decidedly secular, in contrast to the religious morality plays which by this time were outlawed by Elizabeth I. One marked difference between English renaissance tragedies and the classics that inspired them, was the use and popularity of violence and murder on stage.

### **2.2.5 Shakespeare's Theater**

In Shakespeare's time, a stage wasn't just one type of space; plays had to be versatile. The same play might be produced in an outdoor playhouse, an indoor theater, a royal palace—or, for a company on tour, the courtyard of an inn.

In any of these settings, men and boys played all the characters, male and female; acting in Renaissance England was an exclusively male profession. Audiences had their favorite performers, looked forward to hearing music with the productions, and relished the luxurious costumes of the leading characters. The stage itself was relatively bare. For the most part, playwrights used vivid words instead of scenery to picture the scene on stage.

#### **Playhouses and the Globe**

In 1576, when Shakespeare was still a twelve years old in Stratford, James Burbage built the Theatre just outside London. The Theatre was among the first playhouses in England since Roman times. Like the many other playhouses that followed, it was a multi-sided structure with a central, uncovered "yard" surrounded by three tiers of covered seating and a bare, raised stage at one end of the yard. Spectators could pay for seating at multiple price levels; those with the cheapest tickets simply stood for the length of the plays.

Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, was one of several to perform at the Theatre, appearing there by about 1594. A few years later, the

Burbages lost their lease on the Theatre site and began construction of a new, larger playhouse, the Globe, just the South of the Thames. To pay for it, they shared the lease with the five partners (called actor-sharers) in the Lord Chamberlain's company, including Shakespeare.

The Globe, which opened in 1599, became the playhouse where audiences first saw some of Shakespeare's best-known plays. In 1613, it burned to the ground when the roof caught fire during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. A new, second Globe was quickly built on the same site, opening in 1614.

### **Theaters and Palaces**

Large open playhouses like the Globe are marvelous in the right weather, but indoor theaters can operate year-round, out of the sun, wind, and rain. They also offer a more intimate setting with the use of artificial light. Shakespeare's company planned for years to operate its own indoor theater, a goal that was finally achieved in 1609 when the Burbages took over London's Blackfriars theater.

Still more indoor productions often came during the period between Christmas and New Year, and at Shrovetide (the period before Lent) at one of the royal palaces, where Shakespeare's company and other leading companies gave command performances—a high honor that was also well-paid.

### **Audience experiences**

Playgoers in Shakespeare's day paid a penny to stand in the uncovered yard of a playhouse, or two pennies for a balcony seat. (It's hard to find exact comparisons to what a penny then is worth now, but a day's worth of food and drink for a grown man would have cost about fourpence.) Indoor theaters like the Blackfriars accommodated fewer people and cost more, with basic tickets starting at sixpence. Fashionable men about town could get a seat on the side of the stage for two shillings (24 pence).

Spectators liked to drink wine or ale and snack on a variety of foods as they watched the plays—modern-day excavations at the playhouses have turned up bottles, spoons, oyster shells, and the remnants of many fruits and nuts.

### **Actors, costumes, and staging**

While most women's roles were played by boys or young men in the all-male casts, comic female parts such as Juliet's Nurse might be reserved for a popular adult

comic actor, or clown. In addition to their dramatic talents, actors in Shakespeare's time had to fence onstage with great skill, sing songs or play instruments included in the plays, and perform the vigorously athletic dances of their day.

Actors usually did not aim for historically accurate costumes, although an occasional toga may have appeared for a Roman play. Instead, they typically wore gorgeous modern dress, especially for the leading parts. Costumes, a major investment for an acting company, provided the essential "spectacle" of the plays and were often second-hand clothes once owned and worn by real-life nobles.

The bare stages of Shakespeare's day had little or no scenery except for objects required by the plot, like a throne, a grave, or a bed. Exits and entrances were in plain view of the audience, but they included some vertical options: actors could descend from the "heavens" above the stage or enter and exit from the "hell" below through a trapdoor. Characters described as talking from "above" might appear in galleries midway between the stage and the heavens.

#### 2.2.6 Historical Context and Sources

When Shakespeare wrote *King Lear* in 1605/1606, he built on a number of well-known texts that had previously developed the story of the old king and his daughters. Most of Shakespeare's plays, in fact, are not original inventions by Shakespeare himself. Like many of his contemporary writers and playwrights, Shakespeare used well-known tales and previously published plays or stories in order to gather inspiration for his plays. He then appropriated the stories and characters for his particular vision and turned them into the brilliant works we know today.

The earliest existing version of the story of King Lear is probably the *Historia Regium Britanniae*, written in the 12th century by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Even Monmouth's early version of the story of Lear, however, relies on a familiar tale about a father and his three daughters that had long been a part of English mythology. Many critics believe that Monmouth's *Chronicles* are loosely based on the **historical figure of King Lear**, who is believed to have ruled the British Island around the year 800. Most sources, however, are vague about the actual existence of the mythological king.

During the Elizabethan Age, a number of different versions of the play were published that probably served as direct sources for Shakespeare's play, among them

most notably the *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* published by Raphael Holinshed late in the sixteenth century as well as an anonymous text entitled *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*, published anonymously around the same time. Shakespeare routinely turned to Holinshed's *Chronicles* for inspiration; *Macbeth*, for example, as well as a number of his other historical plays, relies on Holinshed's *Chronicles* for historical context. Although Shakespeare relied on a number of sources for the story of Lear, his play differs from Holinshed's *Chronicles* as well as from the anonymous *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* in a number of significant ways. First, Shakespeare added the subplot involving **Gloucester and his two sons Edgar and Edmund** as a story that parallels the fate of Lear and his three daughters. The story of Gloucester was borrowed loosely from yet another source, Sir Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke Arcadia*.

There is no indication that a historical source for the figure of Gloucester exists in British history. Shakespeare added another significant change to the original tale of the old king and his daughters when he wrote the tragic ending to his play. In the texts that served as his source material, King Lear and his **faithful daughter Cordelia** (or Cordeilla) are happily reunited and reassume the royal power in the kingdom. Shakespeare, of course, deviates from this happy ending: both Lear and Cordelia die tragically, and the English kingdom is left in a state of desolation and turmoil. Another crucial aspect of Shakespeare's play, Lear's growing state of madness, is an original feature born in Shakespeare's imagination.

Shakespeare's play, then, uses a well-known basic outline of the story of a father and his daughters and turns it into his very own, unique, and dark vision of love and betrayal, honesty and deception, power and insanity. Indeed, Shakespeare's play was performed faithfully on the Elizabethan stage for only about twenty years. In the 1680s, Nahum Tate conceived an adapted version of Shakespeare's play that, for many years, became the only version that was performed.

Tate's adaptation changed a number of details from Shakespeare's play, most notably his dark ending, which Tate turned into a happy ending. Clearly, Tate's adaptation is not a faithful rendition of Shakespeare's vision. It was, however, the story that English audiences wanted to see. For many years to come, the ending of *King Lear*, as Shakespeare had written it, was too disastrous and negative for the English audiences to endure.



## 2.3 Presentation of Subject Matter

### 2.3.1 *King Lear*: Introduction

*King Lear* is widely regarded as Shakespeare's crowning artistic achievement. The scenes in which a mad Lear rages naked on a stormy heath against his deceitful daughters and nature itself are considered by many scholars to be the finest example of tragic lyricism in the English language. Shakespeare took his main plot line of an aged monarch abused by his children from a folk tale that appeared first in written form in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and was based on spoken stories that originated much further into the Middle Ages.

He, first attribution to Shakespeare of this play, originally drafted in 1605 or 1606 at the latest with its first known performance on St. Stephen's Day in 1606, was a 1608 publication in a quarto of uncertain provenance, in which the play is listed as a history; it may be an early draft or simply reflect the first performance text. *The Tragedy of King Lear*, a more theatrical revision, was included in the 1623 First Folio. Modern editors usually conflate the two, though some insist that each version has its own individual integrity that should be preserved.

After the English Restoration, the play was often revised with a happy, non-tragic ending for audiences who disliked its dark and depressing tone, but since the 19<sup>th</sup> century Shakespeare's original version has been regarded as one of his supreme achievements. The tragedy is particularly noted for its probing observations on the nature of human suffering and kinship. George Bernard Shaw wrote, "No man will ever write a better tragedy than Lear."

### 2.3.2 *King Lear*: Plot

The story opens in ancient Britain, where the elderly King Lear is deciding to give up his power and divide his realm amongst his three daughters, Cordelia, Regan, and Goneril. Lear's plan is to give the largest piece of his kingdom to the child who professes to love him the most, certain that his favorite daughter, Cordelia, will win the challenge. Goneril and Regan, corrupt and deceitful, lie to their father with sappy and excessive declarations of affection. Cordelia, however, refuses to engage in Lear's game, and replies simply that she loves him as a daughter should. Her lackluster retort, despite its sincerity, enrages Lear, and he disowns Cordelia

completely. When Lear's dear friend, the Earl of Kent, tries to speak on Cordelia's behalf, Lear banishes him from the kingdom.

Meanwhile, the King of France, present at court and overwhelmed by Cordelia's honesty and virtue, asks for her hand in marriage, despite her loss of a sizable dowry. Cordelia accepts the King of France's proposal, and reluctantly leaves Lear with her two cunning sisters. Kent, although banished by Lear, remains to try to protect the unwitting King from the evils of his two remaining children. He disguises himself and takes a job as Lear's servant. Now that Lear has turned over all his wealth and land to Regan and Goneril, their true natures surface at once. Lear and his few companions, including some knights, a fool, and the disguised Kent, go to live with Goneril, but she reveals that she plans to treat him like the old man he is while he is under her roof. So Lear decides to stay instead with his other daughter, and he sends Kent ahead to deliver a letter to Regan, preparing her for his arrival. However, when Lear arrives at Regan's castle, he is horrified to see that Kent has been placed in stocks. Kent is soon set free, but before Lear can uncover who placed his servant in the stocks, Goneril arrives, and Lear realizes that Regan is conspiring with her sister against him.

Gloucester arrives back at Regan's castle in time to hear that the two sisters are planning to murder the King. He rushes away immediately to warn Kent to send Lear to Dover, where they will find protection. Kent, Lear, and the Fool leave at once, while Edgar remains behind in the shadows. Sadly, Regan and Goneril discover Gloucester has warned Lear of their plot, and Cornwall, Regan's husband, gouges out Gloucester's eyes. A servant tries to help Gloucester and attacks Cornwall with a sword – a blow later to prove fatal.

News arrives that Cordelia has raised an army of French troops that have landed at Dover. Regan and Goneril ready their troops to fight and they head to Dover. Meanwhile, Kent has heard the news of Cordelia's return, and sets off with Lear hoping that father and daughter can be reunited. Gloucester too tries to make his way to Dover, and on the way, finds his own lost son, Edgar. Tired from his ordeal, Lear sleeps through the battle between Cordelia and her sisters. When Lear awakes he is told that Cordelia has been defeated.

Lear takes the news well, thinking that he will be jailed with his beloved Cordelia – away from his evil offspring. However, the orders have come, not for

Cordelia's imprisonment, but for her death. Despite their victory, the evil natures of Goneril and Regan soon destroy them. Both in love with Gloucester's conniving son, Edmund (who gave the order for Cordelia to be executed), Goneril poisons Regan. But when Goneril discovers that Edmund has been fatally wounded by Edgar, Goneril kills herself as well.

As Edmund takes his last breath he repents and the order to execute Cordelia is reversed. But the reversal comes too late and Cordelia is hanged. Lear appears, carrying the body of Cordelia in his arms. Mad with grief, Lear bends over Cordelia's body, looking for a sign of life.

The strain overcomes Lear and he falls dead on top of his daughter. Kent declares that he will follow his master into the afterlife and the noble Edgar becomes the ruler of Britain.

### **2.3.3 *King Lear*: List of Characters:**

**Lear, King of Britain** : A mythical king of pre-Christian Britain, well-known in the folk lore of Shakespeare's day. Lear is a foolish king who intends to divide his kingdom among his three daughters.

**Cordelia** : Lear's youngest daughter who speaks the truth.

**The King of France and the Duke of Burgundy** : They are both Cordelia's suitors, but the King of France marries her.

**Regan and Goneril** : Lear's selfish daughters who flatter him in order to gain his wealth and power.

**Duke of Albany** : Goneril's husband whose sympathy for Lear turns him against his wife.

**Duke of Cornwall** : Regan's husband who joins his wife in her devious scheme to destroy King Lear and usurp his power.

**Earl of Gloucester** : In the subplot, Gloucester's afflictions with his sons parallel those of Lear's with his daughters.

**Edgar** : The legitimate son of Gloucester.

**Edmund** : The illegitimate son of Gloucester who stops at nothing to gain power.

**Earl of Kent** : Kent is banished by King Lear for trying to intervene when Lear disinherits Cordelia.

**Fool** : The king's professional court jester whose witty and prophetic remarks are a wise commentary on Lear's shortsightedness.

**Oswald** : Goneril's steward who attempts to kill Gloucester.

**Act-wise Summary:**

## **2.4 Section I**

### **2.4.1 Act I Scene 1 : King Lear's Palace**

Gloucester and Kent, loyal to King Lear, objectively discuss his division of the kingdom (as Lear is preparing to step down) and to which dukes, Cornwall and Albany, they believe it will equally fall. Kent is introduced to Gloucester's illegitimate son, Edmund. Gloucester nonchalantly admits that the boy's breeding has been his charge ever since impregnating another woman soon after his legitimate son, Edgar, was born. Kent is pleased to meet Edmund. Gloucester mentions that Edmund has been nine years in military service and will return shortly.

Lear enters and sends Gloucester to find France and Burgundy, Cordelia's suitors. He then begins to discuss the partitioning of Britain he has devised to each of his three daughters and their husbands. Lear decides to ask each of his daughters to express how much they love him before he hands over their piece of the kingdom. As oldest, Goneril speaks first, expressing her love as all encompassing. Regan adds that she is enemy to other joys. Lear gives each their parcel, wishing them well. Cordelia, as the youngest and most liked daughter, is saved the choicest piece of land. However, she responds to her father's request by saying she has nothing to add. She loves only as much as her obligation entitles and will save some of her love for a husband. Lear is enraged and hurt. After giving her a few chances, he strips Cordelia of any title or relation. Kent intercedes on her behalf but he too is estranged by Lear. Kent cries that honesty will continue to be his guide in any kingdom.

Cordelia's suitors enter. Lear apprises them of Cordelia's new state of non-inheritance. Burgundy cannot accept her under the circumstances, but France finds her more appealing and takes her as his wife. Cordelia is not unhappy to leave her sisters and leaves with France. Goneril and Regan conspire to take rule away from Lear quickly as he is becoming more unreasonable.

#### **2.4.2 Scene II: A Hall in the Duke of Gloucester's Castle**

The scene centers around Edmund, at first alone on stage, crying out against his position as bastard to the material world. He is envious of Edgar, the legitimate son, and wishes to gain what he has by forging a treasonous letter concerning Gloucester from Edgar. Gloucester enters, amazed at the events which have occurred during the last scene. He wishes to know why Edmund is hiding a letter and demands to see it. He shrewdly acts as if he is embarrassed to show it to Gloucester and continually makes excuses for Edgar's apparent behavior. Gloucester reads the letter detailing "Edgar's" call to Edmund to take their father's land from him. Edmund asks that he not to make too quick a judgment before they talk to Edgar as perhaps he is simply testing Edmund. He suggests forming a meeting where Edmund can ask Edgar about his proposals while Gloucester listens in secret. Gloucester agrees, musing on the effects of nature and its predictions. He leaves directly before Edgar enters. Edmund brings up the astronomical predictions he had discussed with Gloucester and alerts Edmund that Gloucester is very upset with him, though he knows not why. Edmund offers to take Edgar back to his lodging until he can bring he and Gloucester together and advises him to go armed. Edgar leaves and Edmund notes that he will soon take his due through wit.

#### **2.4.3 Scene III: Goneril and Albany's Palace**

Third Scene reintroduces Goneril, as she is outraged by the offenses she contends Lear has been showing her since moving into her residence. He has struck Oswald for criticizing his fool, his knights are riotous and so on, she claims. Lear is out hunting. Goneril commands Oswald to allow her privacy from Lear and to treat Lear with "weary negligence". She does not want him to be happy, hoping that he will move to Regan's where she knows he will face the same contempt. She demands Oswald to treat his knights coldly as well. She leaves to write Regan.

#### **2.4.4 Scene IV: A Hall in Goneril and Albany's Palace:**

Kent enters, disguised and hoping to serve in secret as a servant to Lear so that he can help him though he is condemned. Lear accepts to try him as a servant. Oswald comes in quickly before exiting again curtly. A knight tells Lear that Goneril is not well and that Oswald answered him curtly as well. The knight fears Lear is being treated wrongly. Lear had blamed himself for any coldness but agrees to look into a problem in Goneril's household. Lear's fool has hidden himself since Cordelia's

departure so Lear sends the knight for him. Oswald reenters, showing Lear the negligence Goneril had suggested. Lear and Kent strike him, endearing Kent in Lear's eyes. Oswald exits as Fool enters. Fool persistently mocks and ridicules Lear for his actions in scene i, his mistreatment of Cordelia, trust in Goneril and Regan, and giving up of his authority. He calls Lear himself a fool, noting he has given away all other titles. The fool notes that he is punished by Lear if he lies, punished by the household if he speaks the truth, and often punished for staying silent.

Goneril harps on the trouble Lear and his retinue are causing, such as the insolence of Fool and the riotous behaviour of the knights. She states that he is not showing her the proper respect and consideration by allowing these actions to occur. Lear is incredulous. Goneril continues by adding that as Lear's large, frenzied train cannot be controlled she will have to ask him to keep fewer than his hundred knights. Outraged, Lear admits that Goneril's offense makes Cordelia's seem small. As Albany enters, Lear curses Goneril with infertility or, in its stead, a thankless child. He then finds that his train has already been halved and again rages against the incredible impudence Goneril has shown him. He angrily leaves for Regan's residence. Albany does not approve of Goneril's behaviour and is criticized by her for being weak. Goneril sends Oswald with a letter to her sister, detailing her fear that Lear is dangerous and should be curtailed as soon as possible.

#### **2.4.5 Scene V: A Hall in Goneril and Albany's Palace**

Impatient, Lear sends the disguised Kent to bring letters to Gloucester. The Fool wisely warns that Regan will likely act no better than her sister had. He criticizes Lear for giving away his own home and place, using examples such as a snail carrying his shell. Lear recognizes he will have to subdue his fatherly instincts toward Regan as well. Fool points out that Lear has gotten old before he is wise. Lear cries out, praying that he will not go mad.

#### **2.4.6 Key Words:**

1. **opulent** : rich and superior in quality
2. **propinquity** : the property of being close together
3. **infirmity** : the state of being weak in health or body
4. **beseech** : ask for or request earnestly

5. **benison** : a spoken blessing
6. **choleric** : easily moved to anger
7. **discord** : strife resulting from a lack of agreement
8. **malediction** : the act of calling down a curse that invokes evil
9. **dissipation** : breaking up and scattering by dispersion
10. **breach** : a failure to perform some promised act or obligation
11. **upbraid** : express criticism towards
12. **ceremonious** : characterized by pomp and stately display
13. **abatement** : an interruption in the intensity or amount of something
14. **dotage** : mental infirmity as a consequence of old age
15. **kin** : group of people related by blood or marriage

#### **2.4.7 Check Your Progress:**

##### **A. Answer the following questions in one word, sentence or phrase:**

1. Why has King Lear called his family together in the first scene?
2. What does Edmund tell Edgar about his father?
3. What kind of servant is Oswald?
4. Where is Edgar instructed to go?
5. Who are the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Cornwall?

##### **B. Fill in the Blanks:**

1. Oswald is defiant and treats the King with .....
2. Goneril tells her father that his train of followers are unruly and.....
3. Lear says .....will take him in.
4. Goneril reduces Lear's followers by .....
5. The..... acts as an honest commentary on the King's fears.

**C. Choose the correct alternative:**

1. The Fool thinks .....will be exactly like her sister.  
a) Regan            b) Cordelia            c) Goneril            d) Elizabeth
2. ....feels he has not treated Cordelia properly.  
a) Lear            b) the Fool            c) Edgar            d) Edmund
3. The Fool is.....Lear for giving his kingdom to his daughters.  
a) censuring            b) praising            c) appreciating            d) admitting
4. Lear would like to take Goneril's half of .....back.  
a) the property            b) the money            c) the estate            d) the kingdom
5. Kent, the disguised servant of King Lear, is sent to the city of Gloucester with..... for Regan.  
a) a letter            b) a message            c) a fool            d) a reward

**2.5. Section II :**

**2.5.1 Act II: Scene I : Gloucester's castle**

Act II begins with a return to the secondary plot of Edmund, Edgar, and Gloucester. Edmund speaks with the courtier, Curan, who advises him that Regan and Cornwall will arrive shortly at Gloucester's castle. He also passes on the gossip that there may soon be a war between Cornwall and Albany. After Curan leaves, Edmund expresses his delight over the news he has learned as he can use that in his plot. Edgar enters and Edmund cleverly asks if he has offended Cornwall or Albany. Edgar says he has not. Edmund cries that he hears Gloucester coming and forces Edgar to draw his sword with him. Telling Edgar to flee, Edmund then wounds himself with his sword before calling out to Gloucester for help. Gloucester arrives quickly and sends servants to chase down the villain. Edmund explains that he would not allow Edgar to persuade him into murdering their father causing Edgar to slash him with his sword. He continues that Edgar threatened him and by no means intended to permit Edmund, an "unpossessing bastard", to stop him from his evil plot. Gloucester is indignant and claims that Edgar will be captured and punished. He promises that Edmund will become the heir of his land.



At this point, Cornwall and Regan enter the scene, wondering if the gossip they had heard about Edgar is correct. Gloucester confirms it is. Edmund cleverly confirms Regan's fear that Edgar was acting as part of Lear's riotous knights. Cornwall acknowledges the good act Edmund has done for Gloucester and promises to take him into their favour. After Gloucester and Edmund thank them, Regan explains why she and Cornwall have come to Gloucester's castle. She had received a letter from Goneril and so had left home to avoid Lear. She asks for Gloucester's assistance.

### **2.5.2 Scene II: In front of Gloucester's castle**

Oswald, Goneril's servant, and Kent, still disguised as Lear's servant Caius, meet at Gloucester's castle after first trekking to Cornwall's residence with messages. Oswald does not first recognize Kent but Kent recognizes him and responds to him curtly with curses and name-calling. He claims that Oswald comes with letters against the King and sides with his evil daughter. He calls Oswald to draw his sword at which Oswald cries out for help. The noise brings in Edmund, Cornwall, Regan, Gloucester, and some servants.

When asked what the commotion is, Kent continues to insult Oswald, who is breathless. Oswald claims that he has spared Kent because of his grey beard at which Kent scoffs. He describes that Oswald is like a dog, ignorantly following a master. To Cornwall's incredulosity, Kent says that he does not like the look of his face. Oswald explains that Kent had no reason to strike him in Lear's company or to draw on him at Gloucester's. Kent refers to Cornwall and Regan as cowards and they call for the stocks. Regan comments that they should leave him not only until noon, as Cornwall had suggested, but for over a day. Gloucester protests but is overruled. After the others have exited, Gloucester apologizes to Kent and admits that the Duke is to be blamed. Alone, Kent muses over a letter he has received from Cordelia, implying that she knows he has taken disguise and promises to try to save her father from the evil of her sisters. Kent recognizes he is at the bottom of luck. He falls asleep.

### **2.5.3 Scene III: Out on the heath/moor**

Scene iii is solely a soliloquy by Edgar discussing his transformation into poor Tom, the beggar. He tells us that he has just missed being hunted as he heard them coming for him and hid in a hollow tree. In order to remain safe, he proposes to take

on "the basest and most poorest shape", that of a beggar. He covers himself with dirt and filth, ties his hair in knots, strips off much of his clothing, and pricks his skin with pins and nails and so on. He no longer resembles Edgar.

#### **2.5.4 Scene IV: In front of Gloucester's castle, Kent in the stocks**

Lear enters the scene with his fool and a gentleman, who tells him that he was not advised of Regan and Cornwall's removal to Gloucester's castle. They come upon Kent, still in the stocks. Lear does not believe that Regan and Cornwall would commit such an offense to Lear has to place his servant in the stocks but Kent reassures him that they have. He stresses that their punishment came only because he was angered enough by Oswald's presence and his letter to Regan to draw his sword upon Oswald. Fool comments on human nature, retorting that children are only kind to their parents when they are rich and that the poor are never given the chance for money. Lear feels ill and goes to look for Regan. Kent asks why Lear's train has shrunk to which Fool replies that many have lost interest in Lear as he has lost his riches and power. He advises all that are not fools to do the same.

Lear returns, amazed that Regan and Cornwall refuse to speak with him over weariness from travel. Gloucester attempts to excuse them by mentioning Gloucester's "fiery quality". Lear is enraged by this excuse. Although he momentarily considers that Gloucester may truly be ill, he is overwhelmed by anger and threatens to beat a drum by their door until they speak to him. Gloucester leaves to get them and shortly returns with them. They appear to act cordial at first to Lear and set Kent free. Lear is cautious toward Regan and tells her that if she is not truly glad to see him he would disown her and her dead mother. He expresses his grief to her over his stay with Goneril and Goneril's demands on him. Regan replies that he is very old and should trust their counsel. She advises him to return to Goneril and ask for her forgiveness as she is not yet prepared to care for him. Lear admits that he is old but pleads with Regan to care for him. She again refuses even with his arguments that Goneril has cut his train and his subsequent curses of Goneril. Regan is horrified. Lear pleads with her to act better than her sister. He finally asks who put Kent in the stocks.

Goneril arrives, as forecast in a letter to her sister. Lear calls on the gods to help him and is upset that Regan takes Goneril by the hand. He asks again how Kent was put in the stocks and Cornwall replies that that it was his order and Lear is appalled.

Regan pleads again for him to return to Goneril's but he still holds hope that Regan will allow him all hundred of his train. However, Regan assures him that she has no room for the knights either and alerts him that he should only bring twenty-five with him after his month stay with Goneril. Lear replies that he has been betrayed after giving his daughter's his all, his land, authority and his care. He decides to go then with Goneril as she must love him more if she will agree to fifty knights. At this point, Goneril diminishes her claim, asking him if needs twenty-five, ten, or five? Regan adds that he does not even need one. Lear cries that need is not the issue. He compares his argument to Regan's clothes which are too scant for warmth. She wears them not for need but for vanity just as a King keeps many things he does not need for other reasons. He hopes that he will not cry and fears that he will go mad. He leaves with Fool, Kent, and Gloucester. A storm is heard approaching and Cornwall calls them to withdraw. Regan and Goneril discuss how it is Lear's own fault if they leave him out in the storm. Gloucester asks them to reconsider but is again overruled. Regan has the house boarded up.

### 2.5. 5 Key Words:

1. **manifold** : many and varied; having many features or forms
2. **dullard** : a person who is not very bright or interesting
3. **riotous** : characterized by unrest or disorder or insubordination
4. **knave** : a deceitful and unreliable scoundrel
5. **base** : of low birth or station
6. **clamorous** : conspicuously and offensively loud
7. **brazen** : face with defiance or impudence
8. **ruffian** : a cruel and brutal fellow
9. **renege** : fail to fulfill a promise or obligation
10. **visage** : the human face
11. **saucy** : improperly forward or bold
12. **verity** : conformity to reality or actuality
13. **malice** : the quality of threatening evil

**14. naught :** a quantity of no importance

**15. depraved :** deviating from what is considered moral or right or proper

### **2.5.6 Check Your Progress:**

#### **A. Answer the following questions in one word, sentence or phrase:**

1. Why does Edmund ask Edgar to raise his sword against him?
2. Why does Gloucester intend to publish Edgar's picture throughout the kingdom?
3. Why is Kent violently angry at Oswald, Goneril's steward?
4. Does Oswald pretend that Kent is a total stranger to him? What proves him wrong?
5. What does the Fool beg Lear to do to get out of the storm?

#### **B. Fill in the Blanks:**

1. The King cannot understand the reason for..... and Regan's absence on the night of his expected arrival.
2. The King sees....., his messenger, in the stocks. He has been placed there by Cornwall.
3. The Fool says that those who..... for gain "Will pack when it begins to rain,/ And leave thee in the storm."
4. Cornwall and..... say they are tired and sick from travelling all night.
5. Lear and ..... have quarreled, and he wants Regan to take him to live with her.

#### **C. Choose the correct alternatives:**

1. .... remains stoic about putting the King's servant in the stocks.  
a) Cornwall      b) Cordelia      c) Goneril      d) Elizabeth
2. .... reads a letter from Cordelia.  
a) Regan      b) Cordelia      c) Goneril      d) Kent
3. Edgar has been living in the hollow of .....

- a) a house      b) a pipe      c) a tree      d) a kingdom
4. Edgar will ..... himself as Tom o' Bedlam.  
a) blame      b) disguise      c) transform      d) appear
5. Edmund is called Gloucester's .....  
a) disloyal and unnatural      b) loyal and natural boy  
c) disloyal and natural      d) loyal and unnatural

## **2.6 Section III:**

### **2.6.1 Act III Scene I: A Heath in the Middle of a Storm**

As it continues to storm, Kent enters the stage asking who else is there and where is the King. A gentleman, one of Lear's knights, answers, describing the King as struggling and becoming one with the raging elements of nature. The King has been left alone except for his fool. Kent recognizes the gentleman and fills him in on the events he has learned concerning the Dukes and the news from France. He explains that a conflict has grown between Albany and Cornwall which is momentarily forgotten because they are united against Lear. He then mentions that French spies and soldiers have moved onto the island, nearly ready to admit openly to their invasion. He urges the gentleman to hurry to Dover where he will find allies to whom he can give an honest report of the treatment to the King and his declining health. Kent gives him his purse and a ring to confirm his honour and to show to Cordelia if he sees her. They move out to look for Lear before the gentleman leaves on his mission.

### **2.6.2 Scene II: Another Part of the Stormy Heath**

We meet Lear, raging against the storm, daring the storm to break up the Earth. Fool pleads with him to dodge his pride and ask for his daughters' forgiveness so that he can take shelter in the castle. Lear notes that the storm, unlike his daughters, owes him nothing and has no obligation to treat him any better. Still, the storm is joining to help his ungrateful daughters in their unnecessary punishing of him. The fool says he is foolish, nevertheless, to reside in the house of of the storm but Lear responds that he will say nothing to his daughters.

Kent enters, pleased to have found the King, and remarks that he has never witnessed a more violent storm. Lear cries that the gods will now show who has committed any wrongs by their treatment in the storm and Kent pushes him toward a cave where they can find a little shelter. Lear agrees to go, recognizing the cold which must be ravaging he and his fool. Before entering the hovel, Fool prophecies that when the abuses of England are reformed, the country will come into great confusion.

### **2.6.3 Scene III: Gloucester's Castle**

Gloucester and Edmund speak in confidence. Gloucester complains of the unnatural dealings of Cornwall and Regan, taking over his home and forbidding him to help or appeal for Lear. Edmund feigns agreement. Taking him further in confidence, Gloucester alerts him to the division between Albany and Cornwall. He then tells him that he has received a letter, which he has locked in the closet because of its dangerous contents, divulging that a movement has started to avenge Lear at home. Gloucester plans to go find him and aid him until the forces arrive to help. He tells Edmund to accompany the Duke so that his absence is not felt and if they ask for him to report that he went to bed ill. Gloucester notes that he is risking his life but if he can save the King, his death would not be in vain. After he departs, Edmund tells the audience that he will alert Cornwall immediately of Gloucester's plans and the treasonous letter. The young will gain, he comments, where the old have faltered.

### **2.6.4 Scene IV: On the Heath, in Front of a Hovel/Hut**

Kent and Lear find their way to the cave, where Lear asks to be left alone. He notes that the storm rages harsher in his own mind and body due to the "filial ingratitude" he has been forced to endure. Thinking it may lead to madness, Lear tries not to think of his daughters' betrayal. Feeling the cruelty of the elements, Lear remarks that he has taken too little care of the poor who often do not have shelter from such storms in life. The fool enters the cave first and is frightened by the presence of Edgar disguised as poor Tom. Edgar enters, speaking in confused jargon and pointing to the foul fiend who bothers him greatly. Lear decides that Tom must have been betrayed by daughters in order to have fallen to such a state of despair and madness. Kent attempts to tell Lear that Tom has no daughters, but Lear can comprehend no other reason. Fool notes that the cold night would turn them all into madmen. Lear finds Tom intriguing and asks him about his life, to which Edgar

replies that Tom was a serving man who was ruined by a woman he had loved. Lear realizes that man is no more than what they have been stripped to and begins to take off his clothes before Fool stops him.

Gloucester finds his way to the cave. He questions the King's company before remarking that he and Lear must both hate what their bodies have given birth to, namely Edgar, Regan, and Goneril. Although he has been barred from securing shelter in his own castle for Lear, Gloucester entreats the King to come with him to a better shelter. Lear wishes to stay and talk with Tom, terming him a philosopher. Kent urges Gloucester to plead with Lear to go, but Gloucester notes it is no surprise that Lear's wits are not about him when his own daughters seek his death. Lear is persuaded to follow Gloucester when they agree to allow Tom to accompany him.

### **2.6.5 Scene V: Gloucester's Castle**

Cornwall and Edmund converse over the information Edmund has shared with him. Edmund plays the part of a tortured son doing his duty for the kingdom. Cornwall muses that Edgar's disloyalty is better understood in terms of his own father's betrayal. Handing over the letter Gloucester had received, Edmund cries out wishing that he were not the filial traitor. Cornwall makes Edmund the new Earl of Gloucester and demands he find where his father is hiding. In an aside, Edmund hopes he will find Gloucester aiding the King to further incriminate him although it would be greater filial ingratitude on his part. Cornwall offers himself as a new and more loving father to Edmund.

### **2.6.6 Scene VI: A Chamber in a Farmhouse near the Castle**

Gloucester finds the group slightly better shelter and then heads off to get assistance. Edgar speaks of the foul fiend and Fool tells the King a rhyme, concluding that the madman is the man who has too greatly indulged his own children. Lear pretends to hold a trial for his evil daughters, placing Edgar, the fool, and Kent on the bench to try them. Lear tries Goneril first and then Regan before crying that someone had accepted a bribe and allowed one to escape. Kent calls for him to remain patient as he had often been in the past and Edgar notes in an aside that he has nearly threatened his disguise with tears. He tells Lear that he will punish the daughters himself. Lear appreciates the gesture and claims that he will take Tom as one of the hundred in his train if he will agree to change his seemingly Persian garments. As Gloucester returns, he urges Kent to keep the King in his arms due to

the death threats circulating. There is a caravan waiting which will take Lear to Dover and safety if they hurry. Edgar is left on stage and soliloquizes that the King's pains are so much greater than his own and he will pledge himself to helping him escape safely.

### **2.6.7 Scene VII: Gloucester's castle**

Cornwall calls for Goneril to bring the letter concerning France's invasion to her husband and calls to his servants to seek out the traitor, Gloucester. Regan and Goneril call for tortuous punishment. Edmund is asked to accompany Goneril so as not to be present when his father is brought in. Oswald enters and alerts the court to the news of Gloucester's successful move of the King to Dover. As Goneril and Edmund depart, Cornwall sends servants in search of Gloucester. Gloucester enters with servants and Cornwall commands that he be bound to a chair. Regan plucks his beard as he protests that they are his guests and friends. They interrogate him on the letter he received from France and his part helping King Lear. Gloucester responds that he received the letter from an objective third-party but he is not believed. He admits that he sent the King to Dover, explaining that he was not safe out in the terrible storm nor in the company of those who would leave him in such conditions. He hopes that Lear's horrific children will have revenge light upon them. Cornwall answers that he will see no such thing, blinding one of his eyes.

A servant speaks up in Gloucester's defense and is quickly stabbed by Regan using the sword Cornwall had drawn. Before the servant dies, he cries that Gloucester has one eye remaining to see harm come to the Duke and Duchess. Cornwall immediately blinds the other eye. Gloucester calls out for Edmund to help him in the time of peril to which Regan replies that it was Edmund who had alerted them to Gloucester's treachery. At this low point, Gloucester realizes the wrong he has shown Edgar if Edmund has done such evil. Regan has Gloucester thrown out of the castle and then helps Cornwall, who has received an injury, out of the room. Two servants discuss the incomprehensible evil of Cornwall and Regan, proposing to aid Gloucester in his blind stumbles. One of the servants leaves to find him while the other searches for ointments to sooth Gloucester's wounds.

### **2.6. 8 Key Words:**

1. **impetuous** : marked by violent force



2. **strive** : to exert much effort or energy
3. **cleave** : separate or cut with a tool, such as a sharp instrument
4. **rotundity** : the roundness of a 3-dimensional object
5. **servile** : relating to or involving slaves
6. **pernicious** : working or spreading in a hidden and usually injurious way
7. **affliction** : a state of great suffering and distress due to adversity
8. **vile** : causing or able to cause nausea
9. **contentious** : showing an inclination to disagree
10. **malady** : any unwholesome or desperate condition
11. **shun** : avoid and stay away from deliberately
12. **pelt** : attack and bombard with or as if with missiles
13. **quagmire** : a soft wet area of low-lying land that sinks underfoot
14. **pendulous** : hanging loosely or bending downward
15. **censure** : rebuke formally

#### **2.6.9 Check Your Progress:**

##### **A. Answer the following questions in one word, sentence or phrase:**

1. What news do France's spies bring regarding King Lear?
2. Where does Kent think Cordelia will be staying?
3. What does Kent tell the Gentleman to show Cordelia as proof of Kent's identity?
4. What does the Fool beg Lear to do to get out of the storm?
5. Who later joins Lear and the Fool in the storm?

##### **B. Fill in the Blanks:**

1. The Fool is Edgar's..... or legal partner.
2. Gloucester and Lear both have..... who seek their birth death.

3. Gloucester has come to find Lear and offer him food and shelter in..... near the castle.
3. Goneril and Regan are the defendants in Lear's.....
4. Lear chooses Edgar, disguised as....., as his "justicer."

**C. Choose correct alternative:**

1. Goneril is ..... by Edmund.  
a) accompanied   b) helped   c) taught   4) killed
2. Oswald tells Cornwall and Regan that the King and ..... of his knights are on their way to Dover.  
a) 36   b) 46   c) 56   d) 26
3. Cornwall says that it is..... for Edmund to observe the revenge they will take upon his traitorous father.  
a) not good   b) not wise   c) not bad   d) not legal
4. Gloucester is bound to..... and cross-examined.  
a) a cot   b) a bed   c) a chair   d) a tree
5. Cornwall's servant draws a sword in defense of Gloucester. He receives ..... for it.  
a) a fatal wound   b) a serious wound  
c) a bad injury   d) a big blow

## **2.7 Section IV**

### **2.7.1: Act IV Scene I: The heath**

Edgar is alone on stage soliloquizing about his fate. He seems more optimistic than earlier, hoping that he has seen the worst. This changes when Gloucester and an old man enters, displaying to Edgar the cruelty of Regan and Cornwall's punishment. Gloucester urges the old man aiding him to leave him, noting that his blindness should not affect him as "I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;/ I stumbled when I saw" (IV.1.18-19). He then laments the fool he has been toward his loyal son, Edgar. The old man tells him a mad beggarman is present to which Gloucester

replies that he cannot be too mad if he knows to beg. Ironically, he notes that his introduction to a madman the night before (who was poor Tom) had made him think of Edgar. This causes Edgar further pain. Gloucester again urges the old man to leave, commenting that poor Tom can lead him. He reasons that the time is such that madmen will lead the blind and tells the old man to meet them in a mile with new clothes for the beggar. The old man agrees to and leaves.

Edgar wishes he did not have to deceive his father but reasons that he must. He speaks in his poor Tom manner of all of the fiends whom have plagued him. Gloucester gives him his purse, hoping to even out some of the inequality which exists between them, and asks him to lead him to the summit of the high cliff in Dover and leave him there.

### **2.7.2 Scene II: In front of Albany's Palace**

Goneril and Edmund are en route to Goneril's home when Goneril asks Oswald why her husband has not met them. Oswald answers that Albany is a changed man. To all events Oswald expects he would be pleased by, he is upset and vice versa. The examples Oswald gives are the landing of the French army at which Albany smiled and Edmund's betrayal of Gloucester to which Albany was very displeased. Goneril is disgusted and sends Edmund back to Cornwall's with a kiss, telling him that she will have to become master of her household until she can become Edmund's mistress.

After Edmund's departure, Albany enters and greets Goneril with disgust toward her character and the events with which she and Regan have been involved. He notes that humanity is in danger because of people like her. Goneril responds that he is weak, idly sitting by and allowing the French to invade their land without putting up protest or guarding against traitors. He lacks ambition and wisdom. The woman form she takes, Albany proclaims, disguises the fiend which exists beneath and if it were not for this cover, he would wish to destroy her.

A messenger enters, conveying the news that Cornwall has died from the wound given him during the conflict with the servant who had stood up for Gloucester after one of his eye's had been blinded. In this manner, Albany learns of the treatment and subsequent blindness imparted to Gloucester by the hands of Regan and Cornwall. Though horrified, Albany remarks that the gods are at least conscious of justice and have already worked toward avenging the death of Gloucester by killing Cornwall.

The messenger then delivers a letter to Goneril from Regan. In an aside, Goneril comments that the news of Cornwall's death is bad for her in that it leaves Regan a widow so she could easily marry Edmund. However, it may be a positive event since it takes Cornwall's threat to her reign out of the picture. She leaves to read and answer the letter. Albany asks the messenger of Edmund's location when Gloucester was blinded. The messenger informs him that Edmund was with Goneril at the time but that Edmund knew of the events which were to take place because it was he who had informed on Gloucester's treason. Albany swears to fight for Gloucester who has loved the good king and received such horrible treatment.

### **2.7.3 Scene III: The French Camp near Dover**

We learn from Kent's conversation with a gentleman that the King of France has had to return to France for important business and has left the Marshal of France in charge. The gentleman informs him also of Cordelia's response to Kent's letter. She was very moved, lamenting against her sisters and their treatment of her father. Kent comments that the stars must control people's characters if one man and one woman could have children of such different qualities, like Cordelia and her sisters. Kent notifies the gentleman that Lear refuses to see Cordelia as he is ashamed of his behaviour toward her. The gentleman confirms that Albany and Cornwall's powers are advancing. Deciding to leave Lear with him, Kent goes off to handle confidential business.

### **2.7.4 Scene IV: The French Camp near Dover**

Pained, Cordelia laments the mad state of Lear and asks the doctor if there is a way to cure him. Rest might be the simple answer, the doctor replies, since Lear has been deprived of it. Cordelia prays for him and hopes that he will be revived. She must leave briefly on business for France.

### **2.7.5 Scene V: Gloucester's Castle**

Regan and Oswald discuss how Albany's powers are afoot. Oswald points out that Goneril is the better soldier and informs Regan that Edmund did not have a chance to speak with Albany. Regan asks what the letter which Oswald brought from Goneril for Edmund says but Oswald knows only that it must be of great importance. Regan regrets blinding Gloucester because allowing him to live arouses sympathy which results in more parties turned against Regan and her company. Stating that

Edmund has gone in search of Gloucester to put him out of his misery, she then claims that he is checking out the strength of the enemy forces. She urges Oswald to remain with her because the roads are dangerous. She is jealous of what she fears the contents of the letter may be, namely entreaties to Edmund for his love. Advising him to remind Edmund of the matters he had discussed with her considering their marriage, Regan allows Oswald to continue. Oswald agrees to halt Gloucester if he comes upon him and thus show to whom his loyalty lies.

### **2.7.6 Scene VI: Fields near Dover**

Edgar leads Gloucester to Dover and pretends they are walking up the steep hill Gloucester wished to be taken to. Edgar says that it is steep and he can hear the ocean, noting that Gloucester's other senses must have grown dim as well if he cannot feel these things. Gloucester comments that poor Tom's speech seems much more elevated than before so Edgar attempts to drop back into his beggarman dialect. Edgar says they have reached the highest spot and Gloucester asks to be placed where he is standing. He then takes out another purse for Tom and requests to be left. Thinking Tom has gone, Gloucester prays to the gods to bless Edgar and then wishes the world farewell and falls forward of the cliff, he believes. Edgar approaches again as another man entirely, playing along with the idea that Gloucester has fallen off the high cliff and survived, calling it a miracle. Gloucester believes what the man says, though he cannot look up to verify. Edgar helps him up and questions the thing which left him at the top of the cliff, making it sound like it was not an actual man but a spirit. Gloucester is skeptical at first but realizes that would make sense for why he lived.

Stumbling onto the scene is Lear, still mad and wearing weeds. He rambles on about being king and then bitterly speaks of Goneril and Regan agreeing to all he said and then stabbing him in the back. Gloucester recognizes the voice and Lear confirms he is the King. He lectures about Gloucester's adultery being no cause to fear because his bastard son treated him better than Lear's own daughters. He then rages on the evil nature of women in his daughter's shapes, similar to Centaurs but fiends from the waist down instead of horses. Gloucester is saddened by this diatribe and wonders if Lear knows him. He does, but refuses to be saddened by Gloucester's blindness since one sees the world better through other venues than the eyes. In his ranting, Lear touches on such issues as the artifice of politicians and others in

positions of authority who cover up their evil-doing and self-centered ambition with wealth and fashion. Edgar notices the sanity in his madness. Lear then identifies Gloucester and rages bitterly against the state of the world which has made them as they are.

A gentleman enters and, glad to find Lear, calls for them to put a hand upon him. Lear is afraid he is being taken prisoner but they are the attendants of Cordelia and happy to follow Lear as King. Still confused and mad, Lear runs out so they will not catch him. The gentleman informs Edgar that the army is approaching speedily, except for Cordelia's men who are on a special purpose and have moved on. When he leaves, Edgar assures Gloucester that he will lead him to a biding place. Oswald enters, pleased to have found Gloucester, and draws his sword upon him. Edgar interposes, using a rustic accent to play the part of a peasant. They fight and Oswald falls. Before dying, Oswald pleads with Edgar to take his purse and deliver his letter to Edmund, "Earl of Gloucester". Edgar reads the letter which is from Goneril, pleading with Edmund to slay Albany so Goneril can be free and they can be together. Edgar vows to defend Albany and defeat the lechers. Gloucester muses that he is self-centered to worry about his plight when Lear is mad. He wishes though that he too were mad in order to numb the pain he feels.

### **2.7.7 Scene VII: A Tent in the French Camp, Lear Asleep in the Bed**

Cordelia thanks Kent for the goodness he has shown her father and the bravery he has adopted. She asks him to discard his disguise but he knows that he will be able to work better for Lear if he remains disguised. The Doctor remarks that Lear has slept for a long while so that they may try waking him. Lear is brought in, still sleeping. Hoping to resolve the horrors committed by her sisters, Cordelia kisses Lear and reflects on the vileness and ingratitude of her sisters, treating Lear worse than a dog by shutting their doors on him in the storm. Lear wakes and Cordelia addresses him. Lear feels awakened from the grave and wishes they had left him. Very drowsy at first, Lear thinks Cordelia is a spirit and then realizes he should know her and Kent (disguised) but has difficulty putting his memory together. Finally he recognizes Cordelia, to her delight, but thinks he is in France. The Doctor advises them to give Lear his space so Cordelia takes him for a walk. The gentleman remains and asks Kent if the rumours of Cornwall's death and Edgar's position in Germany

with the Earl of Kent are true. Kent confirms the first, but leaves the latter unanswered. The gentleman warns that the battle to come will be bloody.

### 2.7.8 Key Words:

1. **wanton** : behave extremely cruelly and brutally
2. **ordinance** : an authoritative rule
3. **usurp** : seize and take control without authority
4. **wither** : lose freshness, vigor, or vitality
5. **barbarous** : able or disposed to inflict pain or suffering
6. **marshal** : a military officer of highest rank
7. **casualty** : someone injured or killed in a military engagement
8. **repose** : freedom from activity
9. **remediate** : set straight or right
10. **incite** : urge on; cause to act
11. **ado** : a rapid active commotion
12. **descry** : catch sight of
13. **beguile** : influence by slyness
14. **pell-mell**: with undue hurry and confusion
15. **scald** : the act of burning with steam or hot water

### 2.7.9 Check Your Progress:

#### A. Answer the following questions in one word, sentence or phrase:

1. Who leads Gloucester to Dover?
2. What is Edgar's mood in his soliloquy?
3. How does Edgar feel when he sees his blind father?
4. What does Gloucester tell the old man to bring for Edgar?
5. How does the old man respond to Gloucester's request for clothes?

**B. Fill in the blanks:**

1. .... accuses Goneril of cruel treatment of her father, the King.
2. Goneril brings news of the impending invasion by.....
3. Goneril sees..... manliness as superior to Albany's.
4. Albany describes Goneril as a devil disguised in.....
5. The messenger brings news of the.....

**C. Choose correct alternative:**

1. Edgar feels encouraged, thinking that the ..... is over.  
a) worst                      b) best                      c) danger                      d) threat
2. Albany accuses Goneril of ..... treatment of her father, the King.  
a) bad                      b) cruel                      c) ill                      d) good
3. The "holy water" is a metaphor for..... tears.  
a) Albany's                      b) Goneril's                      c) Edgar's                      d) Cordelia's
4. The "dog-hearted daughters" are Goneril and .....  
a) Edgar                      b) Cordelia                      c) Regan                      d) Gloucester
5. Edgar places his blind father safely in the shadow of .....  
a) a house                      b) a tree                      c) a bush                      d) a forest

## **2.8 Section V**

### **2.8.1 Act V Scene I: The British Camp near Dover**

Edmund sends an officer to learn of Albany's plans since he has become so fickle. Regan approaches Edmund, sweetly asking him if he loves her sister and if he has ever found his way into her bed. He replies that though he loves in "honored love" he has done nothing adulterous or to break their vow. Warning him to stay away from Goneril, Regan threatens that she will not put up with her sister's entreaties to him. Goneril and Albany enter as Goneril tells the audience that her battle for Edmund is more important to her than the battle with France. Albany informs Regan of Cordelia and Lear's reunion. Regan wonders why he brings up the



subject of the King and his grievances. Goneril points out that they must join together against France and ignore their personal conflicts.

As the two camps separate, Regan pleads with Goneril to accompany her instead of the other camp where Edmund will be present. Goneril refuses at first but then sees Regan's purpose and agrees. Edgar finds Albany alone and asks him to read the letter to Edmund from Goneril he had intercepted. Though he cannot stay while Albany reads it, he prays him to let the herald cry when the time is right and he will appear again. Albany leaves to read it when Edmund reenters to report of the oncoming enemy. In soliloquy, Edmund wonders what he will do about pledging his love to both sisters. He could take both of them, one, or neither. He decides to use Albany while in battle and after winning, to allow Goneril to kill him. Moreover, he plans to forbid any mercy Albany may show Cordelia and Lear because his rule of the state is his highest priority.

### **2.8.2 Scene II: The British Camp near Dover**

The army of France, accompanied by Cordelia and Lear, crosses the stage with their battle colours and drums and exits. Next, Edgar and Gloucester enter. Edgar offers Gloucester rest under a nearby tree while he goes into battle. The noises of the battle begin and end, at which time Edgar reenters the stage to speak with Gloucester. He calls for Gloucester to come with him as Cordelia and Lear have lost and been taken captive. Entertaining ideas of suicide again, Gloucester tries to remain but Edgar talks him into accompanying him, noting that men must endure the ups and downs of life.

### **2.8.3 Scene III: The British Camp near Dover**

Edmund holds Cordelia and Lear prisoner. Trying to keep Lear's spirits up, Cordelia tells him that they are not the first innocent people who have had to endure the worst and she will be happy to endure for the King. She asks if they will see Goneril and Regan but Lear rejects that notion. He wants them to spend their days in prison enjoying their company, conversing and singing and playing and debating the "mystery of things". As they are taken away at Edmund's command, Lear encourages Cordelia to dry her tears and enjoy their reunion as they will never again be separated. Edmund demands the subordinate captain follow Lear and Cordelia to prison and carry out the punishment detailed by his written instructions. Threatened with demotion, the captain agrees.

Albany praises Edmund for his work in the battle and in obtaining his prisoners. He then commands Edmund to turn Cordelia and Lear over into his protection. Edmund replies that he thought it best to send Lear and Cordelia into retention so that they did not arouse too much sympathy and start a riot, but he assures Albany that they will be ready the next day to appear before him. Albany warns Edmund to remember that he is only a subordinate to which Regan replies that Edmund is in fact her husband and thus an equal. Goneril proclaims that he is more honourable on his own merit than as Regan's partner. Not feeling well, Regan implores Edmund to accept all of her property and herself. Goneril asks if she means to be intimate with him to which Albany retorts that the matter does not relate to her. Edmund disagrees and Regan calls for him to take her title. Albany interrupts, arresting Edmund for treason and barring any relationship between Goneril and Edmund. He calls Edmund to duel, throwing down his glove. Edmund throws down his glove as well and Albany alerts him that all of his soldiers have been sent away. Feeling very ill, Regan is taken off.

The herald reads aloud Albany's notice, calling for anyone who holds that Edmund is a traitor to come support that claim. The trumpet is sounded three times and Edgar, still disguised, appears after the last. Asked why he has responded, Edgar states that he is a noble adversary who desires to fight with Edmund, a traitor to "thy gods, thy brother, and thy father". They fight and Edmund falls. Albany calls for him to be spared while Goneril supports Edmund for fighting an unknown man when not required, noting that he cannot be defeated. Albany quiets her with the letter she wrote desiring Edmund's hand but Goneril retorts that as she is the ruler, he can bring no punishment upon her. She leaves before he can take command over her. Dying, Edmund asks his conqueror to reveal himself. Edgar tells of his identity and their relation, noting that Edmund has rightly fallen to the bottom as a result of his father's adulterous act, which also cost Gloucester his sight. Edmund agrees that he has come full circle and Albany rejoices in Edgar's true identity, sorrowful that he had ever worked against him or his father. Edgar describes his disguise and how he led his blinded father, protecting him and sheltering him. He had never revealed his identity until a half hour before, telling his father the entire story. Gloucester was so overwhelmed by the news that his heart gave out. Furthermore, after learning who Edgar was, Kent revealed his identity to Edgar, embracing him and spilling all of the

horrid details of Lear's state and treatment. Edgar then learned that Kent too was dying but was forced to rush off as he heard the trumpet call.

A gentleman runs onto the stage with a bloody knife, informing the company that it was just pulled from Goneril's heart. She had stabbed herself after admitting that she had poisoned Regan. Edmund notes that as he had been contracted to both sisters, now all three would die. Albany calls for the gentleman to produce the bodies and comments on the immediate judgment of the heavens. Kent enters, hoping to say goodbye to Lear. Realizing that he has forgotten about the safety of Cordelia and Lear in the excitement, Albany demands Edmund to tell of their circumstances. Edmund admits that he had ordered their murders but as he hopes to do some good, he sends an officer to try to halt Cordelia's hanging. He and Goneril had commanded it look like a suicide. Lear stumbles in, carrying the body of Cordelia. Overcome by grief, Lear rages against the senseless killing of Cordelia, admitting that he killed the guard who was hanging her. Lear recognizes Kent, though he can hardly see, and Kent informs him that he has been with him all along, disguised as his servant Caius. It is not clear if Lear ever understands. Kent tells him that his evil daughters have brought about their own deaths. A messenger enters to tell them that Edmund has died. Albany tries to set things right, reinstating Lear's absolute rule and Kent and Edgar's authority, promising to right all of the good and punish the evil. Lear continues to mourn the loss of Cordelia and then dies himself. Albany thus gives Kent and Edgar the rule of the kingdom to which Kent replies that he must move on to follow his master, leaving Edgar as the new ruler.

#### **2.8.4 Key Words:**

1. **forfend** : prevent the occurrence of; prevent from happening
2. **incur** : receive a specified treatment
3. **devour** : destroy completely
4. **patrimony** : an inheritance coming by right of birth
5. **heinous** : extremely wicked, deeply criminal
6. **canker** : an ulcerlike sore
7. **adversary** : someone who offers opposition
8. **vanquish** : come out better in a competition, race, or conflict

9. **cozen** : cheat or trick
10. **arraign** : call before a court to answer an indictment
11. **puissant** : powerful
12. **reprieve** : postpone the punishment of a convicted criminal
13. **vex** : disturb the peace of mind of
14. **reprove** : take to task
15. **trifle** : something of small importance

### **2.8.5 Check Your Progress:**

#### **A. Answer the following questions in one word, sentence or phrase:**

1. Why is Albany concerned about the battle with France?
2. How does Albany finally resolve his dilemma about fighting the French?
3. To which sister has Edmund sworn his love?
4. Who joins Albany in the tent to talk about the upcoming battle with France?
5. Who delivers Goneril's letter to Albany?

#### **B. Fill in the blanks:**

1. Lear and Cordelia have been taken captive by..... .
2. Edgar delivers Goneril's..... to Albany.
3. Edgar appears on the call of..... to expose his half-brother Edmund as a villainous traitor.
4. Goneril and Edmund have planned to..... Albany..
5. Goneril poisons Regan and then kills herself with.....

#### **C. Choose correct alternative:**

1. Edmund has ordered that she be ..... The order is rescinded by Edmund, but it is too late.  
a) punished      b) jailed      c) hanged      d) poisoned
2. Albany appoints Edgar and Kent ..... the kingdom.

- a) to destroy      b) to restore      c) to spoil      d) defeat
3. .... plans to show no mercy to Lear and Cordelia.
- a) Edgar      b) Albany      c ) Edmund      d) Regan
4. Edgar tells his father that .....
1. Men must endure      2. Men must not endure
3. Men must intolocate      4. Men must be happy

## 2.9 Summary:

*King Lear* is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare. He based it on an old British story about a king named Leir or Lyr. The play might have been first performed in December 1606. It was first printed in 1608. It was printed again in 1623 in the First Folio. This is a collection of all of Shakespeare's plays. Many great actors over the years have played the part of King Lear. The play is about an old king named Lear. He wants to divide his land between his three daughters. To get the land, they must tell him how much they love him. His youngest daughter Cordelia will not say how much she does. She says words will not be able to describe her love. Lear gets angry at her and will not give her land, and says she is not his daughter anymore. He gives his land to his other daughters Regan and Goneril.

The king soon finds out that Regan and Goneril do not love him. They only wanted his land. Lear becomes very mad. The two daughters, and their husbands, throw him out of the land that is now theirs. The rest of the play is about Lear's trip around the land that was once his as he becomes insane.

## 2.10 Character Analysis:

### 2.10.1 King Lear

Lear is the protagonist, whose willingness to believe his older daughters' empty flattery leads to the deaths of many people. In relying on the test of his daughters' love, Lear demonstrates that he lacks common sense or the ability to detect his older daughters' falseness. Lear cannot recognize Cordelia's honesty amid the flattery, which he craves. The depth of Lear's anger toward Kent, his devoted follower, suggests excessive pride — Lear refuses to be wrong. Hubris leads Lear to make a serious mistake in judgment, while Lear's excessive anger toward Kent also suggests

the fragility of his emotional state. Hubris is a Greek term referring to excessive and destructive pride. In the ancient Greek world, hubris often resulted in the death of the tragic, heroic figure. This is clearly the case with Lear, who allows his excessive pride to destroy his family.

Throughout the play, the audience is permitted to see how Lear deals with problems. He is shocked when people do not obey as they have in the past, since Lear is king and he expects to be obeyed. However, instead of dealing with issues, Lear looks to the Fool to distract him with entertainment, to help him forget his problems. He has been insulted and demeaned as king, but he is not prepared to face those who are responsible. Instead, Lear often responds to problems with anger and outbursts of cursing, even a physical attack when provoked. When confronted with insults, Lear is helpless, at the mercy of his daughter and her servants, and he often succumbs to despair and self-pity. The once-omnipotent king struggles to find an effective means of dealing with his loss of power.

Eventually, the king reveals that he is frightened and apprehensive for his future, but he refuses to submit to another's decisions. Lear wants to remain in charge of his destiny, even though the choices he makes are poor or filled with danger. Thus, Lear chooses to go out into the storm because he must retain some element of control. The only other choice is to acquiesce to his daughters' control, and for Lear, that option is not worth considering. Lear is stubborn, like a willful child, and this is just one additional way in which he tries to deal with the events controlling his life. Lear flees into the storm, as a child flees a reality too harsh to accept.

In spite of his despair and self-pity, Lear is revealed as a complex man, one whose punishment far exceeds his foolish errors, and thus, Lear is deserving of the audience's sympathy. Eventually, Lear displays regret, remorse, empathy, and compassion for the poor, a population that Lear has not noticed before. Lear focuses on the parallels he sees to his own life, and so in a real sense, his pity for the poor is also a reflection of the pity he feels for his own situation.

Lear is the anointed king, God's representative, and thus, he shares the responsibility for dispensing justice on earth. He recognizes that he bears responsibility for both his own problems and for those of others, who suffer equally. His understanding of his complicity in the events that followed is a major step in

accepting responsibility and in acknowledging that he is not infallible. Because of his own suffering, Lear has also learned that even he is not above God's justice.

### **2.10.2 Goneril**

Goneril is Lear's eldest daughter. After professing her deep love for her father and receiving half of his kingdom, she betrays him and plots his murder. Goneril's expressions of love are extreme and reveal the inherent dishonesty of her nature. Goneril reveals her true character when she defies the hierarchy of nature, which calls for daughters to respect and honour their fathers, and lays the groundwork for the torment she will set in motion for the remainder of her father's life.

Goneril leads her father to believe that her love for him extends beyond any evidence of poor behaviour, and so ultimately, she is responsible for Lear's actions, having earlier endorsed them. Later, both Goneril and Regan are depicted as especially cruel and bloodthirsty, as they call for Gloucester's punishment. Throughout most of the play, having power has been most important to Goneril, but by its conclusion, she is willing to lose the battle, and thus the kingdom, rather than lose a man.

### **2.10.3 Regan:**

Regan is Lear's second daughter. Regan is as villainous as Goneril. In the beginning, both Regan and Cornwall appear to be conscientious and reasonable people. Regan appears genuinely upset to learn of Edgar's betrayal. Thus, Regan initially appears as the more sympathetic and gentler sister. She greets her father with politeness, but her deportment is deceptive. Regan has no real reverence for her father and king, as her subsequent actions reveal, but Regan is more competent than Goneril at deception, more easily assuming the mantle of deference and politeness that a gracious daughter is expected to exhibit.

Like Goneril, Regan also proves herself to be unyielding and cruel. Regan's plucking of Gloucester's beard reinforces the point that she has no respect for age or rank. In contrast to her basic inhumanity, Regan shows some real humanity, though briefly, when Cornwall is wounded. Regan's concerns that Gloucester should be relieved of his misery indicates that she is cognizant of public opinion and concerned that her subjects support her actions.

#### **2.10.4 Cordelia:**

Cordelia genuinely loves her father, but her refusal to flatter him leads to the tragedy that unfolds. Cordelia's tears at the news of her father's treatment prove her compassion and establish that she is, indeed, the opposite of her sisters. Cordelia has no desire for revenge, nor any need to make her father suffer for having misjudged her. Her virtue and purity make it easy to see why she is often described as Christ-like or representative of God's goodness. Her response to her father's capture, and her own capture, evokes the stoicism of kings, and reveals that Cordelia is as royal as her father is.

#### **2.10.5 Fool:**

The Fool assumes the role of Lear's protector when Cordelia is banished. The Fool functions much as a Chorus would in a Greek tragedy, commenting upon events and the king's actions and acting, in some ways, as the king's conscience. The Fool is the king's advocate, loyal and honest, but he is also able to point out the king's faults, as no one else can. The Fool's use of irony, sarcasm, and humour help to ease the truth, and allows him to moderate Lear's behaviour. The Fool shares his master's fate, and this reinforces the impression that the Fool's purpose is to protect Lear until Cordelia can arrive to help her father. Both Cordelia and the Fool are caretakers for Lear, and when one is present, the other need not be.

#### **2.10.6 Earl of Gloucester:**

Gloucester is depicted as a foolish old man, whose inability to see through Edmund's lies parallels Lear's own difficulties. By mistaking Edmund's motives, Gloucester is blind to the events occurring around him, even before Cornwall gouges out his eyes. Clearly, he is not intuitive or quick enough to understand the plotting or undercurrents present around him. Gloucester blames events on the stars, and thus, he absolves himself of any responsibility for his actions.

Later, Gloucester is willing to sacrifice his own life for the king. This heroic behaviour sets Gloucester apart from his youngest son, Edmund, who is merely an opportunist. Like Lear, Gloucester feels despair and questions a god, and like Lear, Gloucester finds his humanity in the midst of his tragedy. The blinded old man who asks that clothing be brought, so that Bedlam Tom might be covered, is a very different man from the Gloucester of Act I, who in the play's opening scene, bragged



of the good sport to be had at Edmund's conception. Instead of a thoughtless braggart, Gloucester is filled with compassion for Poor Tom. This compassion for his fellow man indicates that Gloucester regrets the behavior of his past, as he seeks to make amends by sharing with those he never noticed before the recent events.

Although banished, Kent disguises himself in an effort to stay close to his king. Kent is honest — he will not lie to his king — and he is truly selfless, devoted to Lear. When his attempts to protect Lear from his own impetuous nature fail, Kent assumes the guise of an ordinary man and resolves to protect his king. When queried by Lear as to his identity, Kent replies that he is "a man" (I.4.10). Thus, he is no one special, and yet, he stands apart from many other men. Kent is a man defined by integrity, whose goodness is immeasurable, as is his love for his king. Kent's destiny is irrevocably connected to that of the king's, as the final scene of the play reveals. In rejecting Albany's offer to rule the kingdom with Edgar, Kent reveals that he will soon join his king in death. Clearly, Kent feels that his job on earth is to serve his king, and with that job now ended, he anticipates his own death.

#### **2.10.7 Edmund:**

Gloucester's younger illegitimate son is an opportunist, whose ambitions lead him to form a union with Goneril and Regan. The injustice of Edmund's situation fails to justify his subsequent actions. Edmund rejects the laws of state and society in favour of the laws he sees as eminently more practical and useful — the laws of superior cunning and strength.

Edmund's desire to use any means possible to secure his own needs makes him appear initially as a villain without a conscience. But Edmund has some solid economic impetus for his actions, and he acts from a complexity of reasons, many of which are similar to those of Goneril and Regan. To rid himself of his father, Edmund feigns regret and laments that his nature, which is to honour his father, must be subordinate to the loyalty he feels for his country. Thus, Edmund excuses the betrayal of his own father, having willingly and easily left his father vulnerable to Cornwall's anger. Later, Edmund shows no hesitation, nor any concern about killing the king or Cordelia. Yet in the end, Edmund repents and tries to rescind his order to execute Cordelia and Lear, and in this small measure, he does prove himself worthy of Gloucester's blood.

### **2.10.8 Edgar / Poor Tom:**

Edgar is Gloucester's only legitimate heir, but he must flee and hide from his father when he comes under suspicion. Edgar's innate honesty and dignity lets him believe that his brother, Edmund, would never lie to him, since Edgar would not lie to his brother. Edgar's stoic belief that he has survived the worst that fortune can throw at him is tested when Edgar discovers his father, now blinded. The manner in which Edgar addresses his father indicates compassion, understanding, and an acceptance of his father's flaws.

### **2.10.9 Duke of Albany:**

As Goneril's husband, Albany grows in stature during the play and ultimately finds the strength to resist his wife's efforts to have Lear killed. Early in the play, Albany lacks the strength to stand up to his wife, and thus, he cannot control her. Albany is Goneril's opposite, gentle and kind to his wife's cruel and self-serving demeanor. But later, Albany's attack on Goneril's integrity demonstrates that Albany is a highly moral and humane individual, the antithesis of his wife.

Where Goneril has created chaos, Albany endorses nature's design and a view of nature's work within an organic framework. Albany accepts that nature's pattern is essential for survival. Early on, Albany hesitates to confront Goneril when he thinks she's wrong, but he is not the willing participant in evil that Cornwall is. Albany is genuinely shocked when he learns of Gloucester's blinding, while Cornwall easily succumbs to this depravity.

With a new resistance to his wife, Albany joins the ranks of characters who undergo dramatic change during the course of the play; he grows and evolves into a stronger and more compassionate individual by the end of the drama. Albany leads his army in defense of the kingdom, although with great reluctance. The audience witnesses his personal growth, and the culmination of change is clear when he assumes control of the kingdom following the battle's conclusion.

### **2.10.10 Duke of Cornwall**

Cornwall is Regan's brutal husband, vicious and savage when thwarted in his efforts to seize ambition. Cornwall's easy acceptance of Edmund's story and his welcoming of Edmund into his clique foreshadows the evil that will later emerge from Cornwall and provides a hint to the audience that Cornwall is not what he

appears. Cornwall responds to Kent's truthful declarations by placing Kent in the stocks. This action indicates that Cornwall, who himself uses artifice as a substitute for honesty in his own speech, cannot recognize truth when he hears it. Later in the play, Cornwall will make no attempt to control his actions or behave in a civilized manner as he gouges out Gloucester's eyes and grinds them under the heel of his boot.

#### **2.10.11 Oswald:**

Oswald, Goneril's steward, is a willing accomplice to Goneril's plotting and a henchman without honour. Oswald adds to this negative perception by failing to defend himself against Kent's attack and by lying that he spared Kent's life because Kent is an old man. These events paint Oswald as weak and dishonest. Oswald is, as Kent suggests, a parasite who thrives off Goneril's evil machinations and who makes her deceit easier to maintain. As Goneril's servant, he accepts her orders without question. Although he is warned, he refuses to abandon his orders to murder Gloucester, since obedience and position are everything to this servant. Oswald's sense of obedience is so great that he even asks the man who has killed him to deliver Goneril's letter to Edmund

#### **2.10.12 King of France:**

France is honourable and willing to support Cordelia's efforts to rescue her father. France points out that she is a prize as great as any dowry. France's support of Cordelia reveals that he is, indeed, worthy of Cordelia's love.

#### **2.10.13 Duke of Burgundy :**

Burgundy rejects Cordelia when he discovers that she will bring him no dowry or inheritance. Burgundy, who cannot love Cordelia without her wealth, is guilty of selfish motivations.

### **2.11 Major Themes:**

Themes are central to understanding *King Lear* as a play and identifying Shakespeare's social and political commentary.

#### **2.11.1 Power:**

Important is the notion of power — who has it, how one obtains it, how one defines it, and how it plays into *King Lear*. With this look at power should also come

an investigation of issues such as age and gender. Consider, for example, the treatment of the elderly by their offspring. And think about the power and placement of women in Shakespeare's time as compared with the position of women in society and the home today.

### **2.11.2 Nature's Law:**

Nature, in varying forms, is another theme prevalent in *King Lear*. Lear's view of nature is one that holds certain values, such as respect for one's parents and loyalty to one's king, to be important regardless of circumstance.

Edmund, however, believes it's natural to be a repository of sensuality and self-advancement. To Edmund, as well as to several other characters in the play, the natural impulse of humanity is to better oneself at the expense of others.

### **2.11.3 Doubling:**

Doubling (to create either oppositions or parallels) adds tremendously to the *King Lear* experience. At various times, fools are contrasted with wise men, reason is set opposite to nature, the upper class is set apart from the beggar, and the family is paralleled with by society. False service, as in the case of Oswald, is contrasted with true service, represented by Kent. The selfish and false love of Regan and Goneril is a foil for the honest devotion of Cordelia.

### **2.11.4 Parent-Child Relationship:**

Throughout the audience is privy to the conflicts between father and child, and to fathers easily fooled by their children. Each father demonstrates poor judgment by rejecting a good child and trusting a dishonest children. The actions that follow Act I, Scene I illustrate how correct Regan's words will prove to be. It will soon be obvious to the characters and audience alike how little Lear knows and understands his daughters as Goneril and Regan move to restrict both the size of his retinue and power.

### **2.12 Major Symbols:**

Symbols and motifs are key to understanding *King Lear* as a play and identifying Shakespeare's social and political commentary.

### 2.12.1 Animal Imagery:

Shakespeare makes frequent use of animal imagery, often attributing various animal behaviours to the characters. In contrast, you also find numerous references to the gods and to astronomical events. The juxtaposition of these images — those of the beast world and those of the heavens — add interest to the play, further the development of the character's personalities, and help define two distinct worlds between which humans generally live their lives.

### 2.12.2 Machiavelli:

A key image in *King Lear* is the "Machiavelli" — the self-serving villain. *The Prince*, written by Niccolò Machiavelli, contains a philosophy that tended to preoccupy Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Machiavelli wrote that in order to become a ruler and maintain that position, a person should use every means at his or her disposal to gain control. Murder of the family of a deposed ruler was but one of the ways Machiavelli suggested that a new ruler ensure that his authority was not questioned or overthrown. Edmund, the illegitimate son of Gloucester, is often described in Machiavellian terms, and his methods and actions are as deliberate and self-serving as any described in *The Prince*.

### 2.12.3 Divine Justice:

*King Lear* inspires many philosophical questions; chief among them is the existence of divine justice. This concept was particularly important during the Elizabethan era, because religion played such a significant role in everyday life. Religious leaders directed people to expect that they would have to answer to a higher authority, expressing some hope that good would triumph and be rewarded over evil. But throughout *King Lear*, good does not triumph without honourable characters suffering terrible loss. In fact, at the play's conclusion, many of the good characters lie dead on the stage — Lear, Gloucester, and Cordelia. In addition, the audience hears that Kent will soon die, and the Fool has earlier disappeared, presumably to die. Of course, the evil characters are also dead, but their punishment is to be expected according to the laws of divine justice. But how then does the audience account for the punishment and, finally, the death of the good characters in *King Lear*?

Lear makes several poor choices, most importantly in misjudging the sincerity of his daughters' words; but when he flees out into the open heath during a storm, his madness seems a painful and excessive punishment to witness. Parallel to Lear's punishment is that which Gloucester suffers. The plucking of Gloucester's eyes can be perceived as another instance in which divine justice is lacking. Gloucester has made several errors in judgment, as has Lear; but the brutal nature of Gloucester's blinding — the plucking out of his eyes and the crushing of them under Cornwall's boots — is surely in excess of any errors he might have made.

Both Lear and Gloucester endure terrible physical and mental suffering as punishment for their misjudgment, but before dying, both men are reunited with the child each earlier rejected. This resolution of the child-parent conflict, which earlier tore apart both families, may be seen as an element of divine justice, although it offers little gratification for the audience.

Throughout *King Lear*, the audience has witnessed Edmund's growing success as a reward for his evil machinations. But when Edgar and Edmund meet in Act V, the duel between these two brothers is very different from the traditional match for sport. Christian tradition recalls several biblical battles between good and evil, as divine justice is an important component of trial by combat. The duel between Edgar and Edmund is really a conflict that replays this ongoing battle between good and evil, with Edgar's defeat of Edmund obviously signaling the triumph of righteousness over corruption. Edgar's victory, as well as his succession of Lear, as king of Britain, points to an intervention of divine justice.

And yet, when Lear enters with Cordelia's body, any immediate ideas about divine justice vanish. The deaths of Cornwall, Edmund, Regan, and Goneril have lulled the audience into a belief that the gods would restore order to this chaotic world. But Cordelia's death creates new questions about the role of divine justice; a just god could not account for the death of this faithful and loving daughter.

In spite of the seemingly senseless death of this young woman, Shakespeare never intended for his audience to escape the painful questions that Cordelia's death creates. Instead, the audience is expected to struggle with the question of why such tragedies occur. The deaths of Gloucester and Lear are acceptable. Both have made serious errors in judgment, and although both came to recognize their complicity in the destruction that they caused, the natural resolution of this change was an

acceptance of their future, whatever it held. But Cordelia is young and blameless. She is completely good and pure.

At the play's conclusion, the stage is littered with bodies, some deserving of death and some the innocent victims of evil. Cornwall has been destroyed by his own honest servant; Edmund is killed by the brother he sought to usurp; both Goneril and Regan are dead, one murdered and the other a suicide; the obedient steward, Oswald, is dead, a victim of his own compulsion to obey. In the end, no easy answer surfaces to the question of divine justice, except that perhaps man must live as if divine justice exists, even if it's only a product of rich and wishful imaginations.

## **2.13 Critical Commentary**

### **2.13.1 Parent-Child Relationships: The Neglect of Natural Law**

At the heart of *King Lear* lies the relationship between father and child. Central to this filial theme is the conflict between man's law and nature's law. Natural law is synonymous with the moral authority usually associated with divine justice. Those who adhere to the tenets of natural law are those characters in the text who act instinctively for the common good — Kent, Albany, Edgar, and Cordelia.

Eventually, Gloucester and Lear learn the importance of natural law when they recognize that they have violated these basic tenets, with both finally turning to nature to find answers for why their children have betrayed them. Their counterparts, Edmund, Goneril, Regan, and Cornwall, represent the evil that functions in violation of natural law. All four conspirators are without conscience and lack recognition of higher moral authority, since they never consider divine justice as they plot their evil. Their law is man-made, and it focusses on the individual, not the good of the community. Tragedy unfolds as two carefully interwoven and parallel stories explore the abandonment of natural order and the unnatural betrayal of parent and child.

In the primary plot, Lear betrays his youngest daughter and is betrayed by his two oldest daughters. In almost identical fashion, the subplot reveals another father, Gloucester, who betrays his older legitimate son and who is betrayed by his younger illegitimate son. In both cases, the natural filial relationship between father and children is destroyed through a lack of awareness, a renunciation of basic fairness and natural order, and hasty judgment based on emotions. By the play's end, the

abandonment of natural order leaves the stage littered with the dead bodies of fathers and their children.

In the opening act, Lear creates a love test to justify giving Cordelia a larger share of his kingdom. Although his kingdom should be divided equally, Lear clearly loves Cordelia more and wants to give her the largest, choice section of his wealth. In return, Lear expects excessive flattery and gushing confessions of love. But instead, Cordelia's reply is tempered, honest, and reasonable — custom dictates that she share her love between her husband and her father.

Just as soon as Cordelia fails to meet her father's expectations, Lear disinherits her. At Cordelia's loss, Goneril and Regan are quick to take advantage. They may have genuinely loved their father at one time, but they now seem tired of having been passed over in favour of their younger sister. After Lear states his obvious preference for Cordelia, the older sisters feel free to seek their revenge, turning the family's natural order on its ear. At the same time, Lear fails to see the strength and justice in natural law, and disinherits his youngest child, thus setting in motion the disaster that follows. Lear puts in place a competition between sisters that will carry them to their graves.

In a similar father-child relationship, the opening scene of *King Lear* positions Gloucester as a thoughtless parent. The audience's introduction to this second father describes of Edmund's birth in a derogatory manner. Although Gloucester says that he loves both Edmund and Edgar equally, society does not regard the two as equal — and neither does Gloucester, whose love is limited to words and not actions of equality. According to nature's law, Edmund is as much Gloucester's son as Edgar is; but according to man's law of primogeniture, Edmund is not recognized as Gloucester's heir.

In one of the initial pieces of information offered about Edmund, Gloucester tells Kent that Edmund has been away seeking his fortune, but he has now returned. Under English law, Edmund has no fortune at home, nor any entitlement. Edmund's return in search of family fortune provides the first hint that he will seize what English laws will not give him. Clearly, Edmund's actions are a result of his father's preference — both legal and filial — for Edgar, his older and legitimate son. This favoritism leads to Edmund's plan to destroy his father in an attempt to gain legitimacy and Gloucester's estate. Again, the natural order of family is ignored.



Gloucester rejects natural law and a parent's love for his child when he is easily convinced that Edgar — the son he claims to love so much — has betrayed him. Gloucester also puts his faith in Edmund's command of persuasive language, when he rejects the love his eldest son has always shown him. With this move, the earl demonstrates that he can be swayed by eloquence, a man-made construct for easy persuasion, which causes him to reject natural law and the bond between father and child.

Edmund both ignores and embraces natural law. By betraying his father to Cornwall and Regan, Edmund's self-serving course of action abandons nature's order and instead foreshadows the neo-Darwinist argument for survival of the strongest individual. His ability to survive and win is not based on competitive strategies or healthy family relationships; instead, Edmund will take what he desires by deceiving those who trust and love him.

Edmund's greed favours natural law over man's law because natural law doesn't care that Edmund is illegitimate. He claims nature as his ally because he is a "natural" offspring, and because man's law neglects to recognize his rights of inheritance. But, nature only serves Edmund as a convenient excuse for his actions. His actions against his brother and father are more a facet of greed than any reliance on natural law.

One might argue that Gloucester's cavalier attitude toward Edmund's conception mitigates Edmund's actions. When combining this possibility with Edmund's final scene, in which he tries to save Cordelia and Lear, Edmund clearly shows himself to be of different fabric than Goneril, Regan, and Cornwall. In many ways, Gloucester is responsible for what Edmund becomes. Edmund is as much Gloucester's son as is Edgar. In embracing the man-made laws that reject Edmund's legal rights, Gloucester is denying natural laws that would make Edmund and Edgar equal.

Gloucester also acts against nature in rejecting Edgar without sufficient proof of his wrongdoing; thus Gloucester shares responsibility for the actions that follow, just as Lear's love test results in his rejection of Cordelia. Both men are easily fooled and consequently, they both reject natural law and their children. Both act without deliberation, with hasty responses that ultimately betray their descendants.

At the play's conclusion, Goneril and Regan's abandonment of natural order and their subscription to evil has finally destroyed them. The audience learns early in the

final scene that Goneril has poisoned Regan and killed herself. Their deaths are a result of unnatural competition, both for power and for love. But Lear is the one who set in motion the need to establish strength through competition, when he pitted sister against sister in the love test.

For the audience, the generational conflict between parent and child is an expected part of life. We grow impatient with our parents and they with us. We attempt to control our children, and they rebel. When Goneril complains that Lear and his men are disruptive and out of control, we can empathize — recognizing that our own parent's visits can extend too long or that our children's friends can be quite noisy. Shakespeare's examination of natural order is central to our own lives, and that is one of the enduring qualities of *King Lear*.

### **2.13.2 Kingship and Lear:**

Integrity, compassion, and justice are important facets of an effective king. The king is more than the physical evidence of a strong and united government. The king is God's representative on earth, and as such, serves as a model of behaviour for all his subjects, who look to their king for guidance, strength, and hope. If a king lacks the essential components of kingly behaviour, and the authority that these traits embody, his subjects will, as Goneril and Regan demonstrate, turn increasingly to deception, treachery, and violence as a method of government. Does Shakespeare's depiction of King Lear offer the audience a portrait of kingship, or in contrast, a portrait of kingly loss?

In his first scene, Lear initially comes across as a strong ruler, although his plan to divide his kingdom among his three daughters seems rather short-sighted and self-serving. This decision places his two strong sons-in-law, Albany and Cornwall, in charge of protecting the outlying areas of the kingdom. But the single benefit derived from this division creates many problems. Lear is abdicating his purpose and his responsibilities, and he is also creating chaos. To achieve his goal, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia are forced into a love test to determine their inheritance. The division of any kingdom is not without risk, but even before his action has the opportunity to create adversity, Lear establishes a competition, which complicates an already dangerous decision.

Competitions, by their very nature, result in winners and losers. Cordelia loses when she refuses to play the game, but Lear also loses when he "retires" and

abdicates his kingly role. He cannot be king without a kingdom, and the country, which is to be divided into smaller principalities, will not have the unity and strength to long survive as separate units. Civil war and insurrection are the inevitable results of Lear's actions. The love test forces Regan and Goneril into competing against the favoured younger sister. Ultimately, deadly conflict arises between Lear and his older daughters, and the long-standing competition between sisters creates conflict between ruling factions, further dividing the kingdom.

Even before Cordelia's return, dissent is in the air. In Act II, Curan's report of strife between Albany and Cornwall helps illustrate that Lear's division of his kingdom was a mistake (II.1.10). At this point, conflict doesn't appear to exist between Goneril and Regan, and Cordelia is out of the immediate scene as a result of her banishment. Already, though, Cornwall and Albany show signs of uneasiness, a discord with the clear potential to evolve into conflict, and perhaps, civil war. Goneril and Regan soon unite against a common foe — their own father; but it is reasonable to assume that Goneril and Regan, having disposed of Cordelia, would have next turned their troops and anger against one another. Certainly, Edmund was counting on this event, since he indicates he will marry whichever one survives the struggle for absolute control (V.1.55-69).

Notably, King Lear was not always the ineffectual king represented in the middle and final acts of Shakespeare's play. In the opening of the play, Lear is the absolute ruler, as any king was expected to be in a patriarchal society such as Renaissance England. Lear enters in Act I as the king, evoking grandeur and authority, representing God and the reigning patriarchy of kingship. The audience quickly forgets this initial impression because the love test, in all its absurdity, forces the audience into seeing Lear as a foolish, egotistical old man. But the evidence of his greatness is seen in Kent's devotion, in the love of his Fool, and in Cordelia's love, which is sustained, in spite of Lear's rejection.

By the time Shakespeare was writing *King Lear*, the English had survived centuries of civil war and political upheaval. The English understood that a strong country needed an effective leader to protect it from civil war and potential foreign invasion. The strong leadership of Elizabeth I had saved England when the Spanish attempted an invasion in 1588, and much of the credit for her success was attributed to her earlier efforts to unite England and to end the religious dissention that was destroying the country. No ruler would have deliberately chosen to divide a

kingdom, not after having witnessed the conflicts that had marked England's recent history. The division of a country would have weakened it, leading to squabbles between petty lords and the absence of an effective central government and a capable means of defense. Having only recently achieved stability in their country, Shakespeare's Elizabethan audience would have been horrified at Lear's choice to divide his kingdom, and so, create disunity.

The audience would also have questioned the choice of the French king as a suitor, especially as Lear intended to give Cordelia the choice center section of his kingdom. The audience's abject fear that a foreign king might weaken England (and a Catholic monarch made it worse) would have made Lear's actions seem even more irresponsible. But Lear is doing more than creating political and social chaos; he is also giving his daughters complete responsibility for his happiness, and he will blame them later when he is not happy. All of these events create a picture of King Lear as a poor model of kingship, one who reacts emotionally and without reason.

Lear is very much loved by every good character in the play, with only those characters who are unworthy of kingship hating him and plotting against him. Goneril, Regan, Cornwall, and Edmund offer a contrasting image of kingship in their animosity and evil, behaviour that is brutal and uncaring, rather than loving and paternal. One other important element of kingship is its connection to natural law and the image of kings as anointed by God. Kingship is directly connected to natural law, which is a central force in this play. A king has absolute authority and has no need to question natural law, and yet kings rule as God's representative on earth; thus their very position creates a reciprocal agreement between the monarchy and natural law. A successful king works in concert with nature, as Lear does until the moment he disinherits his youngest daughter.

In *King Lear*, the King of France stands as a successful model of how a good and proper king should behave. In his acceptance of Cordelia — even without benefit of a dowry — France is conducting himself with reason and conscience. He is also acting within the confines of natural law, with generosity of spirit and a willingness to share his life and country. The model of France's behaviour recalls how Lear must have behaved before his decision to divide his land. But instead of seeing this kind father and patriarchal authority, the audience witnesses an absolute ruler, one who refuses questioning, or even the wisdom of his lords. Goneril and Regan equate their share of the land with absolute power of a monarch. They reject any allegiance to

God or to any divine justice. Instead, they establish their own system of morality, one based on their father's law rather than natural law. Goneril and Regan can be as absolute in their decisions as Lear chooses to be; their behaviour echoes his.

In their choices, Cornwall and Regan remind the audience of Macbeth and his wife. Cornwall and Regan present a ruling couple, — perhaps even more ruthless, but just as ambitious as the Macbeth's — willing to murder their way to absolute power. Goneril and Regan dismiss Lear's 100 knights, who are really his small personal army. Their action is reasonable if they expect to seize rule and authority. Although the threat of losing a personal guard warrants remedy, Lear's response to this move precipitates the crisis. No king should allow his army to be disbanded, and so Goneril and Regan's actions are certainly dangerous to the king. But by this time, Lear has waited too late to reclaim the kingship that he has denied.

At the conclusion of the play, Albany appoints Kent and Edgar to restore order, although Albany's rank places him above the other two. But Kent intends to follow his master in death and that leaves Edgar to inherit the kingdom. In spite of the recent events, Albany thinks that Kent and Edgar can rule jointly, but Kent is correct in choosing another future for himself.

Although traditionally, the highest-ranking individual speaks the last lines in a tragedy, Shakespeare gives Edgar the final lines, as Gloucester's surviving son responds to Albany's request. Edgar is clearly uncertain and reluctant to assume the crown. Kingship was never his goal, nor his intent. But circumstances have forced him to consider a position for which he is unprepared.

Shakespeare has not offered the audience much to appreciate about Edgar. For much of the play, Edgar was disguised as Poor Tom, and the audience saw only a poor creature from Bedlam. Edgar really steps forward when he challenges Edmund, revealing that he has the goodness and strength to defeat evil. In winning their duel, Edgar's defeat of Edmund signals the triumph of righteousness over corruption and provides an assurance of God's blessing on Edgar. This act signals his ability to assume the role of king. In Edgar, kingship is exemplified by integrity, compassion, and justice — all the elements that Lear once possessed but which were subordinated to his injured ego.

### 2.13.3 The Tragic Ending of King Lear:

The story of King Lear is a mythic one which existed in the folklore of England long before Shakespeare was born. It seems that only Shakespeare, however, imbued the story with its tragic ending. Even Shakespeare's followers resorted to the optimistic resolve of the Lear tale. In a 1680 adaptation of *King Lear*, Nahum Tate not only allows Lear and his most-loving daughter Cordelia to live, but restores Lear to his throne. He also abolishes the character of the Fool from his adaptation altogether. The hopeful ending of Tate's adaptation ignores what Shakespeare interpreted as the tragedy of the Lear story. In order to reveal the poetic truths of life, including its negative aspects—betrayal, filial hatred, deception, and death—*King Lear* must be a tragedy.

Moreover, by definition of a tragedy, the death of King Lear and his devoted Cordelia must be understood as a sacrifice to truth that is inevitable from the beginning of the play.

Lear's death is foreshadowed in the play even before he performs the fatal error of assigning all his kingdom's territories to his greedy daughters Goneril and Regan. When Lear prepares to ask of each of his daughters to express her love for him, he states his purpose in doing so:

... and 'tis our fast intent  
To shake all cares and business from our age.  
Conferring them on younger strengths while we  
Unburdened crawl toward death.

The irony of these lines is revealed as their literal truth becomes apparent. Lear has made the decision to donate as a form of dowry the three parts of his kingdom to each of his daughters: Cordelia, Goneril, and Regan. The size of their share depends on how much they love their father and, moreover, how well they can express it. The fact that the words of Goneril and Regan are infused with their own greed as well as that of their suitors, the receivers of the dowry, is apparent to the audience of the play from the beginning; however, Lear believes them and thus appears gullible. Moreover, Lear does not perceive the true love of Cordelia, who replies "Nothing" when it is her turn to articulate her love to her father. The audience, on the other hand, is immediately clued in to the truth behind Cordelia's reticence by the use of

asides. In her first aside to the audience, as she struggles over how to fulfill her father's demand to speak her love, Cordelia says: "What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent." (1.1.62) The audience begins to pity her plight with Cordelia's second aside, after Regan and Goneril have spoken: "Then poor Cordelia; And yet not so, since I am sure my love's more ponderous than my tongue." (1.1.76-78) Herein lies the principal tragedy of the play that Cordelia, who is moral and good in the purest sense, is destined to be sacrificed from the very start. The second tragedy of the play is Lear's fatal error in falling for his daughters' lying words while being blind to the radiance of Cordelia's unspoiled devotion. The brilliance of the play is that Lear's tragedy moves the audience to extremes of fear and pity, rather than judgment. Thus, the tension between Lear's doom and his struggling blindness to that fact until the very end is introduced in the first scene of the play and developed throughout. There are several rhetorical devices used throughout the play to comment upon the inevitable death of Lear.

One is the continual appeals and references to Nature and the gods, external and all-powerful forces which seem to seal the fate of men. For example, when Lear disclaims Cordelia, he appeals to "the sacred radiance of the sun" (1.1.109), "the mysteries of Hecate and the night" (1.1.110), and "all the operations of the orbs from whom we do exist and cease to be." (1.1.111) And when Gloucester reflects on the twisted goings-on in the kingdom, including the banishment of the "noble and true-hearted Kent" (1.2.113), he begins: "These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us" (1.2.101). Edmund, Gloucester's bastard son, mocks Gloucester's belief that the evils in the world are pre-ordained by the gods as man's excuse for bad behaviour.

Yet Edmund's sarcasm is articulated in twisted words which reflect on his sacrilegious character. Later in the play, when Lear is caught in the storm, the discrepancy between man's vulnerability and the power of the gods is made clear. It is during this scene when Lear enacts his most heart-wrenching struggle with his fate. He appeals to the gods as follows:

Let the great gods  
That keep this dreadful pudder o'er our heads  
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch.  
That hast within thee undivulged crimes

Unwhipped of justice. (3.2.49-53)

Just as the rain cannot be stopped, Lear's fate seems inevitable. Another rhetorical device is the use of irony to foreshadow Lear's death. For example, when Kent appears in disguise to join Lear on his journey to Cornwall, Lear confronts him and questions his identity to which Kent replies, "A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king" (1.3.17). Lear responds with an added ironic twist, "If thou be'st as poor for a subject as he's for a king, thou art poor enough. What would'st thou?" (1.3.18). In third-person rhetoric, Lear mocks his own predicament. Furthermore, the phrase "poor enough" carries the weight of death.

A third rhetorical device Shakespeare uses to indicate the tragedy of Lear to which he himself is blind is in the figure of the Fool. It is interesting to note that many of the "optimistic" versions of the Lear tale omit the Fool completely. But this excises the content of the Fool's crudely poetic and mocking words which usually hide a wise commentary on the action of the play. For example, when Goneril rejects Lear from her division of the kingdom, the Fool interjects:

For you know, nuncle.

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long

That it's had it head bit off by it young.

So out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

(1.4.205-208)

Lear's threatening danger, presented by the initial banishment to wander through his own kingdom, is compared to the fate of the hedge-sparrow. The Fool's common, almost folkloric, analogy ironically carries huge weight and foreboding for the rest of the play. It is no wonder that the Fool is so despised by the play's deceitful characters. Filial betrayal is the Fool's favorite subject. His attempts to warn the King of the evils of Goneril and Regan often assume the form of brutal comedy. When Lear "casts off forever" (1.4.300) away from Goneril, the Fool runs after him, calling out: "A fox, when one has caught her, And such a daughter, Should sure to the slaughter, If my cap would buy a halter. So the fool follows after" (1.4.308-312). Caught up in his own self-mockery (he is foolish for following, yet he follows anyway, because he wears the cap of the fool—hence, it is inevitable), the Fool embeds within his words the foreboding of betrayal.



In the final act of *King Lear*, the King is reunited with his daughter Cordelia, yet in tragic ironic fashion they are being lead in captivity towards death. Lear takes the opportunity to reflect on Cordelia's endearment and his own unkindness. He is at once deluded with dreams of their living on together: "So we'll live, and pray, and tell old tales, and laugh at gilded butterflies . . ." (5.2.11-13) and resigned to their fate: "Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, the gods themselves throw incense" (5.3.20-21). With these words, their tragedy is sealed, just as it was foretold in the first scene of the play and foreshadowed throughout. The inevitability of Cordelia's "sacrifice" was ruled by the gods and hence all the more moving. In this final scene Cordelia, as the sacrifice, represents pure good. And Lear, who must fall along with her, is finally in a state of appreciating her honest goodness and feeling for her fate.

## **2.14 Answers to Check Your Progress:**

### **2.4.7 Check Your Progress:**

- A.** 1. King Lear calls his family together in order to divide his kingdom among his three daughters.  
 2. Edmund tells Edgar his father is very angry with him and might harm him.  
 3. Oswald is a steward in charge of other servants.  
 4. Edgar is instructed to go to Edmund's lodging.  
 5. The Duke of Albany is Goneril's husband, and the Duke of Cornwall is Regan's husband.
- B.** 1. disrespect 2. Quarrelsome 3. Regan 4. 50 5. Fool
- C.** 1. a, Regan 2. a, Lear 3. a, censuring 4.d, the kingdom 5. a, a letter

### **2.5.6 Check Your Progress:**

- A.** 1. Edmund wants his father to see him attempting to prevent Edgar's escape.  
 2. Gloucester plans to publish Edgar's picture throughout the kingdom so that someone will report having seen him, which could help matters regarding his capture.  
 3. Kent is angry because Oswald comes with letters against the King and, pretends he has never seen Kent.

4. Oswald pretends he has never met Kent, but later he tells Cornwall the entire story.

5. The Fool begs Lear to ask his daughters' blessing so they will take him in.

**B.** 1. Cornwall 2. Kent 3. serve 4. Regan 5. Goneril

**C.** 1. Cornwall 2. Kent 3. a tree 4. Disguise 5. loyal and natural boy

### **2.6.9 Check Your Progress:**

**A.** 1. The spies bring the news that King Lear has had to bear the abuses of Goneril and Regan, his daughters.

2. Kent thinks Cordelia is waiting in Dover.

3. Kent instructs the Gentleman to give Cordelia a ring as proof of Kent's identity.

4. The Fool begs Lear to ask his daughters' blessing so they will take him in.

5. Kent joins Lear and the Fool in the storm.

**B.** 1. "yoke-fellow of equity" 2. Children 3. an outbuilding 4. mock trial 5. Tom o' Bedlam

**C.** 1. accompanied 2. 36 3. not wise 4. a chair 5. a fatal wound

### **2.7.9 Check Your Progress:**

**A.** 1. Edgar, still disguised as Tom o' Bedlam, leads Gloucester to Dover.

2. Edgar feels encouraged, thinking that the worst is over.

3. Edgar feels he is worse than he ever was, now that he sees his blinded father.

4. Gloucester tells the old man to bring Edgar, disguised as poor Tom, some clothes to wear.

5. The old man says he will bring the best apparel that he has.

**B.** 1. Albany 2. France 3. Edmund's 4. a woman's body 5. Duke of Cornwall's death

**C.** 1. worst 2. Cruel 3. Cordelia's 4. Regan 5. a tree

### 2.8.5 Check Your Progress:

- A. 1. Albany is concerned about fighting his own father-in-law, the King.  
2. Albany decides that the war with France is a separate issue from the domestic quarrels with Lear and Cordelia.  
3. Edmund has sworn his love to both Goneril and Regan.  
4. Edmund and the oldest and most experienced officers join Albany in his tent.  
5. Edgar delivers Goneril's letter to Albany.
- B. 1. Edmund 2. Letter 3. the third trumpet 4. kill 5. a knife
- C. 1. Hanged 2. to restore 3. Edmund 4. Men must endure

### 2.15 Exercises:

#### A. Broad Questions

1. Discuss *King Lear* as a typical Shakespearean tragedy.
2. In what sense is *King Lear* described as a cosmic tragedy?
3. How far would it proper to say that *King Lear* is rich in imagery that serves useful purpose.
4. Analyse the structure of *King Lear* and bring out the interrelationship between the main plot and the subplot.
5. What is the moral problem dramatized in *King Lear*?
6. 'The ending of King Lear is unbearable.' Discuss.
7. "*King Lear* is a play in which madness is the key to the realization of the truth". Discuss.
8. "Cordelia is admirable, but not entirely." Discuss.
9. Discuss the importance of the characters of Edmund and Edgar in *King Lear*.
10. Discuss the importance of the Storm Scene in *King Lear*.

**B. Write short-notes on the following**

1. The Fool
2. The theme of Renunciation
3. The catastrophe or denouement in *King Lear*
4. The storm scene in *King Lear*
5. Madness in *King Lear*
6. Edmund
7. Regan
8. The nature imagery
9. The death of Cordelia
10. The Earl of Kent

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## Unit-3

### Epic Tradition *Paradise Lost (Book I)*

John Milton

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#### 3.9 Bibliography for Students

### 3.0 Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to understand:

1. the Epic tradition.
2. the life and work of John Milton.
3. how to analyze *Paradise Lost (Book I)*.
4. the characters and themes in *Paradise Lost (Book I)*.

### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous two units you are introduced to the essays of Francis Bacon which represent the intellectual background of the British Renaissance Literature, and also to the Shakespearean Tragedy through the study of *King Lear*. In the present unit, now, you are introduced to the epic tradition through John Milton's *Paradise Lost (Book I)*. As there are limitations to study the whole epic poem, only Book I is prescribed for the course.

Let us try to understand the epic as a form of literature in brief.

#### 3.1.1 The Epic Form

The term 'epic' is derived from the Ancient Greek adjective, *epikos*, which means a poetic story. An English word 'Epic' comes from the Latin word, *epicus* which is derived from the Greek adjective *eipikos*. Literary meaning of an epic is a long narrative poem, which is usually related to heroic deeds of a person of an unusual courage and unparalleled bravery.

According to *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, an epic is a long narrative poem, on a grand scale, about the deeds of warriors and heroes. It is a polygonal, 'heroic' story incorporating myth, legend, folk tale and history. Epics are often of national significance in the sense that they embody the history and aspirations of a nation in a lofty or grandiose manner. The term, epic or heroic poem can be applied to a work that meets at least the following criteria: it is a long verse narrative on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style and centered on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the human race (*A Glossary of Literary Terms*). According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, "epic is a long narrative poem in a dignified style

about the deeds of a traditional or historical hero or heroes; typically a poem like *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* with certain formal characteristics.”

There are two types of epic. First is a primary or traditional epic which is originally oral; it can be called as primitive or folk epic. Their written versions came later. Second is a secondary or literary epic which has originally a written form. In the first category come the epics like *Iliad*, *Odysse*. The epics like Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and Indian epics like *Ramayana*, and *Mahabharata* belong to the second category. Aristotle gives the highest importance to the epic next only to tragedy and most of the Renaissance critics consider the epic as the highest of all *genres*.

The epic has number of characteristic features which differentiate it from other forms of literature in general and poetry in particular. Following are some of the important characteristics of the epic:

1. The epic has a grand size. It has an extensive and lofty narrative in verse. Sometimes the narrative is divided into number of sections which can be called as books. For example, *Paradise Lost* is divided into twelve books, and Homer’s *Iliad* into twenty four books.
2. Its setting is large and wide which may cover many nations, continents, and regions.
3. It has a heroic story narrating the events in the lives of heroes or heroines of historical or national importance.
4. Supernaturalism is a key feature of epic narratives. There are characters related to gods, demons, angels, fairies and even supernatural elements and forces like natural calamities.
5. Exaggeration is also an important characteristic of the epic. In order to make narratives interesting and grand, the epic writer uses hyperbole and exaggeration.
6. It also conveys a moral message. Every epic narrative gives some moral lesson to the readers. So, naturally, the epic becomes didactic in its nature.
7. The epic has sublime, elegant and universal themes. So it deals with the entire humanity having universal appeal.



8. The language or diction of the epic is lofty, grand and elegant. No common or colloquial language is used. Thus, the poet uses a specialized style.

### 3.1.2 Chronology of Milton's Life

Before directly going to the study of the text prescribed, let us study the life of John Milton with the help of the chronology of Milton's life.

- 1608 Born in London on 9<sup>th</sup> December to John Milton Sr. and Sarah Jeffery. His father was a real estate agent.
- 1615 Went to St. Paul's school.
- 1625 Matriculated at Christ's College, Cambridge.
- 1629 Completed B.A.
- 1632 Completed M.A.
- 1637 His mother died, possibly of the plague. One of his Cambridge friends, Edward King, a minister, was drowned in a boating accident. Started writing *Lycidas*. Begins a tour of the Western Europe.
- 1638 Returned to London.
- 1639 Became a schoolmaster and started earning on his own.
- 1641 Published pamphlets: *Of Reformation*, *Of Prelatical Episcopacy*, and *Animadversions*.
- 1642 Married Mary Powell who left him within a month. Published *The Reason for Church Government*.
- 1643 Published a pamphlet *On the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.
- 1644 Published a pamphlet *On Education* and *Areopagitica*.
- 1645 Mary Powel returned to Milton. Published *Tetrachordon*, *Colasterion*, and *Poems of Mr John Milton*, both in English and Latin.
- 1646 His first daughter, Anne, was born. His first collection of poetry was published entitled, *Poems* which included *Lycidas*, *Camus*, and "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity."
- 1647 His father John Milton Sr. died. His father-in-law Richard Powell also died.

- 1648 His second daughter Mary was born.
- 1649 Published *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, after the execution of Charles I. Also published *Observations on the Articles of Peace* and *Eikonoklastes*.
- 1651 Moved to his new home. His son John was born. Published *Defensio pro populo Anglicano*.
- 1652 Became completely blind. His son John died under mysterious circumstances. His wife died giving birth to Milton's third daughter, Deborah.
- 1654 Published *Defensio Secunda*.
- 1656 Married Katherine Woodcock.
- 1657 Daughter Katherine was born.
- 1658 His wife Katherine died.
- 1659 Published *A Treatise of Civil Power, Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* and *The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church*. After the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658, Milton's political fortune reversed and he was arrested in October 1659 and released in December 1659 shortly.
- 1663 Married Elizabeth Minshull.
- 1667 Published *Paradise Lost* in ten books, though he had started working on the epic in 1660s.
- 1669 Published *Accidence Commenced Grammar*.
- 1670 Published *History of Britain*.
- 1671 Published both *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes*.
- 1672 Published *Art of Logic*.
- 1673 Published *Of True Religion and Poems*. . .
- 1674 Published the second edition of *Paradise Lost* in twelve books.

He died of a gout attack on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1674 at the age of 66.

### 3.2 Introduction to *Paradise Lost*

John Milton had decided to write an epic when he was in Cambridge studying Latin. He had in mind to write an epic poem on King Arthur as he was then quite familiar with epics like Homer's the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*. But during his tour to Europe, he might have finalized his idea to write an epic when he met Giovanni Batista and Torquato Tasso. Actually he wanted to write his epic poem following the pattern of the great poets like Homer and Virgil. His idea to write an epic on King Arthur changed in a course of time. There are so many reasons for this change in his mind. He witnessed number of experiences in his life with ups and downs in his political career. It is in the sense rise and fall in his life. He was even imprisoned once but, fortunately enough, he was released within a short period. He experienced disgraceful life with full of uncertainties. At this time, his eyesight had gone and he became totally blind. His two wives died and also two children. Now his idea to write an epic with nationalistic theme had changed and started writing it on a Christian theme.

One cannot claim exactly when Milton began to write *Paradise Lost*. According to some critics he might have thinking of it since 1642 because the characters like Satan appeared in his poems since then. Some think that he had the idea of such writing in his mind during 1660s. But actually Milton had started writing parts of *Paradise Lost* after 1660. During this period he decided not to follow Homer and Virgil but produce his own Christian epic. He even decided to use unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, instead of hexameter. It was then the mostly used poetic meter in English. He even chose a different kind of plot in which Satan plays an important role.

#### 3.2.1 Summary of *Paradise Lost* (Book I)

Milton starts his epic with the Prologue and Invocation in the first twenty-six lines. The subject of the poem is introduced in the very beginning of the epic where the speaker of the poem appeals to muses to speak on the disobedience of man:

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of *Eden*, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,  
Sing Heav'nly Muse, . . . (lines 1-6)

The speaker even asks the muses to inspire him and give him ability to sing on the Fall of Man. The lines refer to the Biblical myth of Adam and Eve's sin to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree i.e. the Tree of Knowledge which resulted in expelling Adam and Eve from the Heaven. And thus they became mortal, in the sense the death was brought into to the world due to the sin, and then Man's redemption by Jesus Christ. According to him, the fall of humankind into sin and death was a part of God's greater plan, and that plan is justified.

After the prologue and invocation, from lines 27 onwards, Milton begins with the narration of how Adam and Eve's disobedience was the result of a serpent's deception. This serpent is none other than Satan who had been expelled from the Heaven into the Hell defeated by God.

Satan is described lying on the lake of a burning inferno; he is described as gigantic, and compared to a Titan or the Leviathan. Next to him lies his second in command, Beelzebub in the lake of fire which gives off darkness instead of light. Milton calls the place as Chaos. Breaking the horrid silence, Satan now talks of their terrible position in the Hell. Satan describes how he and other angels fought with God and lost in the battle. Although they have been beaten, he says, all is not lost. Thus he has no intention to repent the act of rebellion against God. He even thinks of continuing his struggle against God. But Beelzebub is not sure as he thinks that God cannot be overpowered. Then Satan tells him that they can at least pervert God's good works to evil purposes:

To do aught good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his Providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil; (159-65)

Their goal from now on is to be evil. If God does something good, they will try to twist it up.

With great efforts, Satan is able to free himself from his chains and rise from the fire. He flies to a dry plain and Beelzebub follows him. The narrator describes him saying that he is much bigger than any of the famous giants of classical mythology or the Bible. He is so big that a sailor might mistake him for an island and attempt to moor his boat there. Then Satan calls all other angels who are fallen from the Heaven to join him. All the devils are formerly angels who have chosen to follow Satan in his rebellion, and God still intends to turn their evil deeds towards the good. The fallen angels are scatters on the lake like a whole bunch of leaves, or just like a whole bunch of reeds in the Red Sea. Satan asks them to rise up or remain fallen forever. They rise up quickly as if they have been caught napping while on duty. All of them rise one after another from the lake of fire and join their leader, Satan. They assemble in squadrons like an organized army. They are large in number, and the leaders of the squadrons assemble close to Satan who is now the great commander.

The first to come to join Satan is Moloch, who is known as a god requiring human sacrifices, particularly, infants. He is worshipped by the Ammonites. He is described as having a man's body with a calf's head. He is covered with blood; he has deceived Solomon to build a temple for him. Then comes Chemos, who is associated with lust and worshiped by Moabites who are neighbours to the Ammonites. After Israelites made it out of Egypt, they started spending a lot of time with non-Hebrew people and eventually started worshipping Chemos. Next come Baalim and Ashtaroth who can assume either sex and any shape and dimension in the execution of their purposes. They are referred to male and female pagan deities found in the middle-east, especially, Syria, Iraq and Jordan. Baal, the Sun-God, is worshipped under different names in different areas; Baalim is a collective noun referring to all the forms. Ashtaroth or Astarte is a collective term which refers to the Moon-Goddess. She is worshipped by Phoenician virgins and also Israelites. Astarte is a fertility goddess represented as a woman with a bull's head whose horns are in the shape of a crescent moon.

Thammuz comes next. He is the Phoenician name for Adonis, the beloved of Aphrodite. He is supposed to be wounded every year causing the river Adonis, which flows from Lebanon, to become purplish because of his blood. Next to come is Dagon, a Philistine sea-god, whose upper half is man and the lower fish. After him

comes Rimmon. He is a Phonician god, who was worshipped in what is now modern-day Syria. Then come the bestial and beastly Egyptian gods with animal heads – Isis, Osiris and Orus. The invasion of Olympus by the Giants forced some of the gods to migrate to Egypt in the disguise of various animals. Osiris represented as a bull and his wife Isis as a cow. The last to come is Belial whose name in Hebrew means ‘wickedness’. He is not an actual deity but personifies evil. He can be found everywhere though no temple was built for him. The narrator explains that there are a lot of other fallen angels which cannot be named because it will take forever to name all of them as there are also the Olympian gods who were worshipped by the ancient Greeks.

These fallen angels think that they are escaped from the chains through their own power, but Milton clears it that God himself has allowed them to do so. The devils look unhappy but they have some hope to find that Satan has not left hope. Satan believes that he would rather be a king in Hell than a servant in Heaven. He thinks that his own free intellect is as great as God’s will. Satan remarks that the mind can make its own Hell out of Heaven, or in his case, its own Heaven out of Hell. Satan demands that his flag be unfurled. When all the fallen angels see the flag, which shines like a meteor, the individual squadrons raise their flags, spears, and shields and roar with one loud voice. All the soldiers march to the tune of some hellish pipes and assemble in front of Satan. Now they all are waiting for his command. Satan tries three times to speak to his minions, but he keeps bursting into tears. He finally addresses the devil army saying that they still have power and so they will keep on opposing God. He calls them brave soldiers and says that nobody could have imagined defeating such awesome army. He advises them to fight against God with fraud or guile this time. The rumour-mill informs that God has decided to create another world. Satan now plans to distort the world with his evil deeds. When he ends his address, all the army men draw their swords as a sign of approval to the plan.

Under the influence of the speech, under the leadership of Mammon, a money-loving and greedy devil, all the fallen angels begin work to build a capital city for their empire. They find out the mineral resources in the mountains of Hell and dig out gold. A second group works to separate the ore from the rock with the help of liquid fire from the burning lake. The third group pours the ore into a mould. Under the direction of the architect, Mulciber, they construct a great temple with huge

pillars and a golden roof. It is a magnificent building that symbolizes the capital of Hell named Pandemonium. Pandemonium means 'all the demons' in Greek.

The huge number of demonic troops gather in the Pandemonium to hold summit. The devil army flying here and there is compared to a great swarm of bees. As the fallen angels are spirits, they can shrink from huge winged creatures to the smallest size so that they can all fit in the Pandemonium. Only the squadron leaders retain their giant size and gather there for the great debate in Hell.

Here ends the first book in which the theme of the epic poem and the characters involved in the narration are introduced in detail.

### **Check your progress 1**

**A.** Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i. How does Milton begin the epic poem?
- ii. What is the main subject of the poem?
- iii. What is a meaning of a phrase 'one greater Man'?
- iv. Where are Satan and the fallen angels lying in the beginning of the poem?
- v. What is the word used by Milton to mention the Hell?
- vi. Why were Satan and other angels thrown in the Hell?
- vii. What is the goal of Satan?
- viii. How is Moloch described?

**B.** Complete the following sentences choosing the correct alternative.

- i. The fallen angels are scattered on the lake like .....  
a. bees                      b. birds                      c. leaves                      d. flowers
- ii. Satan is so big that a sailor might mistake him for .....  
a. an island                      b. a boat                      c. a tower                      d. a hill
- iii. .... deceives Adam and Eve to eat a forbidden fruit.  
a. God                      b. An angel                      c. A serpent                      d. A dog
- iv. .... starts work to build a capital city for the fallen angels.

- a. Baalim                      b. Moloch                      c. Thammuz                      d. Mammon
- v. .... is an architect to build Pandemonium.
- a. Dagon                      b. Astoreth                      c. Mulciber                      d. Isis

### 3.3 Characters in *Paradise Lost (Book I)*

After reading a detailed summary of the Book I, we will discuss the characters in the Book I. As this book introduces the epic poem which is divided into twelve books, there is limited number of characters.

#### 3.3.1 Major Character

**Satan** is the only major character in *Paradise Lost (Book I)*. Before his rebellion in the Heaven, he is known as Lucifer. He is then second only to God. Satan is one of God's favourite angels until his pride gets in the way and he turns away from God. He is envious to the Son so creates Sin. His incestuous relationship with his daughter produces a son, Death. Satan rebels against God. The Son defeats Satan and he is cast into the Hell. Now, Satan's goal is to corrupt God's new creations, Man and Earth. He has got success in bringing about the fall of Adam and Eve but has been punished for the act. He shifts his shape and tempts Eve in the form of a serpent.

In *Book I*, Milton introduces Satan lying on the lake of fire. He is gigantic and compared to a Titan or an island. Though he is punished by God for his rebellion, he is still trying to collect his courage to fight against God, by dismantling the plans of God to create a new world. As he is a devil, he can fly like a bird from one place to another. With the help of Beelzebub, he raises the army of the fallen angels. All the fallen angels join Satan and start building their Hellish Empire.

#### 3.3.2 Minor Characters

There are so many minor characters introduced in *Book I*. All of them are the fallen angels who have been cast from the Heaven because they have supported Satan's rebellion against God.

**Beelzebub:** Beelzebub is second only to Satan as the devil. He is Satan's second-in-command. Beelzebub is the name of one of the Syrian gods mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. In the Bible, the name Beelzebub is associated with the term "Lord of the Flies", the demon, who drives flies away from sacrifices. It is to Beelzebub that Satan addresses his first speech. He, with Satan, thinks of what they



can do after being cast into the Hell. Throughout the poem, he acts as a mouthpiece of Satan. He along with Satan decides to corrupt the newly created Earth by God.

**Moloch:** Moloch is the first of the Fallen Angels who comes to Satan when he appeals to join him. He is one of the generals of Satan's army. He is an authoritarian military angel, who would rather fight and lose battles than be complacent and passive. He is the god of cruelty to whom infants used to be sacrificed. He is a rash, irrational and murderous devil. He is worshipped by the Ammonites and his influence spreads to neighbouring areas such as the sacred valley of Hinnom, south-east of Jerusalem. Moloch is depicted as having a man's body with a calf's head. The idol is hollow and filled with fire, into which children are fed. Solomon is persuaded by his wives to build temples to Moloch, Chemos and Astarte on the Mount of Olives.

**Chemos:** Chemos was a second fallen angel who comes to Satan. He is associated with lust and is worshipped by the Maobites who are neighbours to the Ammonites. After Israelites made it out of Egypt, they started spending a lot of time with non-Hebrew people and eventually started worshipping Chemos.

**Ashtaroth:** Ashtaroth is a version of Aphrodite revered as Astarte by the Phoenicians. Astarte is a fertility goddess represented as a woman with a bull's head whose horns are in the shape of a crescent moon. She is originally worshipped in Sidon.

**Thammuz:** Thammuz is the Phoenician name for Adonis, the beloved of Aphrodite. He is supposed to be wounded every year causing the river Adonis, which flows from Lebanon, to become purplish because of his blood. The river Adonis flows from its source in Lebanon carrying its reddish soil. The Syrian mourners attribute the red colour to the blood of the slain god.

**Dagon:** Dagon is a Philistine sea-god having the upper half as man and the lower fish. After capturing the Ark of God, the Philistines place it next to Dagon, and are surprised to find the image of Dagon face downwards. He is worshipped in five chief cities, namely, Palestine, Gath, Ascalon, Accaron and Gaza.

**Rimmon:** Rimmon is also a Fallen Angel. He is a Phonician god, who was worshipped in what is now modern-day Syria.

**Belial:** The last Fallen Angel come to Satan is Belial. He is one of the principal devils in the Hell. His name in Hebrew means ‘wickedness’. He is not an actual deity but personifies evil. He can be found everywhere though no temple was built for him. He argues against any further war with God. He does so because of his sloth and inactivity. He is eloquent and learned so he is able to convince many devils with his faulty reasoning.

**Mammon:** Mammon leads the work of constructing a Hellish capital. He is a money-loving and greedy devil. He thinks that the fallen angels should try to build their own kingdom and make their life as bearable as possible in the Hell.

**Mulciber:** Mulciber is the architect of the construction of the capital of the Hell named Pandemonium.

### Check your progress 2

- A. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:
- What is the name of Satan before his rebellion against God?
  - How does Satan tempt Eve to eat a forbidden fruit?
  - Who is lying next to Satan in the Hell?
  - How does Astarte is described?
  - Why does the river Adonis become reddish?
- B. Complete the following sentences choosing the correct alternative.
- ..... defeats Satan and casts into the Hell.  
a. Adam                      b. The Son                      c. Eve                      d. Solomon
  - Beelzebub acts as ..... to Satan in *Paradise Lost*.  
a. a friend                      b. a teacher                      c. a mouthpiece                      d. an agent
  - ..... are sacrificed to Moloch.  
a. Infants                      b. Animals                      c. Elders                      d. None
  - A meaning of ‘Belial’ in Hebrew is .....  
a. softness                      b. gentle                      c. weakness                      d. wickedness
  - ..... the architect of Pandemonium.  
a. Satan                      b. Moloch                      c. Mulciber                      d. Mammon

C. Match the characters in a column X with their description in a column Y.

X	Y
Satan	wounded every year
Beelzebub	an architect of the Hellish capital
Dagon	a military angel
Thammuz	a second-in-command to Satan
Mulciber	Lucifer
Mammon	half man and half fish
Moloch	money-loving and greedy

### 3.4 Themes

Milton has explored various ideas in *Paradise Lost*. In the prologue and invocation, he has cleared his plan of writing the epic poem. After reading the *Book I*, we come across various themes that Milton has tried to put forth before the readers.

#### **Disobedience:**

In the very first line of the poem, Milton has stated his idea that he is going to sing on the theme “Of Man’s First Disobedience”. Milton starts narrating the story of Adam and Eve. He tells in details how they disobeyed the order of God. Satan has also disobeyed the God and so cast from the Heaven into the Hell. According to Milton, the Heaven is at the top and the Hell at the bottom, and the Earth is placed in between the Heaven and the Hell.

As far as the human beings are concerned, Adam and Eve are the first human beings to disobey God, and Satan is the first of all God’s creation to disobey. Satan decides to rebel against God but he is defeated by God and cast into the Hell along with all the angels who supported him in his war against the God. Adam and Eve also eat the fruit of the Knowledge by disobeying the order of God. They are deceived by the serpent, that is, Satan. So Adam and Eve are also thrown out of the Heaven that gives birth to Death. Satan decides to fight against the God and continue disobedience to God, but Adam and Eve understand their mistake, and repent their disobedience to God. It is said they will try to correct themselves with their deeds on

the Earth. In the end, Milton tells that obedience to God, even after repeated fall, can lead to salvation of humankind. Here Milton gives a message to everyone that if anybody disobeys God, he will be punished by Him and suffered a lot in the Hell or on the Earth. Only obedience to God will receive blessings of God and ultimately, redemption from sin.

### **Sin and Fall:**

Milton has complete faith in Christianity so he has decided to write an epic poem on the theme of Fall of Man. He has taken the idea as narrated in the Bible and accordingly planned his epic. The Genesis narrates the story to the Fall of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve commit the mistake by eating a fruit of the Tree of Knowledge which is forbidden by God. So they are thrown on the Earth and become mortals. Thus they commit the Original Sin and have to suffer a lot on the Earth as human beings. Satan also faces his fall only because he is envious of the God. He challenges and rebels against the God and is defeated in the war. He has been punished for his Sin of disobedience to God and so cast into the Hell. While commenting on the theme of *Paradise Lost*, Coleridge says, “It represents origin of evil and the combat of evil and good, it contains matter of deep interest to all mankind, as forming the basis of all religion and the true occasion of all philosophy whatsoever.”

### **Order and Disruption:**

Milton in *Paradise Lost* presents the idea of a universal order and its proper functioning. In the very beginning of the epic poem, Milton narrates how Lucifer acts against the order and rebels against God. He is supported by host of other angels who also face the same fate as Lucifer. Lucifer’s rebellion causes his fall and the fall of other angels too. They all are sent into the Hell and have to face consequences of their deed in Heaven.

The disruption also leads to the temptation of Adam and Eve through the evil plot of the Satan to make them eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge against the ordinance of God. Adam and Eve also have tried to change the order of things and have to face consequences. Before the Fall, Eve used to obey Adam, but due to temptation, Adam obeyed Eve. Thus he violates the natural order of things and has to face disastrous consequences as human beings. Both of them have to suffer on the Earth, and through suffering they can be redeemed by God only.

Lucifer, that is, Satan also disrupts the order by not accepting the superiority of God, and, therefore, is banished from Heaven along with other angels who support him. In Hell, Satan creates his own hierarchical order and even decides to disrupt the order that God is going to create hence forth.

Along with these three themes explained above there are also some other themes like the theme of evil and punishment, the theme of lie and deceit, the theme of revenge, the theme of human interest, the theme of conflict between good and evil, the theme of jealousy, etc which are explored in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

### Check your progress 3

- A. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:
- What is the first sin made by Adam and Eve?
  - Where has Satan been sent by God after his disobedience?
  - Where is the Earth placed?
  - Who support Satan in his rebel against God?
  - What is the name of a fruit tree in Heaven?
- B. Complete the following sentences choosing the correct alternative.
- The..... leads to the temptation of Adam and Eve.  
a. sin                      b. love                      c. envy                      d. disruption
  - When they commit sin, Adam and Eve are sent on .....  
a. the moon              b. the planet              c. the earth              d. the sun
  - Adam and Eve can be redeemed by ..... of their sufferings.  
a. God                      b. angels                      c. men                      d. none
  - By not accepting .....of God, Satan disrupts the order.  
a. punishment              b. superiority              c. will                      d. grace

### 3.5 Glossary:

**Legions of Angels:** a large number of angels

**Canaan:** the Land of Promise, a name for Palestine in the Old Testament

**infernal:** of Hell

**Forbidden Tree:** Tree of Knowledge

**one greater man:** Jesus Christ

**Heav'nly Muse:** The goddess of poetry

**Oreb:** Mount Horeb, the mountain of God in the Old Testament

**the most High:** the Creator

**combustion:** fire

**bottomless perdition:** hell, damnation

**eternal Warr Irreconcilable:** The war against God

**fiery Surge:** the ocean of fire

**billows:** waves

**incumbent:** resting

**sufferance:** permission

**Ethereal temper:** made from heavenly material

**Tuscan Artist:** Galileo

**Marle:** soil

**Smote:** struck

**Potentates:** rulers

**Amrams Son:** Moses

**brimstone:** sulphur, the fuel of hell-fire

**cumbrous:** clumsy

**damp:** depressed

**Staff:** a pole used to support a flag

**Anon:** right away

**Distends:** swells

**Begirt:** surrounded

**Jousted:** fought  
**intrencht:** left deep marks on  
**amerc't:** deprived  
**our better part:** our intelligence  
**beatific:** made blessed  
**Memphian:** Egyptian  
**reprobate:** perverse  
**Scummd:** purified  
**Dulcet:** soft and sweet  
**brazen:** made of brass  
**expatiate:** argue about  
**Arbitress:** a spectator  
**jocond:** joyful  
**incorporeal:** without a body

### 3.6 Answers to check your progress

#### Check your progress 1

- A. i. by appealing to the muse  
ii. the disobedience of man  
iii. Jesus Christ  
iv. near the lake of fire  
v. Chaos  
vi. for their rebellion against God  
vii. to distort the plans of God  
viii. as having a man's body with a calf's head
- B. i. bees  
ii. an island

- iii. a serpent
- iv. Mammon
- v. Mulciber

**Check your progress 2**

- A.
  - i. Lucifer
  - ii. as a serpent
  - iii. Beelzebub
  - iv. a woman with a bull's head
  - v. due to Tammuz's blood.
- B.
  - i. the Son
  - ii. a mouthpiece
  - iii. infants
  - iv. wickedness
  - v. Mulciber

**Check your progress 3**

- A.
  - i. Eating a fruit of a forbidden tree
  - ii. into the Hell
  - iii. in between the Heaven and the Hell
  - iv. the other angels in the Heaven
  - v. the Tree of Knowledge
- B.
  - i. disruption
  - ii. the earth
  - iii. God
  - iv. superiority



### 3.7 Exercises

**A. Answer the following question in detail:**

- i. Explain in details whether Satan is the hero of the poem?
- ii. How does God punish for disobedience and causing sin?
- iii. Analyze the poem as an epic poem.
- iv. Write a detailed note on the theme of Christianity
- v. Write in detail a note on the Fallen Angels

**B. Write short notes on the following:**

- i. Supernatural elements in *Paradise Lost*
- ii. Milton's aim of writing the poem
- iii. The message of the poem
- iv. The theme of disobedience of the poem
- v. The theme of evil and punishment of the poem
- vi. The fall of Adam and Eve

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## Unit-4

### Elizabethan and Metaphysical Poetry (Selected Poems)

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## **4.0 Objectives:**

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand the characteristics of Elizabethan poetry and Metaphysical poetry.
- Explain Elizabethan sonnets and Metaphysical poems
- Find relationship between Elizabethan poetry and Metaphysical poetry.

## **4.1 Introduction:**

The previous unit deals with Epic tradition and the epic of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Book I). The present unit deals with Elizabethan poetry and Metaphysical poetry. The Elizabethan age was regarded as a great age of English literature. English literature flourished and witnessed its culmination during this age. The Elizabethan literature refers to the bodies of work emerged during the period of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603). However, the proper Elizabethan literary age began in 1579 with the publication of Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*. The term 'metaphysical' applied to poetry was first used by Dr. Johnson. He borrowed the term from Dryden. Once Dryden remarked that 'he (Donne) affects the metaphysics.' Dr. Johnson picked up the term and used for a group of the 17th Century poets. The poets, who wrote during the 17th century under the impact of John Donne, are described as metaphysical poets. In short, Donne and his followers are stamped as metaphysical poets. The metaphysical poetry covers a long period of time i. e from 1592 to 1678.

## 4.2 Edmund Spenser: Sonnets from *Amoretti*:

*Amoretti* is a series of 88 sonnets. Such sonnet sequences in Petrarch's manner were extremely popular in England under the influence of the widespread enthusiasm for Italian literature. Spenser's sonnets describe the progress of his love for Elizabeth Boyle, whom he married in 1594. Here the poet's beloved is not a married lady but his own fiancée. In this respect Spenser's sonnets are different from the courtly love-tradition. Hence his sonnets have a purity of their own and are free from fiery sensual passion. They describe an unchanging love that moves steadily towards its goal, confident of its success. The sonnets are first describing the unrelenting nature of the mistress and as a result the lover's dejection and agony. But finally we notice that his unchanging love is rewarded.

Edmund Spenser is credited with the creation of an eponymous sonnet style, taking his place along with such luminaries as Petrarch, Shakespeare, and Milton. The Spenserian sonnet was featured in the poet's epic poem, *The Faerie Queene*. The Spenserian sonnet is also referred to as the Spenserian stanza when referring to his long poem. The Spenserian sonnet features three quatrains and a couplet, just as does the Shakespearean; however, the rhyme scheme differs slightly. While the Shakespearean sonnet's rhyme scheme is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG, the Spenserian features two fewer rhymes with the scheme, ABAB BCBC CDCD EE.

### 4.2.1 Sonnet 75: One Day I Wrote Her Name Upon the Strand (Summary):

The first quatrain finds the speaker reporting that he had written his beloved's name upon the sandy seashore. Of course, the water rushed over this sandy name and vanished it to nil. But then he announces that he repeated his vain gesture, and yet once again the waves rode in and erased the name. The speaker seems to address an unknown party, but he is speaking about his sweetheart, fiancée, or lover, and it become obvious that he means this message to be intended for her alone. This fantasy exchanges is a clever technique allowing the speaker to invent a conversation that could take place but likely has not. The speaker's use of ellipsis is also genius, "hand" replacing "handwriting" allows for a convenient rhyme.

The speaker's sweetheart then castigates the speaker for attempting to accomplish the impossible: to make a mortal immortal. She reminds her lover that not only will the ocean waves obliterate her name, but in time she herself will vanish from the shores of life. The beloved labels her lover a man of vanity for having the notion that he can buck the eternal rounds of life and death by such a limp gesture. The economic speaker again employs the brilliant use of ellipses to keep his rhythm intact: instead of "eke out" he inserts "eke," which allows the reader to understand and supply the necessary missing term.

The speaker, however, is having none of the nonsense of mortality. He admits that lesser things may, indeed, succumb to the whims of the mortal realm, but she is not of those lesser things. The speaker will, in fact, immortalize her in his poems. She possesses such glory as to allow him the ability to "frame" her for eternity. His poems will live far beyond the lives of the two lovers, gaining for them an immortality upon which they likely had not, heretofore, cogitated. The notion is a poetic staple from the birth of poetry itself. Poets have been claiming to immortalize their subjects by displaying them in verse that will continue to be published and read far and wide. Such a notion may seem like a mere poet's vanity, but it has proven true for all of the sonnet makers, sonnet style originators, and other poets who have fashioned their beloveds, and other interests in their verse. We need only look to Spenser, Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, and Walt Whitman for verification of the ability of poetry to immortalize.

The speaker then professes that immortality is in the offing for himself as well as his beloved: their "love shall live." And it will be renewed in the future every time a reader encounters the speaker's poems.

#### **4.2.2 Sonnet 79: Men Call You Fayre, And You Doe Credit It (Summary):**

Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti*: Sonnet 79 centers on the idea of what true beauty is. Spenser states that true beauty comes from God; intelligence and morality are the two qualities that should be held in one's highest praises. Outer beauty fades, but inner beauty lasts forever and in the end touches more people. "The critical consensus is that this poem blends Christian and Neoplatonic terms to express the poet's vision of the force and meaning of love" (Huey 22).

The speaker tells his beloved that men call her "fayre" (fair/beautiful) and she believes it, because she looks herself in the mirror daily and can see that she is beautiful. The speaker tells her that her beauty is not the fairest thing about her; rather it is her "gentle wit" (intelligence) and "virtuous mind" (moral, chaste) that make her beautiful. It is her wit and virtuousness that are the two qualities that the speaker praises above all others.

No matter how beautiful you are now, in time, your looks will fade. The only thing that lasts forever is that which outlasts the flesh. Beauty is fleeting. True beauty is that which comes from within, such as wit and virtuousness. It is the only thing that is permanent and free from corruption. People judge others by how they look on the outside, so people tend to adorn themselves in fancy clothes and wear make-up to make themselves look as attractive as possible to others. The speaker states that outer beauty is not as important as inner beauty. By stressing that his beloved's inner beauty is more praiseworthy than her outer beauty shows that he knows her more intimately than others do.

True beauty proves to be both divine and comes from heaven. True beauty comes from God, the source of perfection. She is born from heaven, angelic. She is the prime example of true beauty because she comes to the Lord.

The only thing that is truly fair is that which was made by Him, and everything else fades like a flower that wilts and dies.

## Section I

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) The speaker wrote his beloved's name upon the -----.  
a) wall                      b) sand                      c) table                      d) note-book
- 2) The beloved labels her lover as a -----.  
a) vain man              b) confident man      c) loyal man              d) cruel man.
- 3) The speaker in *One Day I Wrote Her Name Upon the Strand* wants to -----  
--- his love.  
a) confess              b) immortalize      c) moralise              d) reject

- 4) Spenser states that true beauty comes -----.
- a) inheritance    b) father                      c) mother                      d) God
- 5) According to the poet beauty is -----.
- a) permanent    b) fleeting                      c) shadowy                      d) dark

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) What is the name of sonnet sequence of Spenser?
- 2) To whom, the sonnets of Spenser are addressed?
- 3) How many sonnets are in *Amoretti*?
- 4) What is the quality of his beloved mentioned in the poem?
- 5) What is more important in beauty?

### **4.3 Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)**

Sir Philip Sidney was born at Penshurst, Kent, England, on November 30, 1554, to Lady Mary and Sir Henry Sidney, the latter a lord deputy of Ireland and lord president of the Marches of Wales. Sir Henry Sidney's royal appointment in Wales kept him away from home for much of the young Sidney's childhood. Sidney's mother later became a lady-in-waiting to Queen Elizabeth. She was so closely associated with the queen's care that she contracted smallpox while attending to the queen during her recovery from the illness in 1562. Unfortunately, the disease disfigured Lady Mary's face to the extent that she could no longer appear in court.

Sidney began school at Shrewsbury School in October 1564, along with a boy named Fulke Greville, who would grow to be a close, lifelong friend of Sidney's. In fact, Greville pursued writing and eventually became Sidney's biographer. At Shrewsbury, Sidney learned languages (including Latin), religion, grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, and other subjects typical of a classical education. Sidney attended Oxford but did not graduate. He traveled more widely than was common for a young man in his time, seeing a great deal of Europe and making well-connected friends along the way. He was in Paris for the horror of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre and the Protestant-Catholic rioting and violence that followed throughout



France. Sidney himself was a staunch Protestant, as his friend and mentor Hubert Languet strongly guided him in that direction in his youth.

Upon returning to England, Sidney settled into life as an important courtier, going on diplomatic visits and spurring on young authors he found promising. Among these was Edmund Spenser. Unfortunately, Sidney was temporarily relieved of his position in the court because of his vocal criticism of the queen's potential engagement to a French family. He spent his time away from court with his sister and wrote a lengthy pastoral romantic poetry series called *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, which includes "Ye Goatherd Gods." Sidney's ability to characterize different types of women in this work and others continues to be a point of acclaim among literary scholars.

After learning that certain Puritan scholars were then writing against poetry, Sidney wrote his *The Defence of Poesy*. Around 1576, Sidney began the first sonnet cycle, and one of the greatest, in Elizabethan literature. It is called *Astrophil and Stella*, and it reflects the agony and ecstasy of a man who loves a woman who is minimally responsive to his passion for her. Scholars agree that these poems came from Sidney's lengthy relationship with Penelope Devereaux. While the two eventually married other people, the poetry reveals much about Sidney's feelings for her.

In 1585, Sidney responded to the call for young soldiers to fight for Protestantism in the Low Countries against Spain. He was seriously injured on September 13, 1586, and died at Anhelm, in the Netherlands, twenty-six days later, at the age of thirty-two. All of his poetry was published posthumously to great acclaim.

#### **4.3.1 'Ye Goatherd God' (Summary):**

The first stanza of "Ye Goatherd Gods" is spoken by Strephon. He and Klaius are shepherds in Sidney's larger work *Arcadia*, in which this poem originally appeared. In this stanza, Strephon appeals to the gods, nymphs, and satyrs, all of whom are common figures in pastoral poetry. These figures and the landscape—valleys, grass, and woods—establish the setting. Strephon then advises the gods,

nymphs, and satyrs to grant the favour of listening to his complaining music. He says that his woes come in the morning and stay with him through the evening.

In the second stanza, Klaius appeals to the heavens in his woe. He addresses first Mercury (which can be seen in the evening), then Diana the huntress (which is the moon), and finally the morning star (or Venus). As in the first stanza, this stanza marks out time by the passing of the day. Klaius also uses Strephon's approach of including landscape in his stanza, likewise emphasizing the outdoor and pastoral. Klaius's fifth line echoes Strephon's fourth line exactly; in both, the shepherds ask the ones they address to lend their ears to the music of complaint. In the last line, Klaius admits that his woeful song makes Echo grow weary in the forests.

In the third stanza, Strephon recalls his carefree days in the forests enjoying shade and game playing. He was known and loved for his music but now is banished because of his despair. Instead of playing enjoyable music, he is now like a screech owl to himself. The days of contentment and delight in music are gone, destroyed by his sorrows.

Klaius, in the fourth stanza, also remembers back to a simpler time of hunting in the forest and personifying music of the valleys. Now that his sadness has overtaken him, the whole day is so dark and absent of light that he feels that all day is evening time. His perception of the world is that it is now overwhelming and impossible to conquer. He likens a molehill to a mountain and claims that his crying has replaced music in filling the vales.

In the fifth stanza, Strephon describes his music as a swan's song; the swan supposedly only sang before it died. He says that only his wails greet the morning, and they are strong enough to climb mountains. His thoughts are no longer like the forests he once loved but are now like barren deserts. It has also been a long time, he says, since he experienced joy or a respected place in society.

Klaius says in the sixth stanza that it has been a long time since the other people in the valley—who are happy—asked him to stop disrupting their lives with his music. He has grown accustomed to hating both the evening and the morning, as well as to having his thoughts pursue him like wild animals. He wonders if he might not be better underneath a mountain, presumably meaning dead and buried.

In the seventh stanza, Strephon relates his changed perceptions of the world since his sorrow overtook him. He now sees majestic mountains as gloomy valleys. Strephon anthropomorphizes nature by projecting onto it his own emotions, past and present. What he once saw in the mountains was what he saw in himself, and he now sees them as flattened and dejected, just as he sees himself. In the forest, he hears nightingales and owls, but their music is intermingled. Where he once found solace in the morning, he now feels only the serene that comes in the evening; *serene* here refers not to peacefulness but to damp evening air that was believed to make people sick

In the eighth stanza, Klaius resumes Strephon's discussion of the evening air, finding filth in it. He adds that at sunrise, he detects a foul odour; this is the scent of the flowers, but his perception of the world has changed as dramatically as Strephon's has. Instead of finding beauty in the sight and scent of the flowers, he finds ugliness and offense. His perception is so altered that he describes the lovely music of the morning as being like the horrific cries of men being killed in the forest.

Strephon says in the ninth stanza that he would like to set fire to the forests and bid the sun farewell every night. He sends curses to those who find music. He envies the mountains and hates the valleys. His hatred extends to every part of everyday—the night, the evening, the day, and the morning.

In the tenth stanza, Klaius also delivers a curse, but his is for himself. He describes himself as lower than the lowest valley. He has no desire ever to see another evening, and he proclaims his own self-loathing. He even covers his ears to block the sound of music.

At last, in the eleventh stanza, Strephon talks directly about the woman he and Klaius love. Reading more of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, the reader would know that the object of the shepherds' love is Urania. Urania was one of the Greek muses, and her area of influence was astronomy and astrology. During the Renaissance, Urania was adopted as the muse of Christian poets.

Strephon says that the woman creates music, and it is perfect. Her beauty outshines the morning, and her grandeur surpasses the mountains. The landscape is depicted as having beauty and stateliness, but it is no match for the woman the shepherds' love. For all their complaining about the landscape, it must actually be

beautiful to them for them to compare their love to it. Strephon says that when she left, he was cast down into utter darkness.

Klailus begins the twelfth stanza with the same two words that Strephon used to begin the eleventh stanza. This parallel not only keeps the reader's attention on the new subject of the woman but also indicates that Klailus is continuing Strephon's mode of expression. Klailus says that compared to the woman they love, the Alps are nothing but valleys. He adds that her slightest utterance brings music into existence, and her actions dictate the movements of the heavens and the lushness of the pastures. In their infatuation, the shepherds embrace hyperbole in describing Urania.

The concluding stanza, unlike the preceding six-line stanzas, is a tristich. A tristich is a stanza with three lines that do not necessarily rhyme (unlike a tercet, which is a three-lined rhyming stanza). In the tristich, Strephon and Klailus speak together. They reiterate that the nature that surrounds them will serve as witnesses to their sorrow. They say that their music actually makes nature wretched. They conclude with the declaration that the same plaintive song is what they sing in the morning and in the evening.

#### **4.3.2 'The Nightingale' (Summary):**

It was a dark and stormy night... just kidding, Shmoopers. It's a dark and quiet night, and the speaker welcomes his friend and her sister to join him on a bridge overlooking a green bit of nature, where they begin chatting about the night sky. A nightingale interrupts their chat with its melancholy song. But wait, says the speaker. Who decided that it sounds melancholy?

Nature is never melancholy, he argues. It all just depends on the mood of the person who is listening. In fact, he goes on to say, everyone would benefit from spending more time in nature, really experiencing it, rather than projecting their current feelings onto it. He then recounts a story about a pretty grove where a maiden makes nightly visits to listen to the birds. In a fairy-tale-esque twist, he says that, every time the moon comes out, the grove turns into a chorus of songs.

At the end of the night, the speaker bids everyone (including the nightingale) farewell, but not before reminiscing how his son came to associate nature, and especially the night sky, with joy. He hopes that his son will always enjoy the night

sky, even if most people seem to associate night with gloom and doom in the same way they associate the nightingale's song with sorrow.

#### **4.3.3 'Ring Out Your Bells' (Summary):**

"Ring out your bells" is part of a miscellaneous collection of thirty-two sonnets and songs. This song is divided into four stanzas, each composed of six lines of verse and four lines of choral refrain. The speaker's opening request, addressed to his neighborly audience, suggests the ancient custom of tolling church bells to announce a local death. It also establishes the common funereal experience and the solemn tone for this poetic monologue about the death of love. The speaker distances himself from his own abstract emotion, the idea of love, by personifying it (giving love human attributes and treating it as if it were a real person). In this way, the concept of love, separated from himself, becomes a fictive character whose death is cause for his initial request. When love is viewed as a separate individual, the speaker can complain bitterly about his frustration and misery, the causes for love's infection, sickness and death, and his haughty mistress's abusive and capricious cruelty. Thus, there are three characters in this dramatic song: the speaker, his absent mistress, and love.

The idea of death, a universal event, introduces the situation and allows the speaker to appeal to a reader's sympathetic responses. When he urges his listeners to action—to ring the church bells, openly express grief, wail sorrowful songs, and read thirty requiem masses—the speaker clothes another commonplace occurrence, a romantic dispute and separation,

#### **Themes and Meanings**

"Ring out your bells" is a poem about the subject of love. However, it is the hidden driving force of desire behind the various forms of love that Sidney explores through the filter of his own experiences and feelings. Sidney's personal world included the political arena in Queen Elizabeth I's court. There, he and others sought the monarch's royal favour, which could give them government employment, financial rewards, or honours testifying to their worldly worth and virtue. Additionally, these courtiers courted noble patrons who could help arrange aristocratic marriages for them or help support their political, military, or literary

endeavours. Sidney had direct experience with frustrated desires in his attempts to solicit more than temporary governmental or military appointments from Queen Elizabeth.

The flattering compliments of Petrarchan love sonnets aimed at courting a lady's favours arise from the same ambitious urges of desire as the hyperboles (conscious exaggerations) used to court a queen or a noble. There is little difference between practices. Furthermore, when the Platonic lover suffers and rages about his mistress's scorn and rejection of his worth and faithfulness, his misery underlines the desire behind his egoistic self-love. Feelings of worth, honour, and personal identity grow from the self-validation gained from recognition or reward for deeds accomplished. Human courtiers such as Sidney felt equally discouraged and frustrated.

## Section II

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) *Ye Goatherd God* is spoken by -----.  
a) Strephon      b) Diana      c) Mercury      d) Venus
- 2) Klaius appeals to the ----- in his woe.  
a) gods      b) evils      c) heavens      d) nature
- 3) Strephon describes his music as a ----- song.  
a) swan's      b) nightingale's      c) fairy's      d) mermaid's
- 4) A Nightingale interrupts their chat with its ----- song.  
a) sweet      b) melancholy      c) love      d) artificial
- 5) *Ring out your bells* is a poem about the subject of -----.  
a) hate      b) cruelty      c) love      d) sorrow

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) What is pastoral poetry?
- 2) What is the name of sonnet sequence of Philip Sidney?
- 3) What is a tristich?
- 4) Whom does the speaker welcome in the poem, 'The Nightingale'?
- 5) How many characters are in the poem, *Ring out your Bells*?

## 4.4 Michael Drayton (1563-1631): Sonnets from IDEA

### Introduction:

**Michael** Drayton was born in 1563 as the son of a tanner of Harkshill in Warwickshire. He was brought up on the borders of the Forest of Arden, on the banks of the Ankor. There is no definite information if he had any university education. When he was ten, he entered the service of Sir Henry Goodere of Posworth, as a page. It seems that he cherished his poetic ambitions in his first youth and received encouragement from his guardian Sir Henry. However, his poetic production began rather late. He made his real beginning with *Idea. the Shepherd's Garland* (1593) which was inspired by Spenser. In 1594, he published his first sonnet sequence named *Ideas Mirror*. In 1596, he had turned to historical poetry and published his *The Barons' War* and *Historical Epistles of England* (1597). His satires, *The Owl* (1604) and *The Man in the Moon* were obscure and mediocre. Then he concentrated on his immense *Polyolbion*, which he planned before 1598 and of which the first 18 cantos appeared in 1613, the 12 others in 1622. This poem is described as his '*Strange Herculean Toil*'. He died in 1631 probably in London at the age of sixty-eight.

### 4.4.1 Sonnet No. 1: Into these loves who but for passion looks (Critical Analysis):

At the beginning of his sonnet, Drayton warns the reader: anyone looking just for passion in his or her love is advised to look elsewhere, because they will not find that in his poems. Look to other books, "which may better his labour satisfy." Basically, if you're reading sonnets just for some thrill of love and passion, you're in the wrong place. Drayton seems proud that he is immune to the slings and arrows of love, that he avoids its piercing dart. "No far-fetch'd sign shall ever wound by breast" he boasts, and he mocks other sonnets, "drest" (dressed) in "Ah me's!" and other breathy exclamations of love, the likes of which are nowhere to be seen in his work.

Rather, Drayton fancies himself a libertine, someone who seeks out pleasure as his whims take him, always mutable, "ever in motion." He ranges "sportively" in all humours, as rightly befits an English man. He cannot stay in one mode, but rather, he feels the need to explore, because his "verse is the image of [his] mind." I love that

image particularly, the verse being the very image of the mind. While I don't think it's healthy to declare "Love from mine eye a tear shall never wring" I do find the attitude of celebrating radical mental freedom highly appealing. As with all things poetic, it is surely an exaggeration, as no one is so unfeeling as to never cry. I think Drayton means to say that his poems will never be weepy stuff, dripping with idle tears of Love and Passion.

#### **4.4.2 Sonnet No. 61: Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part (Critical Analysis):**

Drayton's Sonnet, "Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part" is included sonnet No - 61 of Drayton's Sonnet cycle *Ideas Mirror*, comprising sixty three Sonnet's in all. The Sonnet is typically an Elizabethan one with remarkable grace of love and bitterness.

It is to be noted in this connection that Drayton's Sonnet - sequence of *Ideas Mirror* is no poetical work of very high order in poetical value, as a whole is rather mediocre. Yet the present sonnet, sonnet No -61 is highly impressive and well - executed specimen of Elizabethan sonnet. This is even estimated as the one specific sonnet that deserves to be ranked with some of Shakespeare's best workmanship.

The sonnet as already indicated is a good instance of the Elizabethan sonnet sequence. It well bears out how Drayton profited immensely from the study of Sidney's sonnet cycle *Astrophel and Stella*. His theme, whereas Sidney's is the sad and tender love of a true lover for an unresponsive lady love, a soft but deepest sense of farewell rings all over the sonnet. So, he feels it best to bid a graceful farewell to love --

"Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part"

There may be the touch of sadness in such a parting, but the lover wishes to retain no feeling of regret but to leave completely and calmly: "Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows. This painting of love is tended and graceful as in Sidney. The poet's tone is not merely quiet but also profound and here, again Drayton is found to echo Sidney a specific situation or event in the chronicle of love. This definitely added to the impressiveness of the sonnet.



Drayton's sonnet is also couched in the accepted convention of the Elizabethan sonnet. The concluding couplet however has a sort of novelty with the lover's fond hope for a happy change in the ladylove's attitude to him. Drayton's theme is typical Petrarchan a lover's passion and pangs for his fair mistress, who is not responsive, this and love. This has technique, Drayton is found to be a follower of Shakespeare.

As already noted, the opening of the sonnet is dramatic enough. The first quatrain speaks of the lover's separation and the lover's desire to have a graceful farewell from the lady. The second quatrain continues the contention of the previous one and contains the lover's entreaty to forget this matter of love altogether. There seems to be a turn of mood with the third quatrain that presents precisely the last phases of love. Of course, the thought is rounded off as in Shakespeare in the final couplet.

" Nor if thou would'st when all have given him over

From , Death of life trou might if him yet recaver ".

Drayton's Sonnet as pointed out already is in the Shakespearean form with three quatrains and a concluding couplet. A few more technical aspect of the poem need to be noted now. The entire sestet comprises only one sentence. Thus the third quatrain and the concluding couplet, as united one compacted into the sestet. The Sonnet is also really rich in imagery as evident in the third quatrain. Have faith innocence and death are here very usefully personified. There is a fictitious inversion of hyperbaton in the last line.

Drayton sonnet No - 61 is a gem of the Elizabethan sonnet. Here is easy and playful thoughts in a metaphysical strain in the first two quatrains. Indeed the sonnet well deserves such compliments from Rossetti as: "one of the finest of Elizabethan sonnets" or from Saintsbury as: "One among the ten or twelve finest sonnets in the world ".

This sonnet is a model of dramatic poem showing many qualities of great drama. It is one of the most popular of all sonnets in the English Literature.

The experience in the sonnet is that of quarreling and parting in anger, as if saying I don't want to see my beloved again. The speaker bids a bitter farewell to his beloved promising to forget her forever.

In the first quatrain, Drayton says that since there is no help, let him and his beloved 'kiss and part'. He can't gain her any more, and he will be glad with all his heart since it is a clean parting. But there is a clue that the speaker doesn't mean parting forever. To say 'let us kiss and part' is an indication that they are not leaving. Thus, it is not a quarrel.

In the second quatrain, the speaker tells his beloved to shake hands and cancel all the love promises they had. But in the second line, he seems not sure of their parting when he says 'And when we meet again'.

In the third quatrain, the speaker uses the allegory to reveal his point. Literally, we see a dying image, the speaker's pulse is failing. He is breathing his last breath, closing up his eyes. Allegorically, this is the image of dying love between the two lovers. When the priest kneels besides the man by his death, that means he is about to die.

In the couplet, when all people believe that he is going to die, and death is unavoidable, the speaker says that his beloved can bring him from death to life. Yet even at the moment of parting, while the speaker is shaking hands with his beloved, one little word or sigh of love from her would be enough to soften the speaker (The Love: Allegorically) and bring about a reconciliation. The tone in the sestet shifts from impatience to lyrical hope which reverses all that has been said before and leaves the road open to possess a solution.

### Section III

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) ----- is the name of sonnet sequence of Drayton.  
a) Amoretti      b) Astrophel and Stella   c) Ideas Mirror   d) Arcadia
- 2) Drayton fancies himself as a -----.  
a) libertine      b) dictator      c) happy man      d) sadist
- 3) The poem, *Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part* is a allegory of --  
-----.  
a) sorrow      b) love      c) happiness      d) despair

- 4) The opening of the sonnet, *Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part* is -----.  
 a) dramatic      b) abrupt      c) shocking      d) amazing
- 5) Drayton has written his sonnets on ----- fashion.  
 a) Shakespearean   b) Spenserian   c) Miltonic      d) Greek

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) How does Drayton warn his readers in *Into these loves who but for passion looks?*
- 2) What is the theme of *Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part?*
- 3) What is the meaning of “drest” in the poem, *Into these loves who but for passion looks?*
- 4) What is verse for Drayton?
- 5) How many sonnets are there in 'Ideas Mirror'?

## 4.5 John Donne

He is considered as the pre-eminent representative of the metaphysical poets. His works are noted for their strong, sensual style and include sonnets, love poems, religious poems, Latin translations, epigrams, elegies, songs, satires and sermons. His poetry is noted for its vibrancy of language and inventiveness of metaphor, especially compared to that of his contemporaries. Donne's style is characterized by abrupt openings and various paradoxes, ironies and dislocations. These features, along with his frequent dramatic or everyday speech rhythms, his tense syntax and his tough eloquence, were both a reaction against the smoothness of conventional Elizabethan poetry and an adaptation into English of European baroque and mannerist techniques. His early career was marked by poetry that bore immense knowledge of English society and he met that knowledge with sharp criticism. Another important theme in Donne's poetry is the idea of true religion, something that he spent much time considering and about which he often theorized. He wrote secular poems as well as erotic and love poems.

#### 4.5.1 A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning (Summary)

The speaker explains that he is forced to spend time apart from his lover, but before he leaves, he tells her that their farewell should not be the occasion for mourning and sorrow. In the same way that virtuous men die mildly and without complaint, he says, so they should leave without “tear-floods” and “sigh-tempests,” for to publicly announce their feelings in such a way would profane their love. The speaker says that when the earth moves, it brings “harms and fears,” but when the spheres experience “trepidation,” though the impact is greater, it is also innocent. The love of “dull sublunary lovers” cannot survive separation, but it removes that which constitutes the love itself; but the love he shares with his beloved is so refined and “Inter-assured of the mind” that they need not worry about missing “eyes, lips, and hands.”

Though he must go, their souls are still one, and, therefore, they are not enduring a breach, they are experiencing an “expansion”; in the same way that gold can be stretched by beating it “to aery thinness,” the soul they share will simply stretch to take in all the space between them. If their souls are separate, he says, they are like the feet of a compass: His lover’s soul is the fixed foot in the center, and his is the foot that moves around it. The firmness of the center foot makes the circle that the outer foot draws perfect: “Thy firmness makes my circle just, / And makes me end, where I begun.”

The nine stanzas of this Valediction are quite simple compared to many of Donne’s poems, which utilize strange metrical patterns overlaid jarringly on regular rhyme schemes. Here, each four-line stanza is quite unadorned, with an ABAB rhyme scheme and an iambic tetrameter meter.

#### Critical Analysis

“A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning” is one of Donne’s most famous and simplest poems and also probably his most direct statement of his ideal of spiritual love. For all his erotic carnality in poems, such as “The Flea,” Donne professed a devotion to a kind of spiritual love that transcended the merely physical. Here, anticipating a physical separation from his beloved, he invokes the nature of that spiritual love to ward off the “tear-floods” and “sigh-tempests” that might otherwise

attend on their farewell. The poem is essentially a sequence of metaphors and comparisons, each describing a way of looking at their separation that will help them to avoid the mourning forbidden by the poem's title.

First, the speaker says that their farewell should be as mild as the uncomplaining deaths of virtuous men, for to weep would be "profanation of our joys." Next, the speaker compares harmful "Moving of th' earth" to innocent "trepidation of the spheres," equating the first with "dull sublunary lovers' love" and the second with their love, "Inter-assured of the mind." Like the rumbling earth, the dull sublunary (sublunary meaning literally beneath the moon and also subject to the moon) lovers are all physical, unable to experience separation without losing the sensation that comprises and sustains their love. But the spiritual lovers "Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss," because, like the trepidation (vibration) of the spheres (the concentric globes that surrounded the earth in ancient astronomy), their love is not wholly physical. Also, like the trepidation of the spheres, their movement will not have the harmful consequences of an earthquake.

The speaker then declares that, since the lovers' two souls are one, his departure will simply expand the area of their unified soul, rather than cause a rift between them. If, however, their souls are "two" instead of "one", they are as the feet of a drafter's compass, connected, with the center foot fixing the orbit of the outer foot and helping it to describe a perfect circle. The compass (the instrument used for drawing circles) is one of Donne's most famous metaphors, and it is the perfect image to encapsulate the values of Donne's spiritual love, which is balanced, symmetrical, intellectual, serious, and beautiful in its polished simplicity.

#### **4.5.2 The Sun Rising (Summary)**

Lying in bed with his lover, the speaker chides the rising sun, calling it a "busy old fool," and asking why it must bother them through windows and curtains. Love is not subject to season or to time, he says, and he admonishes the sun—the "Saucy pedantic wretch"—to go and bother late schoolboys and sour apprentices, to tell the court-huntsmen that the King will ride, and to call the country ants to their harvesting.

Why should the sun think that his beams are strong? The speaker says that he could eclipse them simply by closing his eyes, except that he does not want to lose sight of his beloved for even an instant. He asks the sun—if the sun’s eyes have not been blinded by his lover’s eyes—to tell him by late tomorrow whether the treasures of India are in the same place they occupied yesterday or if they are now in bed with the speaker. He says that if the sun asks about the kings he shined on yesterday, he will learn that they all lie in bed with the speaker.

The speaker explains this claim by saying that his beloved is like every country in the world, and he is like every king; nothing else is real. Princes simply play at having countries; compared to what he has, all honour is mimicry and all wealth is alchemy. The sun, the speaker says, is half as happy as he and his lover are, for the fact that the world is contracted into their bed makes the sun’s job much easier—in its old age, it desires ease, and now all it has to do is shine on their bed and it shines on the whole world. “This bed thy centre is,” the speaker tells the sun, “these walls, thy sphere.”

### **Form**

The three regular stanzas of “The Sun Rising” are each ten lines long and follow a line-stress pattern of 4255445555—lines one, five, and six are metered in iambic tetrameter, line two is in dimeter, and lines three, four, and seven through ten are in pentameter. The rhyme scheme in each stanza is ABBACDCDEE.

### **Commentary**

One of Donne’s most charming and successful metaphysical love poems, “The Sun Rising” is built around a few hyperbolic assertions—first, that the sun is conscious and has the watchful personality of an old busybody; second, that love, as the speaker puts it, “no season knows, nor clime, / Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time”; third, that the speaker’s love affair is so important to the universe that kings and princes simply copy it, that the world is literally contained within their bedroom. Of course, each of these assertions simply describes figuratively a state of feeling—to the wakeful lover, the rising sun does seem like an intruder, irrelevant to the operations of love; to the man in love, the bedroom can seem to enclose all the matters in the world. The inspiration of this poem is to pretend that each of these subjective states of feeling is an objective truth.

Accordingly, Donne endows his speaker with language implying that what goes on in his head is primary over the world outside it; for instance, in the second stanza, the speaker tells the sun that it is not so powerful, since the speaker can cause an eclipse simply by closing his eyes. This kind of heedless, joyful arrogance is perfectly tuned to the consciousness of a new lover, and the speaker appropriately claims to have all the world's riches in his bed (India, he says, is not where the sun left it; it is in bed with him). The speaker captures the essence of his feeling in the final stanza, when, after taking pity on the sun and deciding to ease the burdens of his old age, he declares "Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere."

#### Section IV

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) The speaker in *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* tells his wife that their farewell should not be the occasion for -----.  
 a) celebration    b) mourning    c) sorrow    d) criticizing
- 2) In the song *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning* the poet forbids his wife weeping because -----.  
 a) he does not like tears while going on a tour.  
 b) her beauty would be spoiled.  
 c) good people do not make a show of their grief.  
 d) he does not want others to see her weeping.
- 3) According to Donne virtuous men die mildly and -----.  
 a) happily    b) sadly  
 c) without complaint    d) making complaint
- 4) The lover in the poem, *The Sun Rising* describes the rising sun as -----.  
 a) busy old fool    b) intelligent    c) unattractive    d) dark
- 5) The speaker claims that his beloved is like every country in the world and he is like every -----.  
 a) man    b) fool    c) commander    d) king

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) What is the occasion of *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*?
- 2) Mention two conceits used in *A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning*.
- 3) What is the expectation of a lover while leaving?
- 4) What is the rhyme scheme of *The Sun Rising*?
- 5) Where is the lover in the poem, *The Sun Rising*?

**4.6 Andrew Marvell:**

Andrew Marvell was a 17th century English metaphysical poet and an infrequent member of the English Parliament's House of Commons. Marvell was known as a strong supporter of Republican ideals during the English Revolution of 1649.

Andrew Marvell was born in 1621 in Winestead-in-Holderness, East Riding of Yorkshire to a clergyman father, also named Andrew Marvell. The younger Marvell matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, when he was 13 years old. During this time, Marvell briefly converted to Catholicism and moved to London, but, at the urging of his father, he returned to Cambridge and completed his Bachelor of Arts degree.

After graduating from Cambridge, Marvell spent the next decade traveling abroad. He eventually took a position as the tutor to the daughter of Lord Fairfax and moved into their home in Nun Appleton, Yorkshire. His time in Fairfax's employ inspired one of Andrew Marvell's most well-known poems, "Upon Appleton House." He also wrote several lyric poems during this time. Later, Marvell wrote poems to honour Oliver Cromwell, the military leader who led the English Revolution and eventually became the Lord Protectorate of the Commonwealth. In 1653, Marvell took a position as the tutor to Cromwell's ward, William Dutton. Four years later, Marvell became the assistant to John Milton while the controversial poet served as the Latin Secretaryship to the Council of State.

After the death of Cromwell, the monarchy of Charles II was restored. Marvell publicly defended John Milton against the royalists, contributing a poem praising Milton to the second edition of Milton's epic, *Paradise Lost*. Marvell then served as



a Member of Parliament (MP) for Hull from 1659 until his death in 1678. During this time, Marvell became known for his satirical pamphlets and political writings, especially *The Rehearsal Transposed*, his infamous attack on Samuel Parker, the Archdeacon of Canterbury. Marvell's sudden death was a shock because of his seemingly good health, and led to rumors that political adversaries had poisoned him. However, these notions were later proven false.

#### **4.6.1 'To His Coy Mistress' (Summary):**

The poem is spoken by a male lover to his female beloved as an attempt to convince her to sleep with him. The speaker argues that the Lady's shyness and hesitancy would be acceptable if the two had "world enough, and time." But because they are finite human beings, he thinks they should take advantage of their sensual embodiment while it lasts.

He tells the lady that her beauty, as well as her "long-preserved virginity," will only become food for worms unless she gives herself to him while she lives. Rather than preserve any lofty ideals of chastity and virtue, the speaker affirms, the lovers ought to "roll all our strength, and all / Our sweetness, up into one ball." He is alluding to their physical bodies coming together in the act of lovemaking.

#### **Analysis:**

Marvell wrote this poem in the classical tradition of a Latin love elegy, in which the speaker praises his mistress or lover through the motif of *carpe diem*, or "seize the day." The poem also reflects the tradition of the erotic blazon, in which a poet constructs elaborate images of his lover's beauty by carving her body into parts. Its verse form consists of rhymed couplets in iambic tetrameter, proceeding as AA, BB, CC, and so forth.

The speaker begins by constructing a thorough and elaborate conceit of the many things he "would" do to honour the lady properly, if the two lovers indeed had enough time. He posits impossible stretches of time during which the two might play games of courtship. He claims he could love her from ten years before the Biblical flood narrated in the Book of Genesis, while the Lady could refuse his advances up until the "conversion of the Jews," which refers to the day of Christian judgment prophesied for the end of times in the New Testament's Book of Revelations.

The speaker then uses the metaphor of a “vegetable love” to suggest a slow and steady growth that might increase to vast proportions, perhaps encoding a phallic suggestion. This would allow him to praise his lady’s features – eyes, forehead, breasts, and heart – in increments of hundreds and even thousands of years, which he says that the lady clearly deserves due to her superior stature. He assures the Lady that he would never value her at a “lower rate” than she deserves, at least in an ideal world where time is unlimited.

Marvell praises the lady’s beauty by complimenting her individual features using a device called an erotic blazon, which also evokes the influential techniques of 15th and 16th century Petrarchan love poetry. Petrarchan poetry is based upon rarifying and distancing the female beloved, making her into an unattainable object. In this poem, though, the speaker only uses these devices to suggest that distancing himself from his lover is mindless, because they do not have the limitless time necessary for the speaker to praise the Lady sufficiently. He therefore constructs an erotic blazon only to assert its futility.

The poem’s mood shifts in line 21, when the speaker asserts that “Time’s winged chariot” is always near. The speaker’s rhetoric changes from an acknowledgement of the Lady’s limitless virtue to insisting on the radical limitations of their time as embodied beings. Once dead, he assures the Lady, her virtues and her beauty will lie in the grave along with her body as it turns to dust. Likewise, the speaker imagines his lust being reduced to ashes, while the chance for the two lovers to join sexually will be lost forever.

The third and final section of the poem shifts into an all-out plea and display of poetic prowess in which the speaker attempts to win over the Lady. He compares the Lady’s skin to a vibrant layer of morning dew that is animated by the fires of her soul and encourages her to “sport” with him “while we may.” Time devours all things, the speaker acknowledges, but he nonetheless asserts that the two of them can, in fact, turn the tables on time. They can become “amorous birds of prey” that actively consume the time they have through passionate lovemaking.

#### 4.6.2 The Definition of Love (Summary):

The poem's speaker is an anonymous lover who contemplates the nature and definition of love. He begins by saying that his love is both "rare" and "strange" because it was "begotten by Despair / Upon Impossibility." He goes on to claim that only despair could reveal to him "so divine a thing" as this love, because "Hope" could never come near it. He imagines that he "quickly might arrive" where this love is leading him, but finds that his soul's inclinations are thwarted by Fate, who "drives iron wedges" between the speaker and the object of his affection.

According to the speaker, the problem is that Fate cannot allow "Two perfect loves" to come together. Doing so would overthrow Fate's power, so Fate has placed the two lovers into physically separate spaces, like "distant poles" that can never come together. They must remain separate, the speaker laments, unless "giddy Heaven" falls or the entire world is suddenly "cramped into a planisphere." The speaker then compares the lovers' connection to two infinite lines, each of which forms a perfect circle. Because these lines are parallel, though, they shall never intersect. Therefore, the speaker concludes, Fate has enviously thwarted the love that binds him to his beloved, and the only way they can be together is in a union of their minds.

#### Analysis:

Scholars often connect Marvell's "The Definition of Love" to John Donne's metaphysical lyrics, due to the elaborate imagery and the neo-platonic implications of love between souls or minds that is distinct from the physical body. The poem constitutes an exploration of love by depicting two perfect yet irreconcilable loves – the love of the speaker, and the love of his lover. These two loves are perfect in themselves and they face each other in an opposition of perfection, but, according to the speaker's formulation, that same condition prevents them from meeting in the physical sphere. The poem is composed of eight stanzas, each of which features four lines of iambic tetrameter that rhyme alternately, in a pattern of ABAB, CDCD, and so forth.

In the first stanza, the speaker makes an odd and striking claim – that his love is so unique and "rare" it must have been born of "Despair" and "Impossibility," which

is a surprisingly dark and tragic formulation of love. The speaker goes on to explain that only despair could have revealed this love to him, because it shows both the utter perfection of the love he feels, and at the same time, the impossibility of its physical fulfillment. Hence, the speaker constructs an oxymoron – “Magnanimous Despair” – as an attempt to bring his reader closer to understanding the nature of his love.

Marvell further develops the speaker's frustration at being separated from his beloved in stanza three, where the speaker elaborates upon the role of Fate. The speaker claims that his perfect love would lead him to the place where his “extended soul is fixed,” or in other words, would lead his body to the location where his soul is already connected to his beloved's. However, Fate actively prevents this by erecting an “iron wedge” between the two lovers. The speaker then explains that Fate keeps the lovers from each other because it perceives their union as usurping its power. The speaker represents Fate as a tyrant with a “jealous eye” who desires to maintain control over the two perfect loves.

He goes on to say that Fate has given “decrees of steel” that place the two lovers distantly apart, which effectively prevents a perfect union of both their physical and spiritual love. The symbols of an iron wedge and a steel decree suggest Fate's dominion over the hard, physical realities of the body, which contrasts sharply with the speaker's claim that the lovers enjoy metaphysical perfection in their own transcendent love.

Next, the speaker attempts to imagine the only conditions in which he and his lover might be physically united. These include the Heavens falling, an earthquake collapsing the Earth, or the entire planet being compressed into a flat plane. The speaker uses the paradoxical term “Planisphere” for this imagined event. Each of these conditions is impossible, and as the speaker acknowledges this fact, he goes on to construct a new, geometrical conceit that contrasts the love of the speaker and his lady with a more typical love. Their love is like a pair of parallel lines – infinitely perfect as they extend - yet they shall never meet. Meanwhile, common love is less perfect, like a pair of oblique lines, which by nature will eventually intersect.

In the final stanza, Marvell delivers two definitions of the speaker's love: it is both “the conjunction of the mind” and the “opposition of the stars.” This two-part definition encapsulates the divided nature of their love. On one hand, the image of

conjunction suggests proximity and harmony, while the image of opposition implies that their love can never be fully realized. This idea implicitly refers to the power of Fate in the physical universe, which in this case, prevents the lovers from meeting on the plane of material embodiment.

## Section V

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) There are ----- characters in the poem, *To His Coy Mistress*.  
a) 3                      b) 2                      c) 5                      d) 4.
- 2) Marvell's concerns in *To His Coy Mistress* are actually -----.  
a) man and woman.                      b) speaker and listener.  
c) time and space.                      d) lover and beloved.
- 3) The Speaker in the poem, *The Definition of Love* says that his love is -----.  
a) false                      b) true                      c) rare and strange                      d) immoral.
- 4) In *To His Coy Mistress* the young man ----- a young lady to accept his love.  
a) informs                      b) pleads                      c) instructs                      d) orders.
- 5) According to the speaker in the poem, *The Definition of Love* ----- cannot allow to perfect loves to come together.  
a) god                      b) fate                      c) parents                      d) society

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) What is the meaning of 'carpe diem' ?
- 2) Who is the speaker in 'To His Coy Mistress'?
- 3) What does the speaker wishes to have in 'To His Coy Mistress' ?
- 4) Give the meaning of 'Coyness'.
- 5) What is 'Humber'?

## 4.7 George Herbert

George Herbert was a Welsh born poet, orator and Anglican priest. Herbert's poetry is associated with the writings of the metaphysical poets, and he is recognised as one of the foremost British devotional lyricists. Born into an artistic and wealthy family, Herbert was largely raised in England and received there a good education that led to his admission in 1609 as a student at Trinity College, Cambridge. He went there at first with the intention of becoming a priest, but when eventually he became the University's Public Orator, he attracted the attention of King James I. In 1624 and briefly in 1625 he served in the Parliament of England. After the death of King James, Herbert's interest in ordination renewed. In his mid-thirties he gave up his secular ambitions and took holy orders in the Church of England, spending the rest of his life as the rector of the little parish of St. Andrews Church, Lower Bemerton, Salisbury. He was noted for unfailing care for his parishioners, bringing the sacraments to them when they were ill, and providing food and clothing for those in need. Henry Vaughan called him "a most glorious saint and seer".

### 4.7.1 Easter Wings (Summary)

The poem "Easter Wings" by George Herbert is a poem full of deep imagery not only in its words but also in the visual structure of the stanzas. In Herbert's poem why does he use a shape poem? Because he wanted this poem to have many different levels and meanings. Herbert also used huge amounts of mental imagery so that the reader can find new truths and meanings each time he or she reads it. The poem tells of the poet's desire to fly with Christ as a result of Jesus' sacrifice, death and resurrection. The argument as to the proper presentation of this poem is easily explained with the help of the poet's address to the "Lord" in the opening line of the first page in the original text. Because this poem is actually a work within a work with many hidden meanings and suggestions. To fully understand it all, one must examine the poem as a whole in greater detail. The poet is the obvious speaker in the poem due to the common use of "I" and "me" through out the poem. The audience is also revealed in the first line of the 1634 edition of the poem with the use of the word "Lord"; meaning the Christian Savior, Jesus Christ who rose from the dead. But there is question as to where the poem truly begins. This is due to the splitting of the poem into two separate pages, and then turned ninety degrees so it must be read sideways.

This is done on purpose to invoke the vision of wings on both pages. This fact must be considered when evaluating where it begins and whether it is in fact two poems instead of one larger one. “Lord, who createth man in wealth and store” is the beginning of this poem, helping to immediately establish the audience in the first word. As well, this fact helps to reveal that this poem is also a prayer of Herbert’s. The appropriate layout of the poem is still the “winged” look necessary for the full impact of the imagery. It is the imagery in this poem that deserves special notice as it gives a much deeper understanding of what Herbert is saying. The first stanza shows the fall of man from the “wealth” that is in God’s holiness into the “decaying” life of a sinful nature: “Lord, who createst man in wealth and store, Though foolishly he lost the same, Decaying more and more Till he became Most poor.” As the stanza’s lines “decays” in length, the imagery goes from good to bleak finally ending with the eventual poorness of mankind. In the first line where it shows how man was born into abundance with full potential.

Yet somehow managed to abuse this potential in habitual sin and so abuse the gift that God had bestowed upon us. As one reads the first stanza, one feels it dwindle and wither away into nothingness; this verse does, indeed, decrease both in emotion and context. At first reading this poem you may not see the complex correlation between the shape and the actual meaning of the poem. Herbert intended this in his poem probably to attach a reader to his poem to find the true meaning as to why this poem was in this shape and has lines large in size and then they decline. But then the emotion in the poem picks up steam again in the next stanza and gains the size and exact structure the first stanza but in opposite order, from small to large. The second stanza of the poem is turning in emotion and finishing with the poet taking “flight” and completing the second wing: “With thee O let me rise As larks, harmoniously, And sing this day thy victories: Then shall the fall further the flight in me.” This stanza is rich in imagery. It seems like this stanza “beats its wing” against the decline of the first stanza, showing how the “fall” of man “furthered the flight” in Herbert as it paved the way for the crucifixion of Jesus. It was this action which redeemed man so they could have fellowship with God again. While in the first stanza you see Herbert using “he” and the word “man”, where as in the second stanza the poem becomes more personal to Herbert when he uses “me”. This part of the poem could be meant as the personal prayer to god thanking him for the death of his

son and our salvation. Also of note is the use of “larks, harmoniously” to give a beautiful, resonate feel to the poem; opposite to that of words like “decaying” and “most poor” used in the first stanza.

The first three lines of the second stanza, “With thee/ O let me rise/ As larks, harmoniously” tells us that Herbert wants to be with Jesus in the air during the resurrection. The word “harmoniously” suggests there is more than one voice singing. Since harmonies are known to work in three’s, this would support the Christian view of the Trinity, saying that Herbert would like to rise “as larks”; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The second page of the poem is very much the same as the first. Some would suggest that it is a separate poem all together, but when noticing that the voice and audience carry over from the first page it is easier to understand that the poem is just continuing. As the first stanza spoke of the “fall” of man into sin, the third stanza becomes more personal to the poet as the turn was made back in the overall attitude in the second stanza: “My tender age in sorrow did beginne: And still with sicknesses and shame Though didst so punish sinne, That I became Most thinne.” Once again, this stanza decreases every line like that of the first. The first line tells of Herbert’s sorrowful beginning and then continues with giving the reader the understanding that Herbert was not free of the punishment of sin as he became “most thinne”. It is this ending that gives the reader the sense of a partial end; a loss of purity. Herbert illustrates this depletion in human character visually. Ideally, our virtues and wisdom should grow with age; Herbert is somber in exclaiming that this is not necessarily the case. With the passage of time, the poet expresses that his only gain was that of guilt and compounded sin. To witness sin, perchance, is a sin in itself, thereby making it impossible to live a life of isolated purity. Again the poet picks up from where he left off and begins the next stanza with words of rejuvenation. However, this stanza adds an element of connection: With thee Let me combine, And feel this day thy victorie; For, if I imp my wing on thine, Affliction shall advance the flight in me.” Again, Herbert turns to his Lord so he can be a part of the victory. This time though, Herbert wants to “combine” with Jesus, to be grafted on His wing. This, unlike the third stanza, moves Herbert even closer to Jesus.



#### 4.7.2 The Collar (Summary):

*The Collar* is a poem that was written by George Herbert in 1633. If you've read this poem, you may have found the beginning of the poem a bit off-putting. It begins abruptly, with a display of seemingly unfounded aggression. For no reason the reader's aware of, the poetic narrator starts by throwing a bit of a tantrum, flailing limbs as he 'struck the board' and yelling, 'No more; / I will abroad!' He asks whether he'll always be in the apparently miserable state he's in, but he finally concludes that 'my lines and life are free' for him to do as he pleases.

With that conclusion drawn, the narrator asks if he should stay in his current situation then and deal with all his resources, 'wine' and 'corn', being spent. The narrative voice also doesn't seem to have anything to show for all those misspent resources. Accordingly, he comes to his next question - if he still possibly has time to recover what he's already lost. The poetic narrator decides that there is indeed enough time; that is, provided he fills what time he has remaining with double pleasures to make up for those he missed out on while he still worried about right and wrong.

The narrator comes to the realization that he's been trapped in his present situation, allowing his own petty thoughts of goodness and duty to distract him from reality. To make things worse, he also realizes that he's simply refused to acknowledge the issue for a long time. At this point, the narrative voice decides it's time for action, and comments on how people who refuse to change their fortunes deserve them. However, as the poem draws to a close and it seems the narrator would just keep ranting and raving, there's a surprising twist: the agitated and plaintive narrative voice is instantly calmed by faithfully responding to that of God.

#### Analysis of the poem:

The poet is fed up, he is in doubt. He is thinking of abusing God's gift: "Freedom". Within temptation, he questions his mission in life. He longs for yesterday. He thinks he sold his soul and he's furious because he feels regret. He demands redemption. He states again his emotional and uncertain decision to "abroad". As he was drowning in his rebellious feelings, his conscience rescued him from his blackest thoughts, waking his tender side and restoring faith.

One of the most interesting aspects of the poem is its title, mainly because throughout the entire poem we don't find the word "collar". Herbert tries to use his title as a pun. This word has different meaning: One that means a band of leather that surrounds an animal neck or a slave collar because Herbert thinks of himself as a slave to the Lord. He spent his entire life serving his Lord with no return. He is in a state of revolt, trying to free himself. He remains in a state of anguish until he hears the word "child". Actually, it's his interior voice. It is this voice that alarmed him to his true relationship with God. Moreover, the past tense is used frequently and this mainly to show us that the situation of the poet is nothing but an experienced one. It's a biblical allusion to many others like "Adam and Eve". In addition, we all go through times of doubt, questioning life's mysteries. This poem is nothing but a reflection of fury and antagonism toward God and his creation. It shows us that God is willing to listen to our grievance and criticism and brings us hope even in the case of despair, frustration and anger. This poem shows that the supremacy of this scene consists of rebellion, love and sympathy rather than in reason and arguments. The word "Child" is enough to affirm Jesus acceptance and unconditional love. He doesn't explain or quarrel, his simple word is enough to affirm his acceptance and love for men. God is always present even in our worse scenario to give us hope and guide us in the right direction. He is keen to help us and restore our faith for it's the only way to answer our questions.

At the end, George Herbert poems echo God relationship with men. They are a concrete example of our life and how God is always present even in our worst case-scenario to give us hope and optimism. In almost every poem of Herbert, God is seen as "Love" and that by the presence of him in our life we should fear nothing because he is on our side. As in the Poem "Easter wings" when Jesus is present in our life, our heart amplifies and when Jesus is out of our life, it become full of despair, anger and frustration. God has sacrificed the life of his own son to lift us from our sins. It's by his resurrection that we find eternal freedom and happiness. God is the ultimate freedom in this world. If it's up to me to decide my life I would definitely as Herbert prefers a one that gets me near Jesus. Moreover, the poem " the collar" shows us that no matter how we feel lost and confused, Jesus can help restore our faith. Finally, everyone of us has a weakness point and a point of doubt in their lives, but God is always present to restore our faith and brings us freedom of the soul. I believe that

God created us in his image and he's always there to help us and shower us with his unconditional love.

## Section VI

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) ----- is the speaker in the poem, *Easter Wings*.  
a) the poet      b) the lover      c) the shepherd      d) the woman
- 2) The meaning of the word "Lord" in the poem, *Easter Wings* is -----.  
a) devil      b) serpent      c) Evan      d) Jesus Christ
- 3) The end of the poem, *Easter Wings* reveals -----.  
a) a loss of faith      b) a loss of purity      c) a loss of wealth      d) a loss of
- 4) The poem, *The Collar* is written in -----.  
a) 1633      b) 1640      c) 1660      d) 1680
- 5) At the end, *The Collar* echoes God's relationship with -----.  
a) nature      b) religion      c) society      d) men

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) Why does George Herbert use a shape poem?
- 2) What is the desire of the poet?
- 3) What is the realization of the narrator in the poem *The Collar*?
- 4) What is the condition of the poet?
- 5) What is the echo of the poem, *The Collar*?

## 4.8. Summary:

Elizabeth age was the great age of English Literature. Poetry and drama flourished in this era. Great dramatists Shakespeare, Marlowe and others enriched English plays and took them to the masses. In this era poetry too flourished and became popular. Songs, sonnets, elegies, and lyrics were produced and enjoyed. The

English literature produced during the time of Queen Elizabeth is called 'Elizabethan literature'. The actual Elizabethan literary age began in 1579 with the publication of Spenser's *Shepherd Calendar*. It was the age of Elizabethan songs, lyrics, and especially sonnets. Patriotism, theme of love, Elizabethan sonnet, and a variety of poetical form are the chief characteristics of Elizabethan poetry. Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, George Chapman and William Shakespeare are the important poets of the Elizabethan age.

The metaphysical poetry emerged with the debut of John Donne. It has some peculiar characteristics. The term metaphysical was borrowed by Dr. Johnson. He borrowed it from Dryden. Dryden once remarked about Donne's poetry, 'he affects the metaphysics.' Johnson picked up the term and applied to the poetry written in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The poets, who wrote poems under the influence of John Donne, are called metaphysical poets. The term 'meta' means 'after'. So metaphysical means after the physical. Metaphysical poetry reflected political insecurity, religious controversy and intellectual confusion of that time. They also expressed the lack of coherence and certainty of their age. The metaphysical poetry bears typical characteristics. They are: Delight in Novel Thoughts and Expression, Obscurity, Scholarship, Religious and Amorous themes, Imagery and Refined language. Apart from this metaphysical poetry is a fine fusion of thought and passion. John Donne is the pioneer of metaphysical poetry. His poetry can be classified into three categories amorous, religious and satirical. His poetry is a mixture of thought and devotion. George Herbert's poems are known for simplicity and homely language. Richard Crawshaw's poems are more emotional than thoughtful. Henry Vaughan's poetry is famous for fantasy. Thomas Carew's lyrical talent gets reflected in his poems. Andrew Marvell's poem reflect theme of love and patriotism. Metaphysical poetry was on the wane after the Restoration period. However, poets like T.S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis and Helen Gardner revived it in their poems. Critics and scholars have defined this poetry as the poetry which is born out of man's passionate thinking about life, love and death.

#### 4.9. Key Terms:

**Flourish** – to grow well and healthy.

**Metaphor** – a way of describing something by comparing

**Pun** – a word or phrase that has two meanings

**Noticeable** – easy to notice

**Quatrains** – a group of four lines in a poem

**Diction** – the way in which someone pronounces words; choice and use of words in literature

**Fantasy** – an exciting or unusual experience or situation created by imagination

**Satire** – a way of talking or writing about something; away of criticising a person or and idea etc.

**Complicated** – difficult to understand or to deal with

**Obscurity** – the state of not being known or remembered; difficult to understand

**Amorous** – involving or expressing love

**Elliptical** – having the shape of an ellipse

**Fusion** – the combination of separate things

**Genuine** – real; not artificial; sincere and honest

**Abbreviation** – a short form of word or expression

**Distinguish** – to be able to recognize and understand the difference between two similar things

**Degradation** – the process by which something changes to worse condition

**Digression** – moving away from the main subject

**Coyness** – hesitancy, reluctance.

**Humber** – river in Northeastern England which flows through ‘Hull’, Marvell’s hometown.

**Flood** – biblical flood.

**Conversion of the Jews** – Jews converted to Christians.

**Vegetable love** – love nurtured like a vegetable.

**Tims's winged chariot** – metaphor for the passage of the time.

**Vault** – grave.

**Quaint** – unusual, preserved carefully or skillfully.

**Hue** – colour.

**Transpires** – emits, breaths out.

**Slow chapt** – chap means jaw of the beast. Here, chewing or eating slowly.

**Iron gates of life** – life full of difficulties and suffering.

#### **4.10. Answers to check your progress**

##### **Section I**

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) b) sand
- 2) a) Vain man
- 3) b) immortalize
- 4) d) God
- 5) b) fleeting

**b) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) Amoretti
- 2) Elizabeth Boyle
- 3) 88 sonnets
- 4) She has gentle wit and virtuous mind.
- 5) Inner beauty is important than outer beauty.

## Section II

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) a) Strephon
- 2) c) heavens
- 3) a) Swan's
- 4) b) melancholy
- 5) c) love

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) The poetry which deals with landscape- valleys, grass and woods.
- 2) Astrophil and Stella.
- 3) A stanza with three lines that do not rhyme.
- 4) His friend and her sister.
- 5) Three – the speaker, his absent mistress and love.

## Section III

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) c) Ideas Mirror
- 2) a) Libertine
- 3) b) love
- 4) a) Dramatic
- 5) a) Shakespearean

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) They should not look towards his poems just for passion in his or her love.
- 2) It is sad and tender love of true lover for an unresponsive lady love.
- 3) 'Drest' means dress.

- 4) Verse is the image of mind.
- 5) Sixty three.

#### **Section IV**

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) b) mourning
- 2) c) good people do not make a show of their grief.
- 3) c) without complaint
- 4) a) Busy old fool
- 5) d) king

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) A scene of saying farewell.
- 2) Compass and Gold conceits
- 3) They should leave without “tear-floods” and “sigh-tempests”.
- 4) ABBA CDCD EE.
- 5) Lying in the bed.

#### **Section V**

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) b) 2
- 2) c) time and space.
- 3) c) rare and strange
- 4) c) instructs
- 5) b) fate

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) Seize the day..



- 2) A young man.
- 3) union of lover and beloved.
- 4) hesitancy, reluctance..
- 5) river in the Northeastern England..

## **Section VI**

**A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below each of the following sentences.**

- 1) a) The poet
- 2) d) Jesus Christ
- 3) b) a loss of purity
- 4) a) 1633
- 5) d) men

**B) Answer the following questions in a word, a phrase or a sentence each:**

- 1) He wanted his poem to have many different levels and meanings.
- 2) The desire of the poet is to fly with Christ.
- 3) He has been trapped in his present situation, allowing his own petty thoughts of goodness and duty to distract him from reality.
- 4) The poet is fed up and he is in doubt.
- 5) The poem echoes the relationship of God with men.

## **4.11 Exercise**

- 1) Discuss in detail "One Day I Wrote Her Name" as a love poem by Edmund Spenser.
- 2) Write critical appreciation of the poem 'The Nightingale'.
- 3) What is the plea of Michael Drayton in his poem 'Into these loves who but for passion looks'?
- 4) Discuss John Donne as a metaphysical poet.

- 5) What is the definition of love in Donne's 'The Definition of Love'?
- 6) Write critical appreciation of the poem 'To His Coy Mistress.'
- 7) Discuss George Herbert as a metaphysical poet.

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## Unit-1

### *The Way of the World*

William Congreve

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- 1.4 Critical Analysis of the Play (Appreciation)
- 1.5 Key Terms
- 1.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 1.7 Exercises
- 1.8 References for Further Study

## **1.0 Objectives:**

After studying this unit you will be able to :

- Understand the type of the play.
- Understand William Congreve's contribution to the drama.
- Understand the social and mannerable aspects Congreve deals with.
- Analyze the characters in the play.
- Study the title, setting, structure, plot, humour in the play.
- Study the different themes in the play.

## 1.1 Introduction:

William Congreve is a great Restoration dramatist who contributed much to the Comedy of Manners. He has invented a new pattern in *The Way of the World*.

Swinburne has called *The Way of the World* is the unequalled and unapproached masterpiece of English comedy.

It is definitely a mirror to the Restoration Age. William Congreve has realistically delineated the life of the court and the courtly circles of the day. The people belong to upper class of London were pleasure seeking men. They had nothing to do except enjoying. They joined in some chocolate house, involve in gossiping, scandal mongering, playing cards and cheap jokes. Even they enjoyed their time in St. James park, Hyde park and Chocolate house etc.

*The Way of the World* deals with life in London. The dramatist of the Restoration age wrote only social comedy or the Comedy of Manners. The title of the play indicates an ironic comment on the ways of the London society. The scenes in the play are laid in Lady Wishfort's room, parlor or a London park. The play deals with the ways of the world of high class men and women. The main theme of the play indicated in the title itself. Money plays an important role in the play. The characters introduced here are typical. They have no any intellectual wit, no feelings and they are heartless. The play is concerned with love in various forms. The main theme of the play is the great intrigue of Mirabell to gain the hand of Millamant for marriage.

It is comedy and one of the important functions of comedy is the reformation of society. A comedy is a comment on the society, morals and manner. *The Way of the World* is a brilliant exposition of the manners and morals of the age. In *The Way of the World* Congreve portrays the upper class of London society of the Restoration age. All the women characters in the play are widows and that is a significant fact.

*The Way of the World* had far less success than the earlier comedies. Congreve himself declared in the dedication that the play was not prepared for the general taste.

## 1.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

### 2.1 Comedy of Manners:

Ben Jonson is the founder of the comedy of humour where as Congreve is the most skillful exponent of the Comedy of Manners. Both were great dramatists, but they stand sharply distinguished. The supreme value of the restoration comedy of manners lies in the fact that in it all the beauties of the age, the courtship, the wit, the satire, and the manly strength are all combined. There is no such fusion in Ben Jonsonian comedy. It reflects the culture of upper middle class in which manners are supreme. It deals with the gallantries, intrigues and the affection of fashionable men and women. Its breeding, its brilliances, romance and freedom excesses and eccentricities. It deals with the brilliant surface of the restoration period.

The following are the dramatist of the Comedy of Manners:

- I. William Wycherley
- II. William Congreve
- III. Sir John Vanbrugh
- IV. George Etherege
- V. Nicholas Rowe

#### 1. William Wycherley (1670-1715)

He was one of the greatest dramatists of the comedy of manners. His prominent plays are :

- I. *The Country Wife*
- II. *The Plain Dealer*
- III. *The Gentleman Dancing Master*
- IV. *Love in Wood*

His two plays *The Country Wife* and *The Plain Dealer* were based on Moliere's two great comedies and are marked by the bitterness and scorn to the Restoration dramatist. His style is full of vigour and in characterization there is a genuine vitality. In his plays, he is mechanical and leaves nothing got the spectators imagination. *The Country Wife* is a good play in plot and characterization but the tone is cynical.

## 2) William Congreve (1670 - 1729)

William Congreve was the founder of the Comedy of Manner. He was one of the most skillful exponents of Comedy of Manners. He deals with love themes. His plays are painted and very effective, and polished.

His best plays are-

- i. *The Old Bachelor*
- ii. *The Double Dealer*
- iii. *Love for Love*
- iv. *The Way of the World*

His play has a significant situation of all world. His plays represents the fine flower of the comedy of manners. The play has a faithful reflection of the upper class.

## 3) Sir John Vanburgh (1664-1726)

He unlike Wycherly paid no attention to the thoughts but they are folk talked. His plays are-

- i. *The Relapse*
- ii. *The Provoked Wife*

*The Provoked Wife* deals with the themes of marriage which is a really mixture of realism and sentimentalism.

### 1.2.2 Section I

#### 1.2.2.1 *The Way of the World*:

- |                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| a) <b>Dramatist</b>    | : | William Congreve (1670-1729)  |
| b) <b>Type of Work</b> | : | Comedy of Manners   |
| c) <b>Publication</b>  | : | 1700  |
|                        |   | Time – Restoration Period (1660-1700)   |
| d) <b>Type of Plot</b> | : | Comedy- Restoration Comedy and Intrigue   |
| e) <b>Theme</b>        | : | The main theme of the play is the great intrigue of Mirabel to gain the hand of Millamant for marriage, |

money, sex, lust, seduction, adultery, pleasure seeking, artificial and unnatural manners.

f) **Style** : Wittiest Comedy, inimitable, flawless and perfect, witty dialogue

g) **Tone** : Immoral Tone

#### **1.2.2.2. Introduction of the dramatist:**

William Congreve, the great Restoration dramatist, was born on 1670 at Bardsey, near Leeds. His father was an army officer (Command the Garrison) in Ireland. He was educated in Ireland at Kilkenny School and Trinity College Dublin. He worked very hard at Dublin. He learned in Greek and Latin. When he was 20 years old, he fell in love with Beatrice Nelson, daughter of an architect. But Beatrice's uncle stood against her marriage with Congreve. His desire to marry with Beatrice was not fulfilled.

At the age of 22, he published his first novel *Incognita or Love and Duty Reconciled* in 1692 under the pseudonym of Cleophil. It described as a fine comedy of errors. His next work was an anthology of verses. Five poems of them published in an anthology called *Miscellany of Original Poems*.

Congreve was appointed commissioner of wine – licenses (1705-1714) and secretary for Jamaica. He also held a place in the Pipe-office. He died on January 12, 1729, from the after effects of a carriage accident. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. Among the Restoration dramatists, Congreve is more mature. He was intimate with Gay, Pope and Walsh.

#### **William Congreve's Plays:**

He was the supreme master of the comedy of manners.

- ***The Old Bachelor (1693)***

It was written under the influence of Ben Jonson. The main story runs around the old bachelor- Heartwell and Silvia, the discarded mistress of vain love. His wit, command over dialogue and humour even satire are all presented in the play.



- ***The Double Dealer (1693)***

It is a better play than the first one, but less received. The play is about Maskwell, the double dealer one who deceives every body. The characters are well drawn and the three unities are observed.

- ***Love for Love (1695)***

It is considered by some critics as his masterpiece. The character are more natural and interesting than the first two plays. The play depicts the story of pure, real and ideal love of two young people. Love is for love and not for money, that's the message of the play. It is remarkable for witty dialogue's and humorous characters.

- ***The Mourning Bride (1697)***

It is a tragedy which deals the love story between Manual, King of Granda and Zara, a queen, is mainly focused in the play. A passage in the play received extravagant praise from Johnson. It is a piece of good rhetoric and not poetry.

- ***The Way of the World (1700)***

Congreve wrote this play to please himself rather than the public. It was a complete failure on the stage. So, he did not write again for the stage.

William Congreve's excellence lies in his wit and dialogue. His plays are faithful reflection of the upper-class life. The tone is one of cynical vivacity. The characters are well drawn. The Age of Congreve is known as the Age of Augustan. The age was an age of party warfare of political controversy. It was an age of personalities, clubs coteries, hatred, sneering, scorn and contempt and wit consisted in an epigrammatic representation of other people's failings. The age of Congreve was corrupt. It described as an age of unbridled license. The spirit of criticism was undergoing to change. People had no notion of ethics with regard to sex. All these things inspire William Congreve to write in his plays.

### **1.2.2.3 The Title of the Play**

The play deals with empty and frivolous life. It indicates the ways of fashionable world in the age of Restoration (1660-1700). It presents artificial life of upper class fashionable life. It closely describes the ways of London society, intrigues, scandals, morals and manners. Congreve presents all type of human being

in the play. They talk scandal, tell falsehoods and play tricks. Men seduce women, wives deceive their husbands and all this considered fashionable. Fainall, Mrs Marwood and Lady Wishfort are sexually hungry even in old age. Mirabell and Millamant marry for the sake of true love. This is the way of the world. So, the title is apt and significant.

#### **1.2.2.4 The Setting:**

The play (Act I) opens at a Chocolate House. Act II happens at a St. James's park. Act III, IV and V take place at the room in Lady Wishfort's House. The setting is realistic. Throughout the play we understand the life of upper class society. We also know about the intrigues, counterpart, love, sex and domestic attitude in the restoration period.

The three unities, unity of time, unity of place and unity of action have been observed. The whole play takes place within the limits i.e. Chocolate House, St. James Park and Lady Wishfort's House. The time has taken more than a single revolution of the day. There is only one action. The intrigue of Mirabell to win the hand of Millamant. The intrigue of Mirabell which covers the major part of the play.

#### **1.2.2.5. The Plot of the Play:**

The plot of the play related with the intrigue of Mirabell to win Millamant. This intrigue is concerned to Act I, its continuation worked out in Act II and it is put into action in Act III, IV and final act comprises the resolution of the intrigue.

The characters in the play divided into two groups..The first group related and support to Mr. Mirabell. They are Millamant, Mrs. Fainall, Foible and Waitwell. The second group is apposed to Mr Mirabell. They are Lady Wishfort, Mrs Marwood and Mr Fainall. The conflict between two groups depicts in Act III and Act IV.

The sub plot related to intrigue of Mr. Fainall and Mrs Marwood against Lady Wishfort and her daughter Mrs Fainall. The two plots have been interlinked between each other. The comedy ends with the triumph of Mirabell.

#### **1.2.2.6 Characters in the Play:**

**Mirabell :** a young man, charming personality, hero of the play, loved by Mrs. Millamant, Mrs Fainall and Lady Wishfort, a great physical charm, a centre

attraction for all the women. His love for Mrs. Millamant is true and very sincere. Finally he marries Millamant.

**Mrs. Millamant** : is a young beautiful, charming lady. She passionately loves Mirabell. She is a heroin of the play. She is cultured and educated. She is intelligent and witty.

**Lady Wishfort** : She is a very rich lady about 55 years old. But/she is not happy. She is a comic figure.

**Mrs. Fainall** : She is a wife of Mr. Fainall and the daughter of Lady Wishford. Her relation with Mirabell is a mystery.

**Mr. Fainall** : He is a husband of Mrs. Fainall. He is a villain of the play. He is married only for money. He neglects his wife and lives a life of pleasure with Mrs. Witwood.

**Mrs. Marwood** : A very close friend to Mr. Fainall yet she likes Mirabell. She has a conspiring by nature. She takes an evil interest in plot. She enjoys the opening of the secrets of others.

**Witwood and Petulant** : Followers of Mrs. Millamant

**Sir Wilfull Witwoud** : Newpew of of Lady Wishford

**Some minor characters** : Dancers, Footmen and Attendants

**Foible** : woman to Lady Wishfort

**Mincing** : woman to Mrs Millanmant

**Peg** : Waiting woman to Lady Wishfort

**Betty** : Woman at the Chocolate House.

#### **1.2.2.7 Use of Humour :**

Congreve uses humour in *The Way of the World*. He employs exaggeration and in congruity which are the two main devices to create humour. Congreve creates funny characters and witty laughable atmosphere. Lady wishfort is an object of humour in the play. She is 55 years old. The contrast between Millamant and Sir Wilfull Witwoud is the source of humour in the play. Witwoud and Petulant play a lot of humour in the play. Witwoud plays the role of Sir Rowland and deceives Lady Wishfort is funny and comic.

### 1.2.2.8 Check your progress:

#### 1.2.2.8.1 Objective type question

- a) Willian Congreve was born in .....  
1) 1965                      2) 1670                      3) 1680                      4) 1685
- b) Willian Congreve's father was -----  
1) a school teacher    2) a lawyer              3) an army officer    4) a film maker
- c) Congreve educated at .....  
1) Ireland                  2) England              3) America              4) German
- d) Congreve is *The Way of the Worlds* is published in .....  
1) 1685                      2) 1680                      3) 1695                      4) 1700
- e) ..... play does not belong to William Congreve.  
1) *The Double Dealer*                      2) *Love for Love*  
3) *The Mourning bride*                      4) *As You Like It*.

#### 1.2.2.8.2 Say True or False

- 1) *The Ways of the World* deals with life in Ireland
- 2) Money plays an important part in the play
- 3) William Congreve portrays the upper class of London society.
- 4) All the ladies in the plays are widows.
- 5) *The Way of the Word* is a mirror of Elizabethan age.
- 6) Congreve presents *The Way of the Word* as a Romantic Comedy.

#### 1.2.2.8.3 Fill in the blanks

- 1) *The Way of the World* is a ..... satire.
- 2) ..... is a beautiful and cultured Lady.
- 3) ..... is a woman of loose character.
- 4) *The Way of the World* is a ..... .
- 5) The tone of the play is ..... .

### 1.2.3 Section II Act Wise Summary:

#### 1.2.3.1 Dedication

Congreve has dedicated the play to the Right Honorable Ralph, Earl of Montague. There is praise of man to whom it was addressed.

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most

Obedient

And most obliged humble servant

-- William Congreve

William Congreve defines the purpose and his view in the dedication. Here he pointed that he owes to the conversation and society of Ralph, Earl of Montague.

#### 1.2.3.2. Prologue:

It is a sort of introduction. The aim and purpose of play is explained. It is spoken by one of the characters in the play. In *The Way of the World*, prologue is spoken by 65 years old Mr. Betterton. Here William Congreve admits that he has taken pains in writing this play.

The play has plot and some new ideas. He thinks that you should not expect satire from this play because no one can dare to correct the people. He would like to please the audience. He does not want to teach. The prologue is not apologetic. William Congreve is not sure of the favour which he has received in his life. Satire is not properly appreciable.

#### 1.2.3.3 : Act I

##### Scene- A chocolate House

The scene is at a chocolate house. Mirabell and Fainall have finished playing cards. Mirabell is defeated by Fainall. Mirabell is in love with Millamant. Mirabell gets his servant Waitwell married to Foible who is Lady Wishfort's maid. Lady Wishfort is fifty five years old and she is offended when she discovers that Mirabell does not love her. Mirabell meets with a repulse at Lady Wishfort's place on the last cabal- night. Millamant was taking part in it. The reason is that Mirabell duped Lady Wishfort by feigning love to her.

When Fainall leaves, a messenger brings a letter from Sir Wilfull. It is addressed to Witwoud. He meets Witwoud, but he does not like to talk his half brother Sir Wilfull. He likes to talk about Petulant. Then Petulant comes. Here Witwoud and Petulant are exchanging wits and repartees. But Mirabell snubs them. Petulant gives the news of Mirabell's uncle Rowland who is coming to town (court Lady Wishfort) with the purpose of marriage. All heard of Lady Wishfort's place on the cabal night. Mirabell is pleased because his marriage is a necessary prelude. After that all the men leave for a walk in the St. James park.

**Critical Comment :**

There is almost no action in this act. There is no exposition to help the audience to understand what is occurring. Mirabell's plot is very interesting. A mystery is kept up. We do know about what it will portend and what it will come Mirabell is in love with Millamant. We get the information about Waitwell married to Foible. The cabal night at Lady Wishfort's place is evidently instituted to propagate aversion to man. Mrs. Marwood explains Mirabell's trick by writing a letter to Lady Wishfort. Lady Wishfort becomes his arch enemy. Millamant's half of the fortune depends on her marrying with her aunt's permission. There is a proposal of marriage between Millamant and Sir Rowland in order to disinherit Mirabell.

**1.2.3.4 Act II**

**Scene-St. James Park:**

The scene is at St. James Park. We meet Mrs Fainall and Mrs. Marwood. They discuss their favorite subject. It is related to Lady Wishfort's pet aversion to man, which they have also taken up. They talk about men and how to manipulate them. They are friendly and both interested in Mirabell. They talk about Mirabell. Mrs. Fainall hates her husband. For his depravity but not all men. Mrs Marwood hates all men. She would like to marry one who loved her very well. Fainall suspects that Mrs Marwood is in love with Mirabell, Mrs Marwood changes her feeling when Mrs. Fainall mention Mirabell. Mrs. Marwood is unscrupulous. She is pleasure loving woman. She looks upon sex as a commodity. Mrs. Marwood says that she hates Mirabell, because he is insufferably proud.

Mrs. Marwood and Mrs. Fainall are separated as Fainall and Mirabell come up there. Mrs. Fainall goes with Mirabell and Mrs. Marwood goes with Fainall. Fainall charges Mrs. Marwood with being false to him and lays Mirabell. Mrs. Marwood

explain that she hates Mirabell. Fainall understands that Mirabell is very indifferent to her. Then Mrs. Marwood discovers Lady Wishfort, Mirabell's, pretended passion. Fainall tell her that Mirabell marries Millamant. He would have got Millamant's wealth. Mirabell during his stroll, told her of his plan to trick Lady Wishfort and marry Millamant.

Mrs. Fainall is very friendly to Mirabell. She loves Mirabell before she married Fainall. Mirabell has taken her into his confidence about his plan to win Millamant. Mirabell is explained that Waitwell is to represent his uncle and makes love to Lady Wishfort. This strick will be disclosed and then Lady Wishfort will be made to consent to Mirabell's marriage with her nice Millamant.

Then Millamant comes with Witwoud and her maid Mincing in St. James Park. She is always aware of her charm. She toys with Mirabell's love. She intends to Marry Mirabell. Millamant and Mirabell discuss each other. He cannot understand Millamant's interest in the company of fools such as Witwoud Petulant.

After Millamant's exit with Mincing, Mirabell meets Waitwell and Foible. Waitwell is going to play the role of Sir Rowland means Mirabell's imaginary uncle, assisted by Foible. Mrs Marwood passes by in a mask but Foible notices it. All exit from stage with Waitwell making typically Restoration comment.

#### **Critical Comment :**

The scene is a continuation of Act II. The relationship between all characters and their intension are clearly explained. At first we meet Mrs. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood in St. James park. They talk about Lady Wishfort aversion to man. Here they test each other, and each character is revealed. The scene between Mrs. Marwood and Fainall has a great dramatic interest. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood is further evidence that there is no such thing as mere chat in the play.

#### **1.2.2.5 Act III**

##### **Lady Wishfort's House**

The act opens with Lady Wishfort. She is trying to hide her age with cosmetics. She is getting impatient at the absence of Foible. Then Mrs. Marwood enters. She tells Lady Wishfort that she has seen Foible with Mirabell in the park. Lady Wishfort is furious to hear this news. She suspects about Foible. At that time Lady Wishfort sends Mrs. Marwood to the next room when she hears Foible coming. Mrs. Marwood

hides herself and listens to them. Lady Wishfort taxes Foible with her disloyalty. She reports the success of her mission. She takes advantage of opportunity to tell Mirabell's plot. She is glad to hear that Sir Rowland will soon be with her. She determines to accept Sir Rowland.

When Mrs. Fainall enters Lady Wishfort departs. She confirms that Mrs. Marwood will do harm by informing Lady Wishfort against Foible. She and Foible discuss Mirabell's secret plot. Still Mrs. Marwood hides herself and listens their conversation. She enters when they are gone. She knows the secret between Foible and Mrs. Fainall. She is going to defeat Mirabell's second plan. Mrs. Fainall was Mirabell's mistress at one time and even Mrs. Marwood is in love with Mirabell. Then Lady Wishfort returns. When she tells Mrs. Marwood that she is expecting her nephew. Lady Wishfort has not yet finished her make-up and she leaves again when Foible comes to attend her.

Millamant enters with Mincing and she meets Mrs Marwood. Millamant meets Mrs. Marwood. She talks of Mirabell's love for Millamant being open secret in town when all the guests arrive for dinner including Petulant, Young Witwood and Sir Wilfull Witwood, the elder brother and Millamant suitor. Then enters Sir Wilfull. He does not recognize country and everything. Sir Wilfull sends his half brother to the inns of court. He addresses Mrs. Marwood and tells her that he is out for travelling.

Lady Wishfort enters with Fainall. She welcomes her nephew and they go for dinner. Fainall finds that his wife is acting for the interest of Mirabell. Mrs. Marwood is going to send a letter to Lady Wishfort exposing the fictitious Sir Rowland. He is advised by Mrs Marwood to discover his wife after acquiring her estate. Fainall's real intension is revealed. Mrs. Marwood proposes to disclose Mirabell's trickery to Lady Wishfort by writing an anonymous letter.

### **Critical comment**

This act is closer to farce than any other act or scene in this play. Mirabell's plot is now no longer a secret to Fainall and Mrs. Marwood. The visit of Sir Wilfull creates a diversion. Sir Wilfull is an unknown quintet. There are ample clues to the acting of the role of Lady Wishfort; the style and rhythms of her speeches the broken thoughts, and her passion that blow now hot and cold. The scene between Mrs. Marwood and Millamant, like all scenes between women in this play, is a duel. The



scene between the brothers Witwood is close to the farcical. It is important to see the basic good sense of Sir Wilfull and the basic shallowness of young Witwoud.

#### **1.2.3.6 Act IV**

##### **Lady Wishforts House**

Here Lady Wishfort is ready to receive Sir Rowland. She is 55 years old widow. She is very much eager to catch a husband. Lady Wishfort is an object of fun. Lady Wishfort leaves the room to see that Sir Wilfull makes address to Millamant. Millamant and Sir Wilfull are on stage. Sir Wilfull makes addresses to Millamant. Then appears Fainall. Millamant is not ready to receive Mirabell. Sir Wilfull somewhat drunk but very shy. He is not yet ready to break his mind to her.

Millamant receives Mirabell. They are discussing the terms and condition of marriage. She is ready to sacrifice her liberty and everything. She demands that she must be called by no pet names. Mirabell offers his own condition. He protests that she cannot think of going to play in a mask. When Mrs. Fainall comes Millamant admits that she does love him violently. When Mirabell leaves Sir Wilfull Witwound and Petulant enter for dinner. They are all drunk. Millamant and Mrs. Fainall leave the company. Lady Wishfort cannot bring her nephew back to his sober senses. When Foible enters and whispers to Lady Wishfort that Sir Rowland is getting impatient. At last enters Waitwell disguised as Sir Rowland. Lady Wishfort apologizes to him. She draws him to his confessing. His love making bids for to be successful. When a letter is brought from Mrs. Marwood, Waitwell and Foible convince Lady Wishfort that the letter is actually sent by Mirabell. Lady Wishfort is finally convinced.

##### **Critical comment**

Waitwell is disguised as Sir Rowland. Lady Wishfort is entrapped. Mirabell's plan is being executed. Foible plans important role. Lady Wishfort has taken into her mind that Sir Wilfull should be engaged to her niece Mirabell, and Millamant meets again. Mirabell is finally accepted by Millamant. The role of letters are very interesting. This act is thematically unified by an almost exclusive concern with variation on the game of love. In three scenes, a man woos a woman, the difference between these proposals or near proposals are the important things to develop. The scene between Mirabell and Millamant is the most important single scene in the play.

The Proviso scene between Mirabell and Millamant would have to be played so as to convey a sense of their sincerity under the conventional badinage,

### **1.2.3.7 Act V**

#### **Lady Wishforts House**

Mirabell's plot has been discovered by Lady Wishfort. She holds Foible guilty. Waitwell has put into prison. She threatens Foible to arrest. Then Foible meets Mrs. Fainall and is told that Mirabell will soon have Waitwell released. Foible can prove the guilty relations between her husband and Mrs. Marwood. Mincing comes and tells that Waitwell released. Fainall is black-mailing Lady Wishfort. Lady Wishfort is all gratitude to Mrs. Marwood for having twice rescued her from the foul trick of Mirabell. Fainall comes and makes three demands- she must not marry, to enjoy her estate during her life, in right of his wife. He must be endowed with Millamant's fortune of six thousand pounds. A deed is being drawn up and Lady Wishfort will have to sign it. When Millamant says that she is prepared to marry Sir Willfull in accordance with the wishes of her aunt and saving her 6,000/- pounds. Fainall suspects a trick. Mirabell presents the evidence which will project Mrs. Fainall. At the time of her marriage, they have judged Fainall's character, and Mrs. Fainall secretly signed over her fortune to Mirabell's control.

Waitwell now appears with a box and Mirabell takes out from it the document, covering the whole estate of Arabella Languish in trust to him (Later Arabella Languish becomes Mrs. Fainall). Sir Willfull gracefully surrenders his claim upon Millamant commending as a fair lady who deserves to marry the gentleman who loves her and whom she loves. Lady Wishfort discovers Fainall as a villain and Mrs. Marwood as an enemy.

#### **Critical comment**

Lady Wishfort is undecieved. Waitwell is put into prison but Mirabell released him. Mirabell is very active. The semi-tragic cast of the play has been noted here. The main issue is marriage between Millamant and Mirabell. Lady Wishfort and Rowland's relations put to a funny ending. The serious affair is Fainall's blackmailing. The sudden turn that events take making for happy ending, as a comedy should have had an artificial effect. Lady Wishfort is torn between hurt, vanity, love for daughter, and considerable disillusionment.

### 1.2.3.8 Epilogue

An epilogue is a poem or speech at the end of play. Sometimes it is apologetic tone, and pleads for a fair consideration of the shortcomings of the play. It seeks to explain the dramatist's stand point. It solicits the favour of the audience and the purpose is to establish a cordial relation.

Congreve seems to have anticipated that the play could not please all. As a matter of fact he wrote the play to please himself and to the audience. The epilogue was spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle.

### 1.2.3.9 Check your Progress

#### 1.2.3.9.1 Objective type questions

- a) Millamant appears on the stage in Act.....
  - 1) Third                      2) First                      3) Second                      4) Fourth
- b) The second Act takes place at .....
  - 1) St. James Park                      2) A chocolate House
  - 3) Lady Wishfort's House                      4) London Night Club
- c) The play *The Way of the World* opens at .....
  - 1) Night Club                      2) Chocolate House
  - 3) Market Place                      4) St. James Park
- d) Mirabells plan to defeat Lady Wishfort is unfolded in Act.....
  - 1) Second                      2) Third                      3) Fifth                      4) First
- e) Mrs.Fainall and Mrs. Marwood introduced in Act No. ....
  - 1) First                      2) Second                      2) Forth                      4) Fifth

#### 1.2.3.9.2 Fill in the blanks.

- 1) ..... is arrested in the fifth Act.
- 2) ..... is Millamant's compliment to Sir Wilfull in Act V .
- 3) ..... the words used by Congress for critics in the Epilogue.
- 4) The main concern in Act IV is .....

- 5) The proviso scene occur in Act .....
- 6) The play dedicates to .....
- 7) In *The Way of The World* Prologue was spoken by .....
- 8) The epilogue was spoken by .....

#### **1.2.3.9.3 Say True or False**

- 1) Marwood is married to Mirabell.
- 2) Fainall describes Sir Wilfull as an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy.
- 3) Mirabell was the first husband of Mrs. Fainall.
- 4) Sir Rowland is a disguised Wilfull.
- 5) Witwoud is the nephew of Lady Wishfort.

### **1.2.4 Section III**

#### **1.2.4.1 Characters:**

##### **1.2.4.2 Edward Mirabell**

Mirabell is one of the most admirable characters in *The Way of the World*. He is a young man with charming personality. He is the hero of the play. His great personal charms and physical charms make him the center of attraction for all ladies in the play. The ladies in the play all admire him.

He apparently not a man of great wealth, has had an affair with Mrs. Fainall, the widowed daughter of Lady Wishfort. To protect her from scandal in the event of pregnancy, he has helped engineer her marriage to Mr. Fainall, a man whom he feels to be of sufficiently good reputation to constitute a respectable match, but not a man of such virtue that tricking him would be unfair. Fainall, for his part, married the young widow because he coveted her fortune to support his amour with Mrs. Marwood. In time, the liaison between Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall ended and Mirabell found himself in love with Millamant, the niece and ward of Lady Wishfort, and the cousin of his former mistress. At the end of the play he gets Millamant but that does not prove his heroism.

There are, however, financial complications. Half of Millamant's fortune was under her own control, but the other half, 6,000 pounds, was controlled by Lady

Wishfort, to be turned over to Millamant if she married a suitor approved by her aunt. Unfortunately, Mirabell had earlier offended Lady Wishfort; she had misinterpreted his flattery as love.

Lady Wishfort is an old lady who still has strong carnal desires. She wants to marry Mirabell. He pretends to love her in order to get an opportunity to meet Millamant. She falls in the trap and starts loving Mirabell. When she comes to know that he was only befooling her, she becomes very angry with Mirabell. But there is more of jealousy in her anger than of bitterness. Finally, she becomes reconciled to him when he saves her from the rapacity of Fainall. His love for Millamant is sincere and genuine and he does his best to win her. He uses all possible means to win Millamant. But he rejects Mrs. Marwood's love.

He has contrived an elaborate scheme. He has arranged for a pretended uncle to woo and win Lady Wishfort. Then Mirabell intends to reveal the actual status of the successful wooer and obtain her consent to his marriage to Millamant by rescuing her from this misalliance. Waitwell was to marry Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid, before the masquerade so that he might not decide to hold Lady Wishfort to her contract; Mirabell is too much a man of his time to trust anyone in matters of money or love. Millamant is aware of the plot, probably through Foible. As the play proceeds the character of Mirabell grows and becomes more mature. In the beginning, he appears to be no better than Fainall. He has been flirting and intriguing against Lady Wishfort. But as the play proceeds we find that he is a very sincere lover and a generous gentleman.

When the play opens, Mirabell is impatiently waiting to hear that Waitwell is married to Foible. During Mirabell's card game with Fainall, it becomes clear that the relations between the two men are strained. There are hints at the fact that Fainall has been twice duped by Mirabell: Mrs. Fainall is Mirabell's former mistress, and Mrs. Marwood, Fainall's mistress, is in love with Mirabell. In the meantime, although Millamant quite clearly intends to have Mirabell, she enjoys teasing him in his state of uncertainty. Mirabell is a modest young man and good sense. He displays a modesty in his behaviour. At the end, he returns the documents of Mrs. Fainall's property to her. He exposes the villainy of Fainall and Mrs. Marwood and thus saves Lady Wishfort from utter ruin.

He bids fair to succeed until, unfortunately, Mrs. Marwood overhears Mrs. Fainall and Foible discussing the scheme, as well as Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall's earlier love affair. Since Mrs. Marwood also overhears insulting comments about herself, she is vengeful and informs Fainall of the plot and the fact, which he suspected before, that his wife was once Mirabell's mistress. The two conspirators now have both motive and means for revenge. In the same afternoon, Millamant accepts Mirabell's proposal and rejects Sir Wilfull Witwoud, Lady Wishfort's candidate for her hand.

He is well-read and witty, when he finds. Millamant quoting suckling, he quotes the same poet. He is not a fool like Sir Wilfull. He shows poise and dignity in the bargaining scene. When Millamant says that in course of time she may 'dwindle into a wife'. He replies that he would in due course be 'enlarged into a husband'.

He is quite unlike the rest of the young men of the Restoration Era. His sobriety is his weakness but patience is his virtue. His love must be seen within the context of the play. The famous bargaining scene highlights Mirabell dramatic personality. He is a serious person. The whole play is concerned with his intrigue and he succeeds in the end.

Merdith calls Mirabell the sprightliest male figure of English comedy. Dr. Johnson calls him an intelligent gladiator. His wit, the fine sparkling things which he says so often, show that he is intelligent and shrewd and knows how to hold his own. As a man of sound sense, Mirabell displays a modesty of behaviour. He believes that good nature and true wit go together.

#### **1.2.4.3 Millamant**

She is the most charming young, charming heroine in Restoration comedy. She is rich but is dependent on her aunt. She loves but shows no sentiment. She is airy, teasing, light, beautiful, tantalizing, and infuriating. Mirabell is aware of her faults. She is affected, coy, and arch and we would have her no other way. She can be sweet and charming, but there can be acid and irony in her wit. She is cultured and refined lady. She takes interest in literature.

She appears significantly in five scenes: her first appearance, her dialogue with Mrs. Marwood, her scene with Sir Wilfull, the proviso scene with Mirabell, and the drunken scene immediately following. The first and fourth are the most important for revealing her character. She has genuine grace. She has a good moral reputation even

in a society which was a school for scandal. When she arrives, trailing her court, Mincing and young Witwoud, she automatically takes the center of the stage. She has affectation that is fully conscious of itself, and flippancy that delights in its own irreverence. She is completely sure of her feminine power, and Congreve has given her the lines to justify her assurance. The lines concerning suitors — one makes them, one destroys them, and one makes others — are all flippant. She knows her power and can laugh at herself, just as she can tease Mirabell. She has been called a coquette. She loves Mirabell sincerely. She likes tantalize him and keep him on tanker hooks.

Within the limited world where she operates, she is intelligent. She sees through the forced false wit of young Witwoud's humour and handles him gracefully and efficiently. "Truce with your similitude's" and "Mincing stand between me and his wit" are deft lines which give Witwoud precisely the attention he merits; incidentally, they gracefully dispose of the small deer, for Millamant stalks more worthy game. She is shrewd enough to see through Mrs. Marwood.

Millamant and Mirabell are worthy partners. She, too, will not admit her love to him, for to do so would be to give up one's position of vantage in the game. It is the control of the skillful Restoration wit, which overlays her love, and through which it must operate, that makes the proviso scene so completely successful.

Millamant has her fault. She is always gay. She cannot be serious. She is very virtuous, rich and cheerful girl. She has strong individuality. She comes into contact with other character but keeps a distinction of her own. Everyone admires her.

#### **1.2.4.4 Lady Wishfort**

Lady Wishfort is one of the most brilliant and uniformly sustained figures of Restoration comedy. She is first described by Mirabell, who points out that her character is defined in the tag-name, *Lady Wishfort*. She is an old woman of wealth status, living in a large mansion, with a number of attendants. She is widow yearning for the joys of love and marriage. There is something degraded in the Sexual desire of this old widow. Her sexuality is so powerful that she would marry any one in man's shape. It is this gross sexuality which makes her a great figure of fun. She is a man-seeking widow. Her indecorous interest in men is a part of her character and important for the action of the play. She has her own life-style and ways. She is abrupt and tyrannical with her maid. She lives in a world of fantasy. She always looks

into mirror. She thinks, she can still be a girl of sixteen only Fifty-five years of age, she is the character with most lines in the final acts of the play.

Everyone she trusts betrays her to a greater or lesser degree. Apparently her closest friend is Mrs. Marwood; her daughter and ward are both prepared to go along with a plot that would trick her in a most humiliating way; her maid, Foible, on whom she depends, plays a major part in the plot. In her dilemma in the last act, she is bewildered and helpless.

The humorous character is not often shown in situations that display aspects of his character other than his humour. However, Lady Wishfort as mother and guardian has a depth beyond the usual for her type. As a mother, she did not always act wisely.

Fainall's demands could prove successful only because she loves her daughter and wants to protect her. Her choice of a husband for her ward might be incongruous, but it is certainly well-intentioned. Sir Wilfull does have sterling qualities, although he is hardly the right choice for Millamant.

The result is that Lady Wishfort, by the end of the play, has gained a certain measure of good will from the audience. She is a complex creation. Lady Wishfort's sketch displays normal human behaviour.

Her vanity and sexual instinct provide fun and laughter. She is also fond of discussing scandals. She is the most comic old widow in *The Way of the World*.

#### **1.2.4.5. Mrs. Fainall**

Mrs. Fainall has some important functions in the play. She is the daughter of Lady Wishfort. She is a widow. Her first husband was Mr. Languish. He was dead. She made her second marriage with Fainall. But this marriage was a marriage of convenience and not of love. She had illicit love relations with Mirabell and become pregnant. Then Mirabell helped her to marry with Mr. Fainall so that child may get a legitimate father. There is no love between her and Mr. Fainall. They both hate each other. Mrs. Fainall continues to be a mistress of Mirabell even though he loves Millamant and is about to marry her.

She is the mainspring in Fainall's counterplot; when she is made aware of Mirabell's plot, she talks too freely with Foible and is overheard. She helps fill out



the gallery of portraits. The cast mistress, now a sadder but wiser person, is, in fact, a common character in Restoration comedy.

She is not as well drawn as the other characters, and it is perhaps easier to see why Mirabell tired of her than why he ever loved her in the first place. Mrs. Fainall is a woman of the world. She seems to have acquired considerable experience of men and has strong view about their nature and character.

#### **1.2.4.6 Mr. Fainall**

He is a villain. He uses his intellectual gift to threaten, and blackmail such helpless Lady Wishfort. He describes himself, in his terms, as an opportunist, a man who can ever with the winds of circumstance. Mirabell describes him as a man on the fringes of respectability, a man who is almost acceptable.

He is a somewhat tarnished version of Mirabell. Mirabell's deftness in handling his world becomes Fainall's "bustling" opportunism. Mirabell's caution in trusting people becomes Fainall's almost pathological suspicion of every word anyone says.

Fainall's attitude to life as a smirched version of Mirabell's. Possibly against their wills, both are in love. Mirabell moves to a marriage based on mutual respect. Fainall will try to shut his eyes to what he sees and pretend to believe against clear evidence in a love affair hemmed in on all sides by indignity and deceit.

When Fainall's suspicions about his wife are confirmed, he moves from a kind of generalized unpleasantness to quite specific action. Once his plans are made, he proceeds ruthlessly. He is bankrupt morally. He is married but has Mrs. Marwood as his mistress. His behaviour towards his mistress is not gentlemanly and often he insults her in the most cruel manners.

#### **1.2.4.7. Foible**

She plays her role as well as that of her counterpart –Waitwell. She marries Waitwell. She is very clever. Foible is obviously a very intelligent young woman and, like all servants, presumably eager to play the go-between. Her loyalties are not clear; although Lady Wishfort's maid, she is prepared to deceive her; her loyalty to Mirabell is based on clear pecuniary interest. In the final analysis, she is like everybody else in the play. Her loyalty is only to herself.

### 1.2.4.8. Check you Progress

#### 1.2.4.8.1 Objective type questions

- a) \_\_\_\_\_ is Lady Wishfort's ward.  
1) Millamant            2) Mrs. Fainall    3) Mrs. Marwood    4) Foible
- b) \_\_\_\_\_ is Millamant's cousin.  
1) Lady Wishfort    2) Mrs. Fainall    3) Mrs. Marwood    4) Foible
- c) \_\_\_\_\_ is Fainall's mistress.  
1) Lady Wishfort    2) Millamant    3) Mrs. Marwood    4) Mrs. Fainall
- d) \_\_\_\_\_ represents the sexual desire in old age.  
1) Lady Wishfort    2) Millamant    3) Mrs. Marwood    4) Mrs. Fainall
- e) \_\_\_\_\_ are the two vicious characters in the play.  
1) Millamant and Lady Wishfort            2) Fainall and Mrs. Marwood  
3) Mirabell and Millamant                    4) Mrs. Fainall and Mr. Fainall

#### 1.2.4.8.2 Fill in the Blanks

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ is the nephew of Lady Wishfort.
- 2) Waitwell is \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ is the heroine of the play.
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ is twice married.
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ is the hero of the play.
- 6) Sir Rowland is a disguised \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_ is married to Mirabell Millamant.

### 1.3 Summary of the Play

The play opens at a chocolate house. Mirabell a typical, young charming restoration man, has a love affair with Mrs. Fainall. She is the daughter of Lady Wishfort. She is widowed. Mirabell and Fainall play cards and Mirabell loses to Fainall. Mirabell protects Mrs. Fainall from the scandal in the event of pregnancy. Mirabell manages and helps Mrs. Fainall's marriage to Mr. Fainall. Last night

Mirabell is cold shouldered by Lady Wishfort. Mrs. Millamant did not like his presence there because she is in love with Mirabell. Fainall tells Mirabell that it is one of their cabal nights and that naturally they want to get rid of him. Witwoud and Petulant being the only male members admitted to cabal-night. Mirabell disguises his love for Lady Wishfort's niece Millamant. Mrs. Marwood is responsible for enlightening Lady Wishfort. Mrs. Marwood has gone against Mirabell because he has rejected her love.

Waitwell has married Foible who is Lady Wishfort's maid. Mirabell has some secrets at present. Fainall and Mirabell talks about Millamant. Mirabell understands the character of Millamant. Lady Wishfort controls half of Millamant's fortune i.e. 6,000 pounds and half of Lady Millamant. This amount turns to Millamant if she marries a man approval by Lady Wishfort. Mirabell continues to love Millamant

A messenger entered with a letter for Witwoud from Sir Wilfull. He was nephew of Lady Wishfort. Witwoud has been playing cards with Petulant. Fainall praises him for his wit. Coachman inquires about Petulant. Fainall suggests that Petulant will make use of this dismissal of the ladies to carry favour with Millamant. Mirabell is a man of his time to trust anyone in matters of money or love. Millamant is aware of that through Foible.

Mrs Fainall is Mirabells former mistress and Mrs Marwood is the mistress of Fainall. Millamant enjoys teasing Mirabell in his state of uncertainty.

They play an intrigue or a series of intrigues. Mirabell makes a plan in which he has arranged Waitwell to make Lady Wishfort fall in love with him. He thinks that he would gain Lady Wishfort's favour and permission to marry Milamant. When the play opens, Mirabell is waiting to hear that Waitwell is married to Foible. Mirabell's card game with Mr. Fainall reveals that their relationship is not good. Unfortunately Mrs. Marwood hears Mrs. Fainall and Foible discussing the scheme of Mirabell, along with Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall's earlier love affair. She also overhears comments about herself. So, she becomes vengeful and immediately informs Fainall of the plot and the fact that his wife was once Mirabell mistress. The two conspirators now have both motive and means for revenge. In the same afternoon Millamant accepts Mirabell's proposal and rejects Sir Wilfull Witwoud, Lady Wishfort's, candidate for her hand.

Fainall, the conspirator, now leads the action. He reveals the truth of Waitwell the false uncle and starts blackmailing Lady Wishfort with the threat of her daughter's disgrace. He demands that the balance of Milamant's fortune should be turned over to his sole control. In addition, he wants to be sure that Lady Wishfort will not marry. So that Mrs Fainall is certain to be the heir.

This plot of Fainall's is now defied by Millamant. She says that he will marry Willful to save her own fortune. Fainall goes on insisting that he wants control of the rest of his wife's money and immediate management of Lady Wishfort's fortune. At the same time Mirabell brings two servants to prove that Fainall and Mrs Marwood are themselves guilty of adultery. Fainall ignores the blame and points out that he will still create a scandal which would blacken the name of Mrs. Fainall if he does not get the money.

At this point; Mirabell victoriously reveals his most successfully trick. Before Mrs. Fainall married Fainall, she and Mirabell had suspected the man's character, so she has appointed her lover a trustee of her fortune. Fainall, now cannot claim the fortune because Mrs. Fainall does not control her own money. He and Mrs. Marwood leave in great anger. Lady Wishfort forgives the servants and gives consent to the match of Mirabell and Millamant.

### **Critical Analysis of The Play *The Way of The World* (Critical Appreciation)**

William Congreve was a great dramatist of the Restoration Era. He contributed in the comedy of manners. His *The Way of the World* is a comedy. He depicted the social life of the fashionable men and women of London of the Restoration Era. This was a peculiar age. The pursuit of pleasure and intrigues for love had just become the sole business of the ladies and gentlemen of the upper class. This is portrayed in *The Way of the World*.

The plot is concerned with the intrigues of Mirabell to gain the hand of Millamant in marriage. The counter intrigues of Fainall to grab all the property belonging to his wife, her mother and Millamant. The men are all pursuing the women. The women all enjoy this chase but are afraid of marriage. Mrs. Marwood is annoyed because Mirabell has repelled her advances and now she is enjoying sensual pleasures with Fainall. Lady Wishfort, an old lady, with a twice married daughter tries to look beautiful with paint and rouge. She is most desirous of marrying again and Mirabell makes a fool of her sending his servant disguised as Sir Rowland to

make love to her. Mirabell has an affair with Mrs. Fainall. He does not marry her. He arranges her marriage with Fainall.

The play is a satire on the artificiality, over formality, affection, coquetry, foppery and so many other vices that corrupted the Restoration society. Lady Wishfort is a typical specimen of the high class society women of that age. Even in her advanced age adorns and beautifies themselves to attract man. She is as passionate as a young woman of twenty. She is a mother of a married woman and yet she loves young Mirabell who has been loved by his daughter and now is being loved by her niece Millamant. The portraits of Mrs. Marwood and Mr. Fainall are also intended on that class of men and women of Restoration age whose main motive is sex, intrigues, flirtation and who live an empty frivolous life. Therefore, Congreve's *The Way of the World* is a true picture of the values and a great satire on them. William Congreve depicts very clearly and frankly what the conditions and ways of living of the upper class society, and what the manners and nature they adopted. He understood well the human nature and accordingly he delineated all his characters.

All the ladies in the play are windows. Lady Wishfort is most satirized in the play. The norm of feminine society can be inferred from the talks, doings, tastes and likings, longings and passions of women in the play.

The title *The Way of the World* itself indicates the social comedy or the comedy of manners. It was an ironic commentary on the ways of the society at that time. It deals entirely with life of London. All the characters in the play except Sir Wilfull are imbued with the spirit of London life. The scenes in *The Way of the World* are laid in Lady Wishfort's bed room or parlour or a London Park. This is the true style of the comedy of manners.

The characters in Restoration comedy of manners are of a set pattern. We find graceful young rakes, lustful women, deceived husbands and a charming young heroine who finally marries the rake who shows signs of becoming better. In *The Way of the World* we find characters of this type.

The hero of the play is Mirabell and the heroine, Millamant. The play is concerned with her fortune. Millamant has kept a distance from Mirabell because she knows the plan of Mirabell. Mirabell has been pursuing her with love. Mirabell's first plan to win Millamant. The play has a serious cast. The action of the play develops between the plot and the counter plot. It is a play based upon a series of of

intrigues, Mirabell gets his servant, Waitwell married to foible and so Foible aids Mirabell in his plot, while Waitwell appears disguised as Sir Rowland, known to be Mirabell's uncle, before Lady Wishfort offers to marry her. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood intercept the plan of getting Lady Wishfort entrapped. But things take a very bad turn for Lady Wishfort. Fainall is now free to prosecute his counter plan demanding his right to manage the property of Lady Wishfort and to have the complete use of his wife's property and the fortune of Millamant which comes to his wife as Millamant refuses to marry Sir Willfull. At first sight Mirabell's plan seems to be defeated, and the success of Fainall's counter plan threatens the ruin of Lady Wishfort and her daughter and Millamant too. The ending of the play looks like that of a tragedy. But Millamant's fortune is saved from Fainall's greedy grasp by Sir Willfull who offers to marry Millamant. Fainall still claims his wife's property by repudiating her as a bad woman. Now Mirabell produces a document which appoints him trustee of Mrs. Fainall's property before she marries Fainall.

So, the ending of the play is a happy one. It seems to be a little forced. Sir Willfull offering to marry Millamant and then making her over to Mirabell. It seems to be such a romantic gesture in a play.

The Restoration age is delighted in witty conversation. Congreve's dialogue is full of wit. His dialogue is full of suggestions, gossip and scandal but everything is clothed in brilliant wit. The gallants and society ladies of this age loved to meet in the parlors or the coffee house or the streets or the garden of London and fire witty repartees at each other. *The Way of the World* is full of such scenes and such dialogues.

For example,

Mirabell : You are no longer handsome when you have lost your lover...

Millamant: --- Beauty the love's gift! Lord, what is a lover that is can give ---

The bargaining scene throws a light on the ways of the high class women of that day. The conditions proposed by Mirabell also show very clearly the condition of the women of the time. He wants that she must not have a lady confidant. She must not be friendly with immoral women.

Here the men are all society rakes who intrigue for love or money. Fainall hates his wife and is in love with Mrs. Marwood. He is intriguing to force Lady Wishforts

to give him his wife's property as well as half the property of Millamant. Greed is his ruling passion and love is a game for him. There is the impression of free love in the play. Mirabell has an affair with Mrs. Fainall when she is the widow of Mrs. Languish and he has persuaded her to marry Fainall to save her reputation. But when he falls in love with Millamant he becomes very serious. He is sincerely in love with her and forms all the intrigues to force Lady Wishfort to agree to his marriage with his beloved.

All these characters are thoroughly cynical and absolutely heartless hating one's own wife and flirting with someone else's wife is common play with them. Marriage is a social bargain. Affection for one's brother or mother is out of fashion. The limit is reached when Mrs. Fainall joins Mirabell in a deep plot to befool her own mother. This is a true reflection of the society of the time of Congreve.

The title is ironic, the action of the play is ironic, the relationships of the characters to each other are ironic. The main themes of the play are indicated in the title itself. It deals with the ways of the world of high class men and women of London in the year 1670. The title sums up the main events and principal characters of the play.

The characters introduced here are typical of that age. They have no feeling. They have intellectual wit. They are cynical and heartless. Even a good man like Mirabell plots to humiliate Lady Wishfort by sending an impostor to make love to her. And her own daughter does not mind her mother being humiliated in this way.

The men introduced here have only two aims in life, love and lucre. The main business of all men seems to be the pursuit of women.

Money plays an important part in the play. Greed is Fainall's obsession. He marries Mrs. Fainall only because she is rich. His first plot is that Millamant should marry Mirabell against the wishes of her aunt, and so her property should come to his wife and so indirectly to him.

Millamant loves Mirabell but she knows that marriage without money would be a sentimental folly so she agrees to marry Sir Wilfull in order to save her property.

The play is concerned with love in its various forms. The most graceful aspect of love is seen in the relations of Mirabell and Millamant. It is love based on mutual esteem. In contrast to this was Mirabell's love affair with Mrs. Fainall. Their

relations are very intimate but they do not get married. Mrs. Fainall has no grudge against Mirabell. She remains in very friendly terms with him and helps him in all his plots.

Then we have the illicit love of Fainall and Mrs. Marwood. Witwoud plays court to Millamant. Sir Wilfull attempts to make love to Millamant. We find all the varieties of love in this play.

The main theme of the play is the great intrigue of Mirabell to gain the hand of Millamant in marriage. Though the plot is excellent as far as the three unities are concerned, it has certainly other well marked faults. The intrigue of Mirabell which covers up the major part of the play fails to achieve its end. Nothing comes out of it. It is frustrated and it fails before it can attain its goal. It is a total failure for Mirabell does not get Millamant through it.

The conclusion strikes us as forced, unnatural and artificial. There are so many moves and counter moves. So many turns and turns that the readers are confused and bewildered. Thirdly the characters of Witwoud and of Petulant are superfluous and irrelevant. They do not have any significant part in the play and do not contribute to the development of the plot. They are fops who may be necessary to fill up the picture of the Restoration world, but they must be regarded as faults as far as the plot construction is concerned.

## 1.5 Key terms

**Prologue** - is a sort of introduction to a play.

**Mrs. Engine** - Foible is so called because she is being used as a tool

**Odious man** - Petulant

**Revolution** - The Revolution of 1688 which put William and Mary on the throne of England.

**Shropshire** - a country of England, bounded on the West by Wales.

**Citizens child** - an illegitimate child

**Intercessor** - mediator

**Epilogue** - is a poem or speech at the end of a play.

**Ralph, Earl of Montague (1638-1709)** – First Duke of Montague

**Digression** - departure



**Ternce (190-159BC)** – he translated Greek drama into the Latin tongue.

**Plautus (251-181 BC)** – Comedy writer

**Menander (342-291 BC)** - Athenian poet.

**Theophrastus** – (372-287BC) Greek philosopher

**Vapours** – Melancholy

**Coupling** - Marriage

**Hyde Park** – Famous public park of London

**Cable nights** – nights devoted to a secret intrigue of a sinister character.

**Horace** – Latin epic poet.

## **1.6 Answer to Check your progress**

### **1.2.2.9.1 Objective type question**

- a) 1970
- b) An army officer
- c) Ireland
- d) 1700
- e) As You Like it

### **1.2.1.7.2. Say true or false**

- a) False (London)
- b) True
- c) True
- d) True
- e) False (Restoration Age)
- f) False (Comedy of Manners)

### **1.2.1.7.3. Fill in the blanks**

- a) Social
- b) Millamant

- c) Mrs. Fainall
- d) Comedy of Manners
- e) Immoral

#### **1.2.3.9. Answer to check your progress**

##### **1.2.3.9.1 Objective type questions**

- a) Second
- b) St. James Park
- c) Chocolate House
- d) Second
- e) Second

##### **1.2.3.9.2 Fill in the blanks**

- 1) Waitwell
- 2) The flower of knightwood
- 3) Malicious fops
- 4) The variation on the game of Love
- 5) Act IV
- 6) The Right Honourable Ralph, Earl of Montague
- 7) Mrs. Bracegirdle
- 8) 65 years old Betterton

##### **1.2.3.9.3 Say True or False**

- 1) False (Millamant)
- 2) True
- 3) False (Languish)
- 4) False (Waitwell)
- 5) False (Sir Wilfull)

#### **1.2.4. 8 Answer to check your progress**

##### **1.2.4.8.1 Objective type questions**

- a) Millamant
- b) Mrs. Fainall
- c) Mrs. Marwood
- d) Lady Wishfort
- e) Fainall and Mrs. Marwood

##### **1.2.4.8.2 Fill in the Blanks**

- 1) Sir Willfull
- 2) Servant of Mirabell
- 3) Millamant
- 4) Mrs. Fainall
- 5) Mirabell
- 6) Waitwell
- 7) Millamant

#### **1.7 Exercise :**

##### **A) Long answer type question**

- 1) '*The Way of the World* reflects the social life of the Restoration period'. Discuss.
- 2) Consider *The Way of the World* as a perfect example of the Comedy of Manners.
- 3) Critically examine the plot construction of *The Way of the World*.
- 4) Discuss the themes of *The Way of the World*.
- 5) Discuss *The Way of the World* as a social satire.
- 6) Discuss the character of Mirabell.
- 7) Sketch the character of Millamant.

**B) Short answer type question**

- 1) Lady Wishfort.
- 2) Write a note on main plot and sub-plot.
- 3) Write a note on the three unities.
- 4) Mrs. Fainall as a woman of loose character.
- 5) Mr. Fainall – a villain (Blackmaller)
- 6) Write a short note on the wit and style of the play.
- 7) Write a note on the humour in the play.
- 8) Write a short note on the title of the play.
- 9) Bring out the significance of the ‘Proviso Scene’ in *The Way of the World*.
- 10) Discuss *The Way of the World* as a mirror of contemporary Life.

**C) Show your acquaintance with -**

1. Restoration Era
2. Comedy of Manners
3. William Wycherley
4. Sir John Vanbrugh
5. The Country Wife
6. The Old Bachelor
7. The Double Dealer
8. Love for Love

**1.8 Reference for further study:**

Fisk, Deborah Payne. Ed. (2000). *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*. Cambridge CUP.



## Unit-2

### *Gulliver's Travels (Book I & II)*

Jonathan Swift

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#### **Contents:**

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
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#### **2.1 Objectives:**

After studying this unit, all students will be able:

- to know the life and works of Jonathan Swift.
- to understand the themes of *Gulliver's Travels*.
- to analyze the writing style of Jonathan Swift.
- to interpret *Gulliver's Travels* as a travelogue and critique of humanity.
- to get insights of irony and satire as literary techniques.

## 2.2 Introduction:

*Gulliver's Travels*, the most famous literary work of Jonathan Swift was published in 1726. It was first published as *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, by Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and then a Captain of Several Ships*. Over the period of almost three centuries, the book has been considered as a classic example of a satire and a collection of adventure stories in English literature. This unit discusses the major themes of *Gulliver's Travels* (Book I & II). Besides, it highlights how Jonathan Swift has used a satire and irony as literary techniques to criticize human tendencies and controversies of his time.

## 2.3 Life and Works of Jonathan Swift:

Jonathan Swift, the son of English parents - Jonathan Swift and Abigail Erick was born in Dublin, Ireland on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1667. Swift's father came to Ireland to work with his elder brother Godwin but unfortunately, he died of syphilis just seven months before Jonathan Swift's birth and hence, Abigail Erick was enforced to depend on the financial support of Godwin. His mother went to England, leaving him behind alone in the care of his uncle Godwin, who looked after his nursing and schooling. At the age of six, Swift was sent to Kilkenny School where he studied for eight years and then went to Trinity College, Dublin for further education in 1682. In his school activities, Swift was an average student and completed his degree on the mercy of college authorities. His uncle Godwin died in 1688 making him orphan and helpless. Therefore, Jonathan Swift had no alternatives except to work hard and so he offered himself as a secretary to Sir William Temple, a famous diplomat who was living as a retired person at Moor Park. Then, with the help of Sir William Temple, Jonathan Swift obtained a position the Prebend of Kilroot and later on became a professional clergyman and worked there for two years. In 1696, leaving the job, he came back to Sir William Temple at Moor Park. After Sir William Temple's death in 1699, Jonathan Swift became the private secretary of Lord Berkley and started to write pamphlets for Whig Party in England. However, he had some conflicts with Whig Party regarding Church issues, so he left Whig Party and joined Tory Party. Unfortunately, the Tory government fell down from the power in 1714 and being disfavoured, Jonathan Swift came back to Dublin, Ireland. During his stay at England, Swift had developed friendships with the world famous literary persons namely Alexander Pope, Mr. Arbuthnot, and Mr. Gay. The final years of Swift's life

were really bad causing him lot of troubles and sufferings. He lost his memory, became deaf and insane and died on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1745 at the age of 78.

In the field of literature, Jonathan Swift is famously known for his satirical works. In fact, he has been considered as the father of English Satire who used satire and irony for social criticism. His major literary works are: *A Tale of Tub* (1704), *The Battle of the Books* (1704), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), *A Modest Proposal* (1729) and *Journal to Stella* (1766 - 1768). Jonathan Swift is also known for his poetry and the most famous poem is "Cadenus and Vanessa" (1713). His other famous poems are "On Mrs. Biddy Floyd" ( 1707), "The Progress of Beauty" (1720), "An Epistle to Mr. Gay" (1731), "The Beast's Confession to the Priest" (1732), "On Poetry: Rhapsody" (1733), "The Lady's Dressing Room" (1733) and "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift (1739). In short, Jonathan Swift is known as the greatest satirist, essayist, pamphleteers and the poet in English literature.

## **2.4 *Gulliver's Travels*: Its Structure and Other Literary Details**

Jonathan Swift started to write *Gulliver's Travels* in 1721 and finished it in 1725. The book as a unified novel was first published in 1726. The book is divided into four parts: Part I - A Voyage to Lilliput, Part II - A Voyage to Brobdingnag, Part III - A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbdubdrib and Japan, and Part IV - A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms. The novel begins with the publisher's note to the readers following by Gulliver's letter to Sympson and then four parts detailing the travels and experiences of Gulliver in the remote lands. The publisher's note to the reader is a sort of introduction to the book and to the main character of the book. This note informs the readers that Lemuel Gulliver is a friend and relative of Mr. Sympson and he had left Redriff because of visitors' disturbance. While leaving Redriff, Gulliver had given written scripts of his travels to Mr. Sympson and by editing these scripts; Mr. Sympson had published them in a book form entitled *Gulliver's Travels*. By inserting the publisher's note to the reader in the very beginning of the novel, Jonathan Swift wants to assure the readers that all experiences of Gulliver in the remote lands are not his fantasy or the creation of his mind but the truthful records of real life experience. After the publisher's note, the readers come across to a letter entitled "A Letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson." It is here in this section the readers read about Gulliver's regrets as the book doesn't bring reformative changes in the contemporary society. Lemuel

Gulliver is not a person in existence. He is invented by Jonathan Swift and therefore, the regrets of Gulliver are the thoughts of Jonathan Swift. Jonathan Swift, by inserting Gulliver's Letter to Mr. Sympson in the novel intends to highlight that he wrote the novel *Gulliver's Travels* not for only to entertain the society. He wanted to bring some reformative changes in the society through criticizing and satirizing human follies and vices. However, the regrets of Gulliver (in fact of Swift) expressed in the letter leaves a message to the readers that the stupidity and evils are deeply rooted in the human bones which are hardly possible to wipe out. Finally, after the publisher's note and Gulliver's letter, the readers are exposed to the wonderful and fantastic journey of Gulliver in four parts and each part details about the mishappenings, the encounters and communications of Gulliver with different races of human beings beginning with the tiny people, then with the giant people and the human beings with horse-heads.

Lemuel Gulliver is the central character in the novel and functions as a mouthpiece of Jonathan Swift. He is the narrator of this story and all the time he speaks in the first person using past tense. Throughout the novel, he tells about his meeting with the strange species and his own actions in the remote lands. Basically, the novel is a satirical work and Swift has used a number of literary devices including allegory, irony and allusions to mock at the contemporary English society.

## **2.5 Characters and the Setting of the Novel: *Gulliver's Travels***

While reading *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), the readers can come across the wide varieties of characters including the protagonist and the other major characters, minor characters and the extras. The protagonist is a leading character who remains at the centre of the story throughout the novel. Minor characters are the supporting or background characters and extras are known as crowd characters. Considering the novel *Gulliver's Travels* (Part I and II), one can classify Lemuel Gulliver as the protagonist - the leading character, and the Emperor of Lilliput, the Farmer, Glumdalclitch, the Queen and the King of Brobdingnag, etc. as other major characters who play the crucial role in the development of the plot. The other characters including Richard Sympson, James Bates, Abraham Pannell, William Prichard, Captain John Nicolas and Thomas Wilcocks are minor characters as they play background or supporting role in the novel. The Lilliputians, the Blefuscudians, the Brobdingnagians, the soldiers of the two kingdoms, Tamecksan and Slamecksan,



the giant reapers in the fields, the visitors and villagers at the exhibition shows can be classified into the category of extras as they are used to create crowd scenes in the novel. A detailed list of characters (*Gulliver's Travels*- Part-I and Part-II) is given below.

### ***Gulliver's Travels (Part I)***

**Lemuel Gulliver:** Lemuel Gulliver is the protagonist and narrator of *Gulliver's Travel* who narrates all his educational and professional experiences throughout the book. He is the author of a travel book, an apprentice to Mr. James Bates, and surgeon on the ships during sea-voyages. Being advised, he marries to Lady Burton and has two children — Jonny and Betty. He is always haunted by his strong desire to see foreign countries and therefore he leaves his family behind and joins the ships for sea voyages at regular interval.

**Lady Burton:** Lady Burton, the wife of Lemuel Gulliver is a minor character in the novel. She is the second daughter of Mr. Edmond Burton, hosier, in New Gate Street. She brings four hundred pounds to Gulliver as a part of dowry. By the end of the first part of this novel, the readers come to know that she has produced two children for Gulliver and lives at Redriff in a well established house.

**Richard Simpson:** Richard Simpson is a fictional editor and publisher of *Gulliver's Travels*. He is a self-declared close friend and the relative of Gulliver. He informs the readers that he has edited Gulliver's manuscript and by excluding few descriptions, he has published his manuscript in the book form titled as *Gulliver's Travels*.

**James Bates:** James Bates is a famous surgeon in London. After graduation, Lemuel Gulliver has offered himself as an apprentice to James Bates and later on has started his medical profession. He is very cooperative and benevolent man who always recommends patients to Lemuel Gulliver. He is the man who has recommended Gulliver as a Ship Surgeon to Abraham Pannel, the commander of a ship named Swallow.

**Abraham Pannel:** Abraham Pannel is the commander of a ship named Swallow and on recommendation of James Bates, has appointed Lemuel Gulliver as a Ship Surgeon. He is the first employer of Gulliver and has a minor role to play in the novel. Lemuel Gulliver has worked with Abraham Pannel for three and half years.

He has made two sea-voyages under the guidance of Abraham Pannel and has left the job.

**William Prichard:** William Prichard, the second employer of Gulliver is a pretty minor character in the novel. He is the master and commander of a ship named Antelope. Lemuel Gulliver started his journey towards the South Sea in 1699 under the captaincy of William Prichard. It is assumed that William Prichard is lost in the sea when the ship Antelope splits into pieces.

**The Emperor:** The Emperor is the ruler of Lilliputian Kingdom. Like his citizens, he is also six inches high. He is generous, benevolent and careful emperor who offers huge quantity of food and wine to appease Gulliver's hunger regularly. He grants liberty to Gulliver within the restrictions of rules and regulations. He is also selfish being and wants to destroy the Blefuscu thoroughly by using Gulliver's strength. During the private intrigue against Gulliver, the Emperor chooses the option of blinding Gulliver instead of death punishment.

**Lilliputians and Blefuscudians:** Lilliputians are small, tiny citizens of six inches in average height and they belong to the kingdom of Lilliput. They are presented as extras in the novel and used for creating crowd scenes. Lilliputians are greedy, selfish, violent and untrustworthy people. Blefuscudians are also small and tiny beings of six inches in average height and they belong to Blefuscu, the neighboring land of Lilliput. They are the enemies of Lilliput and have lost their ships during the war against Lilliput. Blefuscudians are the people who at the end have supported Gulliver in his escape from Lilliput.

**Reldresal:** Reldresal is the Principal Secretary of Private Affairs in Lilliputian government. He becomes a close friend of Gulliver and informs him the plans of the court. He also explains the history of the political tensions between Big-Endians and Little-Endians. It is he who tells Gulliver about the impending invasion of Blefuscu. He speaks up for Gulliver's survival in the court.

**Tramecksan and Slamecksan:** These are two leading parties in Lilliput. Tramecksan is the most conservative party who follow the ancient constitution of Lilliput. They are distinguished with the high heels of their shoes and symbolically stand for Tory Party in England. Slamecksan is another leading party in Lilliput. They are distinguished with low heels of their shoes. The Emperor of Lilliput is in favour of Slamecksan and allows only Slamecksan into the administration.

**Skyresh Bolgolam:** Skyresh Bolgolam is the High Admiral of Lilliput and only the person who opposes Gulliver's freedom. He is the counselor of the Emperor and is afraid of to lose his position because of Gulliver's bravery. He is the leading person of the private intrigue against Gulliver and wants to bring death to Gulliver by any means.

**Flimnap:** Flimnap, a greedy and selfish being is the treasurer of Lilliput government. He absurdly believes in the court rumour of Gulliver's love affair with his wife. Being jealous, he always plans for Gulliver's punishment.

### ***Gulliver's Travels (Part II)***

**The Farmer:** The Farmer is Gulliver's first master in Brobdingnag. He finds Gulliver in his cornfield and brings him to his home as pet animal. Considering the rationality of Gulliver, he plans to earn profit from putting the small creature into market shows and exhibition. He is very selfish being as he notices Gulliver's reducing health and organizes more and more shows to get more profit before his death. Finally, he sells Gulliver to the Queen for one thousand pieces of gold.

**Glumdalclitch:** Glumdalclitch (Little Nurse) is the nine years old daughter of the farmer. She is the caretaker of Gulliver who she calls Gildrig. She washes, dresses and feeds Gulliver with utmost care. When Gulliver is sold to the Queen, she stays with him in the royal palace.

**Brobdingnagians:** Brobdingnagians are the giant people of sixty feet tall in average heights and they belong to the country named Brobdingnag. They are not violent like Lilliputians.

**The Queen:** The Queen of Brobdingnag purchases Gulliver from his master for one thousand gold pieces. She is kind and considerate woman who purchases Gulliver after his consent and allows Glumdalclitch to stay in royal palace as Gulliver wishes. She is very much fond of Gulliver and could not dine in Gulliver's absence.

**The Dwarf:** The Queen's employee in the royal court. He is very short person of thirty feet height. He is very much thrilled by seeing Gulliver who is very short and takes pleasure by playing tricks upon the small creature.

**The King:** The King of Brobdingnag is a considerate and intellectual human being. He always conducts conversation with Gulliver to learn about his country, his people, his government and various customs.

**Thomas Wilcocks:** Thomas Wilcocks is the captain of the ship who rescues Gulliver from wooden box that fell down from eagle's beak into the ocean. Initially, he doesn't believe in Gulliver's story but later on observing numerous objects bring by Gulliver has accepted Gulliver's story. He is a cooperative man who lends five pounds to Gulliver for hiring horse.

The setting is one more important aspect of the novel that includes the time, place and situation upon which the plot is based. In *Gulliver's Travels*, we learn that Gulliver lives in the house at Redriff and because of visitor's disturbance leaves the place. While going away from the place, he gives the manuscripts of his four voyages to Richard Sympson to publish them as a travelogue. All the voyages, incidents and events take place between 1699 and 1706. Therefore, the setting of the novel is the early eighteenth century. As far as the location and the circumstances are concerned, the events and incidents in the novel *Gulliver's Travels* take place on different land beginning from England to imaginary countries namely Lilliput and Brobdingnag etc.

## **2.6 Brief Summary of the Plot of *Gulliver's Travels***

Lemuel Gulliver was a well educated sea-voyager. He took four major voyages and visited remote lands of the world. He came back to his native place and wrote the memoirs of his four sea journeys. He wanted to publish his memoirs in order to bring some reformatory changes in his contemporary society. He gave all his manuscripts of voyages to Richard Sympson who published them in four different parts under the title of *Gulliver's Travels*. Here is a brief summary of the first two parts of *Gulliver Travels*.

### **Part I - A Voyage to Lilliput:**

As a young man, Lemuel Gulliver studied at university and became a doctor. However, he was haunted by the strong desire of sea-voyages. He got an opportunity of the sea travel as he was appointed as a surgeon upon a ship called Antelope. Under the control and captaincy of William Prichard, Gulliver started his voyage to the South Sea on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1699. In the beginning the voyage was very successful.

Unfortunately, there was a violent storm that led the ship towards the large rock. The ship had collision with the rock and instantly divided into two parts. All the crewmen including the captain lost in the ocean. Lemuel Gulliver swam strongly and reached at sea-shore. He was awfully tired and put down himself on the land for rest. He slept for nine hours and when he woke up, he found unable to make movements. His hands, legs and long hair were strongly tied down to the ground. He then, heard a lot of noise around him and at the same time he experienced a small insect-like creature was moving upon his body towards his face. He turned his eyes downwards and saw a human creature of six inches high carrying arrow and a bow in his hands and a quiver on his back. He was followed by forty human creatures. One of them shouted Hekinah Degul and others repeated the same words. Gulliver shouted very loudly and all the small creatures fell down on the ground and got injuries. The leader of the small creatures shouted loudly -Tolgo Phonac and immediately a huge shower of arrows rested upon Gulliver's body. Gulliver decided to lay down on the ground until the night. Meanwhile, the tiny human beings had constructed a small wooden stage besides Gulliver's face and a person who was not taller than Gulliver's middle finger climbed up the wooden stage through a small ladder and addressed to Gulliver. He instructed him not to harm his people. Gulliver made a promise of peace. Gulliver was so hungry and by making hand movements, he told the man on wooden stage that he wanted food and drink. The man climbed down the stage, ordered his men to bring food and water for Gulliver. Several men climbed up the stage and showered baskets of food and then two barrels of water into Gulliver's mouth. Few hours later, a messenger from the Emperor arrived there and instructed that the Emperor wanted to see this huge creature in his court. Gulliver requested him for his freedom but he rejected and told that he should be carried to the city as a prisoner. A wooden vehicle of three inches high, seven feet long and three feet wide moving on twenty two wheels had been prepared by five hundred carpenters and engineers to carry Gulliver towards the city. Nine hundred men took great effort to put Gulliver on this great vehicle. They harnessed fifteen hundred horses to pull the vehicle. They brought him to the Emperor's palace. The Emperor came to visit Gulliver and they talked for three hours but never understood each other as they spoke different languages. After the departure of the Emperor, six tiny people played tricks upon Gulliver. Therefore, Gulliver picked them up and put five of them in his pocket. He held the one between his thumb and index figure and gestured to eat him. They were frightened. But Gulliver made them free immediately. Gulliver's this act

brought him positive result. They thought him as a good being. The Emperor of Lilliput discussed about Gulliver's existence. Many argued that the feeding of Gulliver would bring famine to the kingdom, so he must be starved or must be killed by shooting poisonous arrows at him. Others opposed the idea of killing Gulliver as his huge dead body would bring plague and sickness in the city. The army officers went to the court and told them how Gulliver captured six criminal and released them kindly without punishing them for their criminal act. The officers' remark on Gulliver's kindness brought good result and the Emperor was ready to keep Gulliver alive as a prisoner. Gulliver was given forty sheep, thirty oxen, and a large quantity of bread, wine and water as a part of his lunch and dinner every day. They built him a large house for his stay and six scholars had been appointed to teach him the Lilliputian language. Within three weeks of his stay at the court, Gulliver made good progress in learning the Lilliputian language. The people were becoming less afraid of Gulliver and they started to play upon his body. Gulliver requested the Emperor for his liberty and seeing the gentleness of Gulliver, the emperor sent a messenger to him who informed that the Emperor would offer you freedom on certain conditions. The messenger read out the conditions: The Man-Mountain (Gulliver) should not leave the kingdom without permission. The Man-Mountain should not enter the city without the proclamation of his arrival. The Man-Mountain should not crush the citizens and their animals walking on the road nor should he take any man in his hands without their consent. The Man-Mountain should help the kingdom in the war against Blefuscu. The Man-Mountain, in a leisure time, should help the workers and the labourers. After listening to the conditions, Gulliver promised to follow these conditions. Immediately, his chains were unlocked and Gulliver became free.

Two weeks passed and one morning, Reldresal, the principal Secretary of the Kingdom came to Gulliver and informed him about the forthcoming danger of the invasion from Blefuscu. He also told him about the clash between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians. Gulliver promised to help the Kingdom against all invaders. Gulliver went towards the army of Blefuscu by walking across the water and dragged all fifty of enemy's largest ships towards the royal port of Lilliput. The Emperor gave the title of Nardac on his bravery. The Emperor commanded Gulliver to destroy whole kingdom of Blefuscu. However, Gulliver rejected this idea that annoyed the Emperor too much. At one midnight, many people came to Gulliver's house requesting him to help in extinguishing the royal palace which was on fire. Gulliver

went there and extinguished the fire within three minutes by discharging his urine on it and saved the beautiful palace and the queen from the destruction. Few days later, a member from the royal court visited Gulliver and warned him about the private intrigue against him. Flimnap, the treasurer of the kingdom and Bolgolam, the high Admiral of the kingdom were two conspirators and they convinced the Emperor that Gulliver's existence in the kingdom would bring destruction in future. They accused him as traitor and made a charge sheet against Gulliver's crime. Gulliver was charged for breaking rules of the Lilliputian court. He was accused for urinating on the royal palace, disobeying Emperor's command of destroying Blefuscu, planning to visit Blefuscu without Emperor's written permission and so on. Flimnap who was suspicious about Gulliver's affair with his wife and Bolgolam, being jealous on Gulliver's bravery were insisting the Emperor to kill Gulliver by putting his house on fire or shooting poisonous arrows on him. However, the Emperor was not ready to kill Gulliver in merciless way. Finally, it was resolved to reduce Gulliver's food and this starvation would bring death to Gulliver. They would split his dead body into small pieces to bury them in the distant land for avoiding the infection. The skeleton of his huge body would be kept in the kingdom for tourist purpose. Gulliver had a power to destroy the whole kingdom within a fraction of second but his promise of peace didn't allow him to do so. Instead of that, he planned to escape from Lilliput to his own country. He had an invitation from Blefuscu, so he went there. Few days later, he saw a huge ship in the sea and with the support of Blefusculian, he got the ship. Gulliver loaded this ship with a huge amount of meat, food, wine, water and also few alive animals and sailed the ship towards his mother country on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1701 and arrived in England on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1702.

## **Part II : A Voyage to Brobdingnag**

Gulliver spent only two months with his family in England and once again he left his motherland for the second sea voyage. He joined the ship named Adventure that was heading towards Surat, India. On 16<sup>th</sup> June, 1703, they landed on the island and the captain ordered them to bring fresh water. All the crewmen searched the land for water. Gulliver, alone visited few places on the island in search of water. Being tired, he came back to the place from where he had left his fellowmen and to his wonder, he saw no one there. All they were in the ship and started their journey hurriedly. Gulliver shouted loudly and astonished that the ship was followed by the huge giant creature. The giant was not able to catch the ship. Being frightened,

Gulliver ran towards the hill to hide there. Later on, he saw another giant figure and decided to hide in the corn field. The giant creature called seven other giant creatures and instructed them to reap the corn as he was owner of this field. While reaping the corn, one of the giants came very close to Gulliver and picked him up with his finger and thumb and held him before his eyes. Then, he kept Gulliver in his pocket and ran towards his master. He placed Gulliver before the farmer. Gulliver took his hat off and bowed him. Gulliver's this act imposed the farmer to think him as a rational creature. The farmer brought Gulliver to his home and showed him to his wife who screamed loudly as English women used to scream at seeing toad or spider. Gulliver slept for two hours in the farmer's house and was attacked by two rats. Gulliver fought with them and killed one of the rats. The farmer had a daughter of nine years old. She took him with her and put him in her cradle for safety purpose. Her name was Glumdalclitch and she was a caretaker of Gulliver and also taught him their language. Very soon, the news of the Farmer's discovery of a small creature spread into the whole country and being curious, thousands of people started to visit the Farmer's house to see the strange human-like small animal. Another farmer who was the friend of Gulliver's master came to see the creature and advised the farmer to put this creature on show in the market. The Farmer carried Gulliver to the market through the travel box. They stayed in the inn and allowed thirty people at one time to see the activities of the creature. The excessive labour of eight hours brought weakness to Gulliver. The Farmer, for earning huge profit decided to show this creature in every town, so they started their journey. Gulliver was shown in the eighteen largest cities and every day he was put the show for ten times in a day. The excessive labour reduced Gulliver's health and he was supposed to die within few days. The Farmer decided to sell Gulliver before his death and make money. Meanwhile, a messenger came from the royal palace and instructed the Farmer to bring this creature to the Queen of Brobdingnag to entertain her.

The Queen, being delighted by seeing Gulliver asked a number of questions about his country and travel. Considering Gulliver's, the Queen purchased him for one thousand pieces of gold from the Farmer. Gulliver (Gildrig) and Glumdalclitch were living in the royal palace. The Queen had constructed a wooden box as a bedroom for Gulliver. Day by day, the Queen was becoming very much fond of Gulliver and couldn't dine without Gulliver. The King of Brobdingnag used to spend more time with Gulliver listening him about his country, religion and the



government. Gulliver was frequently disturbed by the wasps and flies during the lunch and dinner time. The Queen had constructed another wooden box for Gulliver that would be used while travelling. Gulliver lived his life happily in the royal palace except few mishappenings and accidents. Glumdalclitch took Gulliver to the garden for walk around and at the same a white dog smelling Gulliver came to very close and picked him up in its mouth and dragged him towards the gardener. The gardener took him gently in his hand and returned him to Glumdalclitch. Another misfortune happened to Gulliver due to Dwarf. Dwarf shook the apple tree when Gulliver was passing the tree and got injured. One day Gulliver was picked up by the huge monkey and placed on the top of the roof. However, he was rescued after great efforts. In Brobdingnag, Gulliver was treated gently and the King and the Queen loved him from their bottom of hearts. The King advised Gulliver to choose one woman of his size and to marry her in order to produce and sustain his breed. However, Gulliver was tired of his stay in Brobdingnag and wanted to go back to his country. He wished to be among the people of equal rank. Gulliver stayed in Brobdingnag for two years and this was the beginning the third year. The Queen and the King took Gulliver and Glumdalclitch on a tour to the south coast of the kingdom. They carried Gulliver through the wooden travelling-box. After travelling on sea-shore, a servant boy placed the wooden box on the ground and Gulliver took a small nap. It was here, a large eagle arrived and picked up the wooden box by the ring of the box in its beak and flied in the sky. The eagle was planning to let the box fall on the rock to break it open and wanted to eat Gulliver's flesh as soon as it opened. However, the box fell down into the sea and started to float on water. It floated for four hours and Gulliver listened to a voice that came from the ship. Gulliver cried for help. The box was picked up by the captain Wilcocks and his crewmen and placed it on their ship. Being tired, Gulliver slept for hours and when he woke up, he started to tell about Brobdingnagians. The crewmen didn't believe in his story. Finally, the ship arrived at the English sea-shore on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1706 and Gulliver borrowed five pounds from the captain and hired a horse and came back to his home happily.

## 2.7 Chapter-wise Summary of *Gulliver's Travels*

### Part One: A Voyage to Lilliput

#### Chapter I

The novel begins with Gulliver's act of narrating his family background, his schooling and his professional life. He was the third son of a man who lived in Nottinghamshire with five children. At the age of 14, Gulliver was sent to Emanuel College in Cambridge where he studied for three years. However, being a member of poor family, he left the school and joined to James Bates, a famous Surgeon in London as an apprentice. Gulliver, with the support from his relatives, once again started his education at Leyden University where he learned Physics for thirty one months. After his education, considering James Bates recommendation, Captain Abraham Pannel appointed Gulliver as a surgeon on his ship Swallow where he worked for three and half years. He, then came back and started his medical profession. Being convinced, he married to Mary Burton, the second daughter of Mr. Edmond Burton who brought him a fortune of four hundred pounds as a dowry. Meanwhile, James Bates died and Gulliver's business began to fail. After consulting with his wife and other relatives, Gulliver left out for sea voyages. He joined two ships and travelled for six years in regions of East and West Indies. Being tired of sea-voyages, he came back to his family and stayed in home for three years. Thereafter, he joined the ship Antelope and under the control of Captain William Prichard started his voyage from Bristol on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1699 towards South-Sea. In the beginning, the journey was proper. Later on the ship was driven by violent storm to the north-west of Van Dienmen's Land. The wind was so strong and therefore, the ship wrecked. Number of crewmen lost in the sea and Gulliver swam himself and most of the time he was pushed forward by wind and tide. At 8.00 o'clock in the evening Gulliver reached at the shore. He walked on the land near half a mile but couldn't discover any sign of houses and human beings. For him, this was the remote land. Being extremely tired, Gulliver slept soundly for eight hours and when he woke up, he found unable to move as he was tied with small strings to the ground. He tried but not succeeded and he had to lie down seeing towards the sky. He heard confused voices and felt something like tiny creatures mounting on his body. Finally, Gulliver saw these tiny creatures of six inches average in height and they were human beings. When Gulliver made small movement, they showered bows and spears on him.

Gulliver was so hungry so he made hand movements to tell them that he wanted food. They gave him a huge amount of food and two hogsheads of wine. After eating and drinking, Gulliver slept. They decided to present Gulliver to Emperor's court and therefore, five hundred carpenters and engineers started to work on preparing a huge machine to draw Gulliver to the royal court of the Emperor of Lilliput. They prepared seven feet long and four feet wide wooden vehicle having 22 wheals. They placed Gulliver on this cart that was dragged by fifteen hundred horses towards the city.

## **Chapter II**

Gulliver observed the city and felt that it was like a painted scene in the theatre. The authorities, the priests and the lawyers started their inquiry by asking numerous questions to Gulliver in the emperor's court. Gulliver never understood their language. However, he talked in many languages- Latin, Spanish, Italian, French and English which they never understood. After two hours effort the court retired. Gulliver was protected by soldiers and in spite of the security, few men shot arrows towards Gulliver. Six men who played tricks upon Gulliver were handed over to him. Gulliver put five of them into his pocket and the sixth one he captured between his thumb and index finger and gestured to eat him. After a short period he left all the captives and this act resulted into spreading the message that Gulliver was harmless creature. The news of Gulliver's stay in the city spread throughout the kingdom and hence, a large number of people started to visit Gulliver's house to see the huge creature. The emperor proclaimed that without the licence from the court no one could visit Gulliver. Gulliver got the knowledge of Council debates on his existence in the kingdom. Many debaters remarked that the diet of Gulliver was very expensive and the continuity in it would bring famine to the kingdom. Other suggested that they should kill Gulliver but no one accepted this suggestion as huge dead body of Gulliver would spread plague in the whole kingdom. Finally, all they agreed upon to protect Gulliver with good quantity of food, wine and water. Gulliver frequently requested the Emperor for his liberty which was denied continuously. The troops made a minute search of Gulliver's body and dress. They found a scymiter and a pistol in his pocket and demanded these items. Gulliver gave other items too to the soldiers including pouch of powder, bullets and his watch. Then, he gave up silver and copper money, pieces of gold, comb, knife and razor, silver snuff box, handkerchief and journal book. Gulliver's scymiter, pistol and a pouch of powder

were kept into the kingdom's store room and rest of the items returned to Gulliver. There was a private pocket which didn't come under the purview of soldiers' search. In this private pocket, Gulliver kept his spectacles and telescope.

### **Chapter III**

Through his gentle and good behaviour, Gulliver succeeded in spreading the message of his harmlessness among the emperor, his royal court, army and people of whole kingdom. He allowed all the creatures to play upon his body. The emperor decided to entertain Gulliver with rope dance activity. The candidates who want to join kingdom's office had to dance over ropes without falling. The rope dancing activity caused great physical harms to the candidates. Gulliver saw another dexterity in which the emperor held a stick in his hand and the candidates were asked to jump over the stick. A candidate whose performance remains longest was awarded with blue-silk threads, the second with red and the third with green. Few soldiers came to the Emperor and told him that they saw a huge black substance on the sea shore and when they mounted on it and observed hollowness within it. Gulliver understood that it was his hat and insisted the Emperor to order his soldiers to bring it to the court. Soldiers went there, got two holes in it and trapped two hooks in these wholes tied with strings and the strings were tied with the harness of the horses. In this way they fetched the black substance to the Emperor's court by dragging it. Gulliver had sent a number of petitions requesting his liberty to the Emperor. After considering and debating a lot in the council the Emperor was ready to offer Gulliver's liberty on following conditions: The Man-Mountain (Gulliver) shall not depart without the government license. Without proclamation, the Man-Mountain shall not enter the metropolis. He shall walk on only high road in the city and not allowed to walk or lie down in the meadow and the field of corns. While walking on the said roads, the Man-Mountain shall take care of not trampling upon the Lilliputians and other animals. The Man-Mountain shall support the kingdom of Lilliput against the war with Blefuscu. The Man-Mountain, in his leisure, shall assist the workmen in raising the huge stones, etc. Finally, the authorities told him that if he follows these articles he will be given a daily allowance of meat and drink worth of 1724 Lilliputians. By taking oaths on these articles, Gulliver obtained his liberty.

## **Chapter IV**

Gulliver requested the Emperor to allow him to see Mildendo, the metropolitan city of Lilliput. The Emperor allowed him to visit the city without damaging the houses and people of the city. Proclamation about Gulliver's arrival was made and everybody was asked to live in their house. Gulliver described that the city was surrounded by the wall compound of five hundred feet long and the city includes five hundred thousand citizens. In the middle of the city, there was the palace of Emperor. One morning, Reldresal, the Principal Secretary of Private Affairs came to Gulliver and requested him to listen to him for one hour. Gulliver took him in his hand and allowed him to tell what he wants. Reldresal told that the Lilliputians are under two evils: a violent faction within the kingdom and the invasion of the most powerful enemy-Blefuscu. The kingdom of Lilliput was divided into two groups known as Tramecksan and Slamecksan. Reldresal was talking about the animosity between Lilliput and Blefuscu. According to the old tradition of Lilliput, the people had to break the eggs by big ends. What happened once, the grandfather of the present majesty, while breaking the eggs by the big end got cut in his hand. Thereafter, they passed the ordeal of braking eggs by the small end instead of big one. The followers of old custom felt annoyed by this ordeal. They exiled in Blefuscu and now leading the invasion.

## **Chapter V**

Blefuscu was an island situated at the north-east of Lilliput. Gulliver offered his plans against Blefuscu to the Emperor. After the Emperor's permission Gulliver walked towards the north-east sea, lied down at hillock and gazed the Blefuscu army's activity through his telescope. Gulliver came back and collected huge amount of cables and iron bars molded them as hooks. He fixed fifty hooks to all cables and crossed the sea and attached all hooks to the ships of Blefuscu Army. Irrespective of their attack, Gulliver started to drag all ships at a time. He had cut down the cable of anchor and dragged the fifty ships to the shore of Lilliput. The emperor offered an honour of Nardac to Gulliver for his bravery. The Emperor wanted to destroy the whole Blefuscu kingdom and Big-Endian exiled people through Gulliver and wished to become the mighty king of the two kingdoms. Gulliver rejected this idea telling him that he didn't want to bring slavery to these wiser and brave people of Blefuscu. Gulliver's rejection resulted into the conspiracy of ministers against him that broke out within the next two months. Blefuscu ambassadors came to settle down the

matter and they praised Gulliver's valour and strength. They invited him to Blefuscu which Gulliver accepted immediately. At one midnight Gulliver heard the crying of the Lilliputian people and became aware that the palace was put on fire and they wanted to save the princess. Gulliver woke up immediately and made proclamation of his entry and went to the palace and urinated there to extinguish the flame. Within three minutes, the fire was extinguished.

## **Chapter VI**

Gulliver described the human beings, animals, trees and the empire of Lilliput. All human beings were under six inches height. The largest horses and oxen were between four and five inches in height. The tallest trees were about seven foot high. The sheep were of one and half inches of height. Then, he described the learning of Lilliputians that distinguishes from the methods of learning of the rest of the world. Lilliputian used to write neither from left to right, nor from right to left, but they write across the one corner to other corner of the pages. They used to bury their dead relatives putting their heads down as the earth revolves and after eleven thousand moons, the bottom side of the earth would come to the top and that makes the dead to stand on their own foot. Further, Gulliver described laws and the customs of the Lilliputian government. All crimes against the state were punished with severity without excuses. However, if the accused person proved his or her innocence after trial in the court, the accuser would be punished to death. The accused person would be honoured through proclamation in the city and also compensated four times economically. For Lilliputians, fraud was greater crime than the theft and the fraud people were immediately punished to death. The punishments and the rewards were the two parts of good government. However, Gulliver remarked that only the first part was implemented by government of the rest of the world. But Lilliputian government used to follow these two principles. If the man or woman strictly observes the laws of the country for seventy-three moons, he or she will be rewarded with great fund of money and honoured with the title of Snilpall or Legal. Further, Gulliver tells that the notions of parent's duties are different in the Lilliput. Children are never treated as under the obligation of the father. Lilliputians have public nurseries in every city for schooling of the children. All parents, except labourers and workers have to send their children to the nurseries for rearing up and education up to 20 moons of the age. Boys are educated in male nurseries that offer education which is based on principles of honour, justice, courage, modesty and love of

country. Boys are always engaged in some works and bodily exercise. Parents are allowed to meet their children twice in the year and their visit should exceed more than one hour. In the female nurseries, girl students are taught for dressing up themselves, and they are taught as male nurseries. The cottagers and labourer are allowed to keep their children in the home for their homely duties. Then Gulliver describes his dressing and eating. He tells about the rumour spread by Flimnap and other attendants. They spread the news that Flimnap's wife Grace has an illicit affair with Gulliver.

## **Chapter VII**

Gulliver's friend from the court of Lilliput secretly came to Gulliver's house and informed him about the private intrigue against him. He told that Skyresh Bolgolam, the High Admiral, Flimnap the treasurer, Limtoc the general, Lalcon the chamberlain and Balmuff the grand justiciary involved in this private intrigue and prepared the articles of impeachment against Gulliver. The articles of impeachment against Quinbus Flestrin (Gulliver) includes following charges: Article I: The statute of Lilliput strictly warns the human beings that whoever shall make water within the precinct of royal palace, shall be liable for pains and penalty of high treason. Quinbus Flestrin broke the said law while extinguishing the fire kindled in the royal apartment. He urinated there to extinguish. Therefore, he needs to be punished. Article II: The said Quinbus Flestrin brought the imperial fleets of Blefuscu and being afterwards commanded to seize all the fleets of the enemy and destroy them by the emperor of Lilliput, Gulliver disobeyed the command. Article III: Gulliver was charged that he helped, comforted and diverted the ambassadors of Blefuscu when they came for discussion in the court of Lilliput. Article IV: Gulliver is preparing for the voyage to Blefuscu on only verbal licence and is planning to help and comfort the kingdom of Blefuscu. Having several debates on the impeachment, the people who were involved in the intrigue insisted the Emperor of Lilliput, that the emperor should put painful and ignominious death to Gulliver by firing his house, others suggested to shower 20 thousand poisonous arrows on Gulliver's hands and face to bring him death. Many others suggested poisoning his Juice. However, the Emperor felt that Gulliver helped them in the war against Blefuscu. Therefore he didn't agree upon putting Gulliver to death. Instead, he agreed upon to blind him for his treachery. Bolgolam and Flimnap also planned to starve Gulliver and bring him death slowly. After his death, they also planned to cut his huge corpse into small pieces and

bury them in the distant place to avoid infection. His skeleton will be kept nation's property for tourist purpose. To avoid all this mess and to protect his life, Gulliver planned to visit Blefuscu.

## **Chapter VIII**

After three days journey, Gulliver reached at the port Blefuscu, the north-east cost of the island. Gulliver came to the court of Blefuscu and told about his life and journey. Meanwhile, the envoy came to Blefuscu telling the king must sent back Gulliver bound hand and foot to Lilliput as they want to punish the traitor. However, the emperor of Blefuscu informed his inability. Considering the danger in future, Gulliver planned to return back to his mother country. Gulliver took a boat and ready to sail again in the ocean to go back to his motherland. He stored his ship with carcass of hundred oxen, three hundred sheep, bread and drink, and huge amount of ready dressed meat. He also took six cows and two bulls, ewes and rams alive with him on the ship intending to show them to his country people. He also took a bundle of hay and bag of corn. He wanted to take the citizens with him but the emperor not permitted. Having prepared, Gulliver sailed back to his country on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 1701 at six in the morning. On 26<sup>th</sup> September, Gulliver reached the English shore with the animals he had brought. He earned huge profit through organizing shows of these cattles. He spent two months with his wife, his son Jonny and daughter Betty at Redriff. He gave fifteen hundred pounds and a good house to his wife. Because of his strong desire seeing foreign countries, Gulliver left his native land and joined the ship named Adventure, a merchant ship under the captaincy of John Nicholas of Liverpool.

## **Part II: Voyage to Brobdingnag**

### **Chapter I**

On 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1702, Gulliver left his native country and started his sea-journey by the ship called Adventure under the captaincy of John Nicholas towards Surat, India. The ship arrived at Cape of Good Hope and they landed for fresh water. Then after few months, the violent storm dragged the ship towards the north-west part of the Great Tartary and into the frozen sea. On 16<sup>th</sup> June, 1703, the ship reached the sea-shore. The crewmen landed on the Island and started to search for drinking water. The island was known as Brobdingnag. Gulliver alone went to the remote land for a short period and when he came back, he saw his ship was driven and it was



pursued by the huge giant. Being frightened, Gulliver hid behind the rock, then in the corn field. There, he saw few giant people of 60 foot high with reaper in their hands. One of the reapers came there and picked up Gulliver and kept him in his pocket. Immediately, the reaper ran towards the farmer, his owner and showed him the small creature. Gulliver bowed before the farmer, made small movements, offered thirty small coins. The farmer instructed him to take back all these coins and got insight that Gulliver is the rational creature. The farmer took him to his house and showed it to his wife who screamed as the English women screams at seeing toads or spiders. The farmer with his family sat at dining table for dinner and they placed Gulliver on the table. Farmer's son held Gulliver by his foot and causes harm to Gulliver. The farmer slapped the boy for his mischievous act. Gulliver was attacked by two big rats but he saved himself.

## **Chapter II**

The farmer had a daughter of nine years old who became a caretaker of Gulliver and named him Gildrig. Gulliver, in turn, named her Glumdalclitch (little nurse). The news that the farmer had found a strange animal was spread throughout the country and number of villagers started to visit the farmer's house to see the strange animal. The Farmer's friend advised him to put the strange little animal on show in the market places and accordingly, the farmer planned to put him on show. The family kept Gulliver in a small box and brought him to the neighboring town. Gulliver's movement pleased the audience and the farmer got huge amount as a profit of the show. Gulliver was tired of this journey and the frequent shows. The farmer planned to show this creature in all the town of the country and accordingly, he was shown in large eighteen towns besides many villages and private families. On 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1703, Gulliver was brought to the metropolis named Lorbrulgrud or Pride of the Universe. The farmer booked lodging on the principle city road for their stay. Gulliver learned their language with the help of Glumdalclitch.

## **Chapter III**

Gulliver became weak due to excessive labour during the exhibition. He lost his hunger and reduced to a skeleton. The farmer, his master observed his health and came to conclusion that the animal would die soon. So he decided to conduct more shows to gain more profit before his death. Meanwhile, a *slardral* (gentleman) from the royal court came to Gulliver's master and commanded him to bring this small

creature to the Queen in the royal court. Gulliver kissed the foot of the queen to express his honor. The queen asked him about his country and his travel and finally asked him whether he likes to live in the court. Gulliver bowed and said that right now he is his master's slave. However, if asked personally, he would happy to serve the Queen in the court. The Queen purchased Gulliver from the farmer giving him one thousand pieces of gold. Gulliver requested the queen to keep Glumdalclitch as his caretaker in the court. The queen granted permission and both Gulliver and Glumdalclitch were living in the court. When the queen showed Gulliver to the King, he reacted strongly against the creature and didn't accept him as a human being. He called three scholars to know more about this creature and after the great debate and inspection; all three scholars agreed and remarked that the small creature is a freak of nature. Day after day, the Queen's love was growing for Gulliver. She could not dine without Gulliver as she liked to watch Gulliver's eating. The interest of the King in Gulliver was also growing day by day and he asked Gulliver about his country, people of his species, religion and his government. However, he couldn't believe the small beings like Gulliver were so rational. Gulliver was also in trouble for few times in the royal palace and the trouble maker was the dwarf who played trick upon Gulliver and because of that he fell down in the huge bowl of cream. Dwarf played another trick and placed Gulliver in the hole of huge bone from where he was taken out as the marrow. Gulliver also suffered a lot because of flies and wasps in the Brobdingnag.

#### **Chapter IV**

Gulliver described the city and the country Brobdingnag exclusively. For him, the country Brobdingnag looked like a peninsula that was surrounded by mountains of thirty miles high on the north-east and sea on all other sides. Brobdingnag, the country had fifty one cities and hundred walled towns and a great number of villages. Lorbrulgrud is the metropolis and crowded with more than eighty thousand houses. Gulliver took small visits in the city with his royal governess and saw a horrible scene. The huge woman had a cancer in her breast that was swollen in monstrous size. There were big holes in which he could easily enter. He saw another beggar who had huge tumor on his neck and a beggar woman having wooden legs. Then, Gulliver visited the temple in the town.

## **Chapter V**

Gulliver was telling about the ridiculous and troublesome accidents happened to him when he was taken for a small walk in the garden. The Queen's Dwarf who was jealous on Gulliver came to the garden and shook the large apple tree when Gulliver was passing the tree. Huge apples fell down on Gulliver's Body. Gulliver was knocked down on the ground. Another trouble for Gulliver was the showering of hailstones. Gulliver was walking on the grass. He was seen by the dog and the dog came there, held Gulliver in its mouth and brought him to his master. Luckily, Gulliver hadn't got any injury as the dog was trained. The royal maids in the Queen's court had become very much fond of Gulliver. They placed him on their naked bodies allowing him to travel upon their breast and other body parts. They used to undress themselves in front of Gulliver as they thought him as a small insect. Gulliver felt disgusting and their bad smell disturbed him. Gulliver described the greatest misfortune was happened to him when he was kidnapped by the huge monkey and placed him on the top of huge building. The huge monkey was playing with Gulliver as the cat plays with the rat. Gulliver was so frightened and became ill. He was rescued by the King's men. One day while walking on the path, Gulliver fell down in the cow-dung that was huge.

## **Chapter VI**

Gulliver described his leisure time activities. According to the custom of Brobdingnag, the King was shaved twice a week and Gulliver had collected huge amount of the stuff of the shaved beard. He picked up forty or fifty stumps of hair and then took a fine wooden piece. He made several holes in the wooden piece and fixed all the stumps of hair at the same distance. He had made a comb. He, then, collected the queen's hair as they drop down while combing and prepared two good chairs out of it. He, then, played a musical instrument called spinet that sixty foot long. According to Gulliver, the king was a person of great intellectuality and understanding. He had several conversation with the king in which he described the Government of England, two houses of the parliament, the election system and the court of justice in England. The king listened to him carefully and took down notes too. However, he was doubtful and had queries in his mind. Gulliver told him the

history of England and through his account the king remarked that Gulliver's country looked like the country of conspirators and of mad people.

## **Chapter VII**

This chapter narrates the art of government and the education in the Brobdingnag. For Gulliver, the remarks of the King of Brobdingnag on his country-England and other European countries seemed false and the king was living isolated. Gulliver advised the king to be more powerful by creating gun-powder that would destroy the opponents of the kingdom immediately and Gulliver knew the art of making gun-powder. He would support the king in the production of the gun-powder. According to the King, use of gun-powder is inhuman and he rejected this idea. The education in Brobdingnag was limited to morality, history, poetry and mathematics.

## **Chapter VII**

The King of Brobdingnag wanted to spread the breed of the species like Gulliver. So he ordered Gulliver to choose a woman of his size and produce children. However, it was the third year of Gulliver's stay in Brobdingnag and he began to fed up with his stay in the country. He wanted to go back to his mother land. After a few days, a strange incident happened. Gulliver and Glumdalclitch were taken on a trip at the sea-shore by the Queen and the King. A boy on Gulliver's request took him out of the box for a small walk on the sea-shore. After a short duration, the boy placed Gulliver again into the travelling box and locked the door. Being tired, Gulliver slept in the traveling box. Few moments later, Gulliver's travel box was picked up by the large eagle through its beak and the eagle flied in the sky. The eagle wanted to break the box. However, it fell down in the sea. Later on, the box was picked up by Mr. Thomas Wilcocks, the captain of the passing ship and rescued Gulliver from his miserable condition. Gulliver narrated all the events happened in Brobdingnag, the huge giants, etc. to the captain but he didn't believe in Gulliver's story unless he was shown the articles and objects of Brobdingnag. The ship arrived at English sea-shore on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1706, nine months after Gulliver's rescue from Brobdingnag. He borrowed five pounds from the captain and hired a horse. While riding on the horse towards his home at Redriff, Gulliver felt the smallness of the houses, cattles, trees and peoples of his country. He came back to his home and lived with his family.

## 2.8 Critical Analysis of *Gulliver's Travels*

*Gulliver's Travels* is primarily a work of fiction written in the form of adventure stories. It was written during the period between 1721 and 1725 and published as whole in 1726. The same period was known for the political turmoil and upheavals in England. The book *Gulliver's Travels* is full of allusions with the real life characters, incidents and political events of England. Jonathan Swift has used all literary techniques, devices and forms in a very skillful manner in his novel *Gulliver's Travels*, so the book remains popular as well as classic in the field of literature over the period of almost three centuries. For children, the novel is a collection of wonderful adventure stories and for the grown up people it is a classical satire on human follies and tendencies. Jonathan Swift has used the elements of realism, allegory, irony and satire throughout the novel in order to bring some reformative changes in the contemporary society after the publication of *Gulliver's Travels*.

### Origin and Intention of the Book

According to Alexander Pope, Swift's idea of writing imaginary travels of the fictional character had its link with the activities of Scriblerus Club. Scriblerus Club was a group of world-famous authors including Alexander Pope, John Gay, John Arbuthnot and Jonathan Swift and it came into existence in 1713 in England. The group devoted to write satirical works to focus on human follies in the field of learning, philosophy, politics and science. Accordingly, they had created an imaginary character named Martinus Scriblerus and wrote the fictitious memoirs of him entitled *The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus* and published it 1741. Though, it was published in 1741, the parts of the memoirs were collectively written in 1720. The sixteenth chapter of this memoir describes the fictitious journey of Martinus Scriblerus and the imaginary journey of the fictitious character Gulliver in *Gulliver's Travels* has the resemblance with Scriblerus' journey.

The basic aim of Scriblerus Club and Gulliver's letter to the fictional publisher Richard Sympson outline Jonathan Swift's intention of writing *Gulliver's Travels*. Swift joined the Scriblerus Club which devoted to satirize human follies and tendencies. Being the follower of this group, it is obvious that Swift wanted to criticize the human follies of his contemporary society and he had done this through his book *Gulliver's Travels*. Jonathan Swift wrote a letter to his friend Alexander Pope and told him that his prime aim of writing *Gulliver's Travels* was "to vex the

world.” It means Swift wanted to generate a feeling of dissatisfaction among the readers about their vices and follies and in turn, to promote them for corrective actions. Gulliver who is the mouthpiece of Jonathan Swift registered his complaints in his letter to Sympson about unfruitfulness of the publication of *Gulliver’s Travels*. Gulliver, in fact, Jonathan Swift had an intention of bringing reformative changes in the contemporary society through the four journeys of Gulliver narrated in *Gulliver’s Travels*.

### **Fusion of Fact and Fiction:**

*Gulliver’s Travels* is a product of Jonathan Swift’s highly imaginative mind. All the described countries, people, events and incidents happened to Gulliver during his stay and travel in the remote lands are totally imaginative and they are never existed in the real world. However, because of Swift’s writing techniques, the readers cannot question the authenticity of the narratives and the real existence of the countries like Lilliput and Brobdingnag. This willing suspension of disbelief is achieved by Jonathan Swift through his artistic skills of making fusion of the fact and the fictional elements throughout the narrative. Jonathan Swift has used the elements of realism such as inserting maps and the internal geographical details, use of first person narrator, employing the technique of addressing the readers, and the matter of fact way writing techniques such as describing the exact dates, times and mathematical details. The first and the second parts of *Gulliver’s Travels* begins with the world map showing the places like Dimens Land, Lilliput, Blefuscu, North America, Brobdingnag, and Lorbrulgrud with its discovery dates. While reading the book, the readers also travel with Gulliver through these regions without questioning its reality as they have these two maps. Jonathan Swift succeeds in getting realistic effect through describing the internal geographical locations, the position of Gulliver’s ship, longitude and latitude and allusions to geographical location in each part of the book. Gulliver is a fictional and invented character but by giving his biographical details such as childhood, schooling and family life, etc. the author has forces his readers to believe him as a real life character. Gulliver frequently addresses his readers directly in his narration and that also brings an effect of realism. Other details such as the date and time of Gulliver’s departure and arrival, the description of physical size of the Lilliputians and Brobdingnagians, and the specifications of army strengths, houses, number of cities, wooden bed and travelling box etc gives an air of reality in the fictitious narrative.

### **Allusion, Satire and Irony in *Gulliver's Travels***

Allusion is a literary device in which the author, through his narrative makes a brief and indirect reference to a person, event, location and political condition of the real world. Allusions have historical, cultural and political significance. The book *Gulliver's Travels* is overloaded with the contemporary allusions to political persons (leaders), events and political conditions of England during the first quarter of 18<sup>th</sup> century. A number of characters that seem to be imaginary are really based on real life person. Gulliver, the fictive protagonist is the mouthpiece of Jonathan Swift. Gulliver's dream of bringing reformation in the contemporary society is really the dream of Jonathan Swift. Gulliver's schooling and predicaments in the Lilliputian Court have the resemblance with Swift's childhood and his experiences in English Courts. In *Part I- Voyage to Lilliput*, Swift has described the empire of Lilliput. Lilliputians are very small creatures of average six inches in height but they have managed to control Gulliver and have used him for their political purpose. The Lilliputian empire has an allusion to English Empire. In spite of being a small country in Europe, the kingdom of England spread over the maximum part of the world and they managed to control a number of empires. In the same part, Gulliver's friend from the royal court of the Lilliput came to Gulliver and told him about the political tensions between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians and the threat from Blefuscu. This story has political, religious and geographical allusions to the contemporary England. The clash between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians has a reference to the political clashes between Whig Party and Tory Party of the then England. The two neighboring lands-Lilliput and Blefuscu alludes to England and France, the powerful nations in Europe. In chapter three, we read about Gulliver's description of rope dancing activity in the royal court of Lilliput. The Emperor of Lilliput selects his administrators who have performed well in rope dancing activities and neglects their intellectual capacity. This act of selecting administrators in the royal court through the trivial method symbolically refers to George I who had appointed ministers and administrator without considering their abilities during his time. The characters of Bolgolam and Flimnap have personal allusions to the real life persons namely the Earl of Nottingham and Sir Robert Walpole. The Empress of Lilliput is deeply hearted and annoyed when Gulliver urinated on the royal palace to extinguish the fire. This situation refers to the Queen Anne's disgust and annoyance after Swift's publication of *A Tale of Tubs* in 1704. The Part II- A Voyage to

Brobdingnag has no allusion to contemporary real life personalities. It has general allusions with contemporary politics. The King of Brobdingnag listens to Gulliver about his own country and government and finally he ridicules the whole of account of Gulliver by saying that his country is of the mad people's country. The harsh and ridiculous remarks of the King of Brobdingnag symbolically refer to the criticism of Tory Party on English government of that time.

*Gulliver's Travels* is the greatest satire in English literature and Jonathan Swift has used this book to satirize the then English society and the government of England. Satire is a literary technique used by the writers to criticize the absurdities and dishonesty of the person or the society. The writers make use of irony, humour and ridiculous situation to bring forth the human follies, tendencies and vices. *Gulliver's Travels* is a full of irony, humours and mockery that bring forth the hypocrisy, absurdities and corrupt nature of English Society. Descriptions of Gulliver's voyages in Lilliput and Brobdingnag offer several humorous incidents that make *Gulliver's Travel* a comic satire. The rumour about Gulliver's love affair with Flimnap's wife, his act of urinating on the royal palace, the rope dancing activities, etc are really comic scenes in the Part I. In the second part, we read that Gulliver is picked up by his foot by Farmer's son, then picked up by the gardener's dog, kidnapped by huge monkey and finally picked up by the large eagle. All these are comic situation and these comic situations are used to satirize English people and society. Besides these comic scenes, Jonathan Swift has used irony as the most important weapon of satire. He has used irony of situation and verbal irony to satirize the people and the English society of his time. In the first part, Gulliver finds himself among the tiny people for whom he is brave man but in the second part, he is just a dwarf and pet animal to the giant Brobdingnagians. One more example of irony of situation is there in the final of part of the first part. Gulliver returns back to his country and organizes the shows of the tiny animals that he has brought from Lilliputian Land and finally sells them. The same thing happens in the second part where the farmers captures Gulliver as a small creature and organizes frequent shows in different cities and towns and finally sells Gulliver to the Queen. These ironies of situation have been used by Swift to satirize human tendencies of money making by using animals. The best example of verbal irony is the comments of the King of Brobdingnag on Gulliver's country. Gulliver describes his country with positive tone but gets harsh remark on his country that criticizes the true nature of England.



### **Themes: Abuse of Power and absurdity in Pride**

One of the major and significant themes of *Gulliver's Travels* is the abuse of power and this theme is presented through the actions of Lilliputians and the Farmer, the first master Gulliver in Brobdingnag. Lilliputians are the tiny people of six inches high and they have captured Gulliver and imprisoned him. For them, Gulliver is the Man-Mountain and they have used him in the war against Blefuscu. The Emperor of Lilliput further wants to destroy the whole kingdom of Blefuscu and Big-Endian exiled people by using Gulliver's power and wants to become the sole emperor of these two regions. The Emperor is in power and being authoritative person, he selects candidates for his administration without examining their caliber and abilities. This is another type of abuse of the power. The Farmer, being a giant and powerful person has captured Gulliver as a small creature and organizes frequent shows for earning his fortune. The excessive labour reduces Gulliver's health but the farmer goes on visiting number of cities, towns, and village for earning money. It is his abuse of power that enforces Gulliver to perform according to his master's will.

Absurdity in pride is one more important theme of *Gulliver's Travels*. Human beings are supposed to be very rational, self-esteemed and honourable beings in compared with the other species and insects. This pride of self-esteem and honourable status look absurd when Gulliver finds himself as a captive in Lilliput as well as in Brobdingnag. Though, Gulliver is a Man-Mountain in Lilliputian land, he is governed, controlled and used by the Emperor of Lilliput who is six inches high. In the land of Brobdingnag, Gulliver looks like a dwarf, freak of nature and the pet animal and he is used for their amusement. By criticizing, huge bodies of giant people Gulliver wants to spread the message that it is vain of being proud for our body. One of the Lilliputian complained that Gulliver smells badly. In Brobdingnag, the King is not ready to accept Gulliver as rational creature and remarks that his country is of mad people's country. Apart from these two major themes, *Gulliver's Travels* has also touched upon the selfish nature of human beings, misogyny and the human follies and tendencies of his contemporary English society.

### **2.9 Terms to remember:**

**Hekinah Degul:** Wonderful, amazing, and incredible

**Tolgo Phonac:** Fire the arrows

**Borach Mivola:** Warning Shout

**Langro dehul san:** Tie him up

**Hurgo:** Great Lord

**Quinbus Flestrin:** The great Man-Mountain

**Nardac:** Title showing high rank in Lilliputian Government

**Splacknuck:** An imaginary animal of six foot long

**Slardral:** Gentleman

**Glonglungs:** Fifty-four English Miles

**Names or labels to Gulliver:** Man-Mountain, Quinbus Flestrin, Freak of Nature, Gildrig

## **2.10 Check your progress:**

### **A) Give answer in one word/phrase/sentence of the following questions**

1. What is the original title of *Gulliver's Travels*?
2. Who is the protagonist/narrator of the novel *Gulliver's Travels*?
3. Which two parties are symbolized through Big-Endians and Little-Endians?
4. Who is the High Admiral of the Empire of Lilliput?
5. By which ship, Gulliver started his journey to the South Sea?
6. Who did recommend Gulliver as a surgeon on ship to Abraham Pannel?
7. Give the names of Gulliver's wife, son and daughter.
8. Describe the exhibition shows of Gulliver organized by the Farmer.
9. Who is the caretaker of Gulliver in Brobdingnag?
10. Who had purchased Gulliver from the Farmer and What is the cost?
11. Who are involved in the private intrigue against Gulliver?
12. Explain the words- Hekinah Degul, Tolgo Phonac and Borach Mivola.
13. Who rescued Gulliver from the floating box and bring him back to England?

14. Which countries are symbolized through Lilliput and Blefuscu?
- B) Complete the following sentences by choosing correct alternative.
- Jonathan Swift is famously known for .....  
 a) satirical works                      b) tragic works  
 c) comic works                          d) romantic works
  - Gulliver's Travels* is divided into ..... books.  
 a) two                      b) three                      c) four                      d) five
  - Lemuel Gulliver is .....  
 a) an engineer    b) a sea-voyager    c) a warrior                      d) a landlord
  - Lemuel Gulliver was treated as Man-Mountain in .....  
 a) Brobdingnag    b) Laputa                      c) Japan                      d) Lilliput
  - ..... rescued Gulliver from the box in the second book.  
 a) Mr. Wilcocks    b) James Bates    c) Mr. Sympson    d) Dwarf
  - The political tension between Big-Endians and Little-Endians symbolically stands for .....  
 a) Whig Party and Tory Party                      b) Labour Party  
 c) Nationalist Party                      d) None of them
  - The countries-Lilliput and Blefuscu alludes to .....  
 a) Indian and Pakistan                      b) England and France  
 c) Israel and Palestine                      d) UK and USA
  - ..... is a caretaker of Gulliver in Brobdingnag.  
 a) Glumdalclitch                      b) Farmer  
 c) Dwarf                      d) Farmer's wife

**Key to Check Your Progress:**

- A) 1. The original title of *Gulliver's Travels* is *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, by Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and then a Captain of several Ships.*

2. Lemuel Gulliver is the protagonist of *Gulliver's Travels*.
  3. Whig Party and Tory Party are symbolized through Big-Endians and Little-Endians.
  4. Skyresh Bolgolam is the High Admiral of Lilliput.
  5. Antelope
  6. James Bates
  7. Lady Burton (Wife), Jonny (Son) and Betty (Daughter)
  8. The farmer has organized more exhibition shows of Gulliver in large eighteen towns besides many villages and private families.
  9. Glumdalclitch
  10. The Queen purchased Gulliver from the farmer giving him one thousand pieces of gold.
  11. Skyresh Bolgolam, the High Admiral, Flimnap-the treasurer, Limtoc-the general, Lalcon-the chamberlain and Balmuff-the grand justiciary are involved in the private intrigue against Gulliver.
  12. **Hekinah Degul** : Wonderful, amazing, and incredible **Tolgo Phonac** : Fire the arrows **Borach Mivola** : Warning Shout
  13. Mr. Thomas Wilcocks
  14. The countries namely England and France are symbolized through Lilliput and Blefuscu.
- B) 1) satirical works      2) four      3) a sea-voyager   4) Lilliput  
 5) Mr. Wilcocks      6) Whig Party and Tory Party      7) England and France  
 8) Glumdalclitch

## 2.11 Exercises:

### a) Broad Answer Type Questions:

1. Discuss *Gulliver's Travels* as a Satire.
2. Write a critical appreciation of *Gulliver's Travels*.
3. *Gulliver's Travels* is an adventure story. Discuss.

4. Write a note on Swift's use of allusions and irony in *Gulliver's Travels*?

**b) Short Notes**

1. Sketch the characters of; a) Gulliver b) the Farmer c) Glumdalclitch
2. Fantasy in *Gulliver's Travels*
3. Conflict between Big Endian and Little Endian
4. Impeachment against Quinbus Flestrin (Gulliver)

**2.12 Reference for further reading:**

Fox, Christopher, Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift*. Cambridge: CUP, 2003.

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. WC. 2001.



## Unit-3

### *Pride and Prejudice*

Jane Austen

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#### **Contents**

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Life Sketch of Austen
- 3.3 Austen's Literary Career.
- 3.4 Summary of the novel
- 3.5 Check your progress
- 3.6 Keys to check your progress
- 3.6 Thematic concerns:
  - 3.6.1 Major and Minor characters.
  - 3.6.2 Plot construction of *Pride and Prejudice*
  - 3.6.3 Theme of the novel
  - 3.6.4 Short notes
  - 3.6.5 Check your progress
  - 3.6.6 Exercises

#### **3.0 Objectives**

- To deal with the life and career of Jane Austen.
- To discuss the summary of the novel.
- To discuss the characters of the novel in detail.
- To discuss the plot, the title and theme of the novel.

### 3.1 Introduction

In this unit you will study the life- sketch of Jane Austen followed by the summary of the novel. This unit also discusses the characters plot construction, title and theme of the novel.

### 3.2 Life sketch and Background:

Jane Austen was born on December 16, 1775 at Steventone in Hampshire (England). Her father Rev. George Austen was a rector of Steventone who was a genius man. Her mother Cassandra Leigh was a very humorous woman. They had eight children and Jane was the sixth child of this couple. Jane was sent to a school at Bath and Reading. But she got real education under guidance of her father in church house. Jane's father gave up his job and left his property for his first son and moved to Bath. After sudden death of George Austen, the family moved and settled in Southampton. It is here Jane's literary career started taking shapes as she started writing novels. Prior to it Jane developed her interest in reading. She read the works of renowned authors like Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith and Richardson. The works of Sir Walter Scott fascinated her. Apart from reading, Jane had special likings for dancing as she attended many balls in her surroundings. Jane never married and she could not accept a marriage proposal saying that marriage without love is impossible. However, she got attracted towards a man at Lyme Regis but he never expressed his love and unfortunately he died. Jane accepted the fact quietly and accepted spinsterhood. But the only solace for her was her sister's and brother's love. In spite of this, Jane had the merits of a genius novelist. Her perception and keen observation helped her to pen and transform life around her into great themes. Her novels are fine illustrations of the upper middle class and their clashes and adjustments. The life of these people made her novels more meaningful and worthy of reading. She had a great speed of writing. The continuous writing resulted in deterioration of her health. She died on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, 1817 in Winchester at the age of forty two.

The society at the time of Jane Austen was based on rigid class distinctions - the aristocratic society, the emerging industrial class, the workers and labourers. The power was in the hands of aristocratic society even the industrial class had no right to vote. In her novels Austen depicts the world of middle class people. The middle class involvements, struggles and adjustments grew her interest in the lives of these people.

Jane Austen wrote *Pride and prejudice* at the exact point of time when British society had put women in restrictions. They were supposed to do domestic duties like produce children, bring them up, cooking and cleaning the house. They were forced to just marry any man and were expected to be comfortable and secure there. In short, Jane Austen focuses on the social and cultural practices of her time.

The period of Jane Austen was the period of great political upheavals. The world witnessed two major incidents- the independence of America and French revolution. The industrialization of England took place in the period of Jane Austen. It created many problems in north England. However, the life at Steventone was not disturbed at all. The period of 1747-98 is marked as the period of Romantic Movement. But Jane Austen never upheld this approach to life in her novels. She deliberately choose neo-classist approach. Nature and natural setting had a very little place in Jane Austen's novels.

### **3.3 Austen's Literary Career:**

Jane Austen began her literary career at the age of fourteen. She used to write in notebooks for her amusement. This writing consists of short novels, plays etc. She wrote the novel *Elinor and Marianne* in 1775. However, it was revised as *Sense and Sensibility* in 1797. Her second novel *First Impression* was revised as *Pride and Prejudice* in 1797-1798. *Northanger Abbey* written during 1798 and was published in 1818. The next novel *Mansfield Park* was published in 1814. The novel *Emma* was published in 1816. Her novel *Persuasion* appeared on the horizon of literature in 1818. She started writing her last novel entitled *Sandition* but she did not complete it.

### **3.4 Summary of Pride and Prejudice:**

Mr. and Mrs. Bennet lived at Longbourn. They had five daughters - Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Lydia and Kitty. The estate is entailed. It means it can be only inherited by a male. But the family did not have a son. So after the death of Mr. Bennet the all property would go to Mr. William Collins, the distant cousin of Mr. Bennet. The entire family-Mrs. Bennet and five daughters-would be deprived of the property. It was the main cause of worry for the family particularly, for Mrs. Bennet. She was worried about her daughters and wanted them to marry and settled well. It would bring security to her daughters when Mr. Bennet died.



At this point in the novel the young gentleman name Mr. Bingley came to live in a house in neighborhood. His arrival made Mrs. Bennet very happy as she would get an opportunity to introduce her daughters to Mr. Bingley. Actually she wanted her daughters to marry well. Mr. Bennet unwillingly made a contact with Mr. Bingley as he did not like his wife's planning. Mr. Bingley with four persons- his two sisters, Mr. Hurst, the husband of his elder sister and his friend Mr. Darcy- appeared first at a ball. Here Darcy refused to dance with Elizabeth. At the same moment Mr. Bingley fell in love with Jane and Jane too fell in love with him.

After this, Jane was invited to visit Bingleys, but Jane suffered from illness and she had to stay there. This incident made Mrs. Bennet very happy. She wanted her daughter get closer to Mr. Bingley. During the stay of Elizabeth with Bingleys, Darcy observed Elizabeth's dutifulness and her cleverness. These things impressed him. But the prejudice of Elizabeth developed a kind of negative feeling for Darcy. The arrival of Elizabeth for taking care of Jane to Netherfield did not like Bingley's sisters as Elizabeth belonged to a lower class with no money and no equal position. Moreover, Miss Bingley wanted to marry Mr. Darcy and she wanted nobody to come between them. As a result, she was jealous of Elizabeth. The whole matter came to an end with the departure of Bennet sisters for their home.

As the novel proceeds, Elizabeth happened to meet George Wickham, a military man with whom she had developed a friendly attitude. Wickman told Elizabeth false stories about Darcy. Actually Darcy had helped Wickman to shape his career. But Wickman squandered the money. But the false stories about Darcy developed a hostile attitude for Darcy. .

The arrival of Mr. Collins, a distant cousin of Mr. Bennet with the intention of marrying one of the daughters of Bennets did not bring solace to the family. His intention to marry Jane was diverted by Mrs. Bennet who informed that Jane was to be engaged to Mr. Bingley. Actually, she was not sure of it. So Mr. Collins proposed Elizabeth but she was not interested in him. The whole matter baffled Mrs. Bennet. After these two experiences Collins developed his interest in Charlotte Lucas, a friend of Elizabeth who liked him and they were engaged. Shortly Bingleys left Netherfield for England. Bingley's sister wrote a letter to Jane saying that she foresaw a relationship between Bingley and Darcy's sister. This episode made Bingley sisters angry including Elizabeth. She felt that Bingley sisters tried to keep Darcy away from Jane.

Following this episode Lady Catherine De Bourgh, an aunt of Darcy appeared in the novel. Mr. Collins and Charlotte were living with her. The meeting of Elizabeth and the aunt in Kent, on the occasion of the dinner with Collins, disturbed Elizabeth. The aunt tried to frighten her by asking questions after questions. Here Elizabeth happened to meet Darcy. Elizabeth was surprised by the proposal of marriage. But she didn't accept the proposal thinking that he separated Bingley from her sister. However, the letter written by Darcy for Elizabeth clarified things and disclosed the matters. He also clarified that he thought that Jane was indifferent to Bingley. So he made his friend go away as he did not want to hurt him. He further mentioned about Wickham's interest in marrying Darcy's sister for money. He had no love for her. At this point Elizabeth realized that she had wrong notions about Darcy

After some days, Elizabeth went on tour with her uncle and aunt, the Gardiners. They visited Derbyshire and decided to visit Pemberly, the estate of Darcy. They reached there. Suddenly Darcy arrived at Pemberly. Elizabeth was surprised to see the great hospitality of Darcy which also surprised Gardiners. In this tour Elizabeth came to know that Darcy's feelings were same as they were in their first meeting. After this, the chain of bad incidents surprisingly led towards the happy ending. The letters from Jane to Elizabeth disclosed the elopement of Jane with Wickham. It defamed the family in the society. The couple was searched by Mr. Bennet and Mr. Gardiner and the couple got married. Following this, Darcy and Bingley arrived in Longbourn and met the Bennet family. At this point Bingley dared to ask Jane to marry him. The family was happy over the proposal especially, Mrs. Bennet who wished for their marriage. But Lady Catherine's visit interrupted the happiness. She wanted Bingley to marry her daughter. She warned Elizabeth to refuse the proposal. But Elizabeth rejected to do so. Knowing this, Darcy came to meet Elizabeth and expressed his love for her and regretted for what happened in the past. The marriage of both couples underlines the happy ending of the novel.

### **3.5 Check your progress.**

#### **a) Fill in the blanks**

1. Jane Austen was born in-----.
2. Jane Austen started her literary career when she was ----- years old.
3. Jane Austen's every novel has the theme of -----.

4. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet lived at-----.
5. Lady Catherine De Bourgh is an aunt of -----.
6. Mr. Collins is a distant cousin of -----.
7. Mr. Hurst is the husband of -----elder sister.
8. Jane Austen's second novel *First Impression* was revised as-----.
9. Jane Austen died in-----.
10. Jane was the -----child of her parents.

**b) Keys.**

1. 1775
2. fourteen
3. Love and marriage
4. Longbourn.
5. Darcy
6. Mr. Bennet
7. Mr. Bingley's
8. Pride and Prejudice
9. 1817
10. sixth

**c) Answer the following questions in one word/phrases/sentence only.**

1. Who searched the eloped couple- Lydia and Wickman?
2. Who came to live in a house in neighborhood?
3. Who is the friend of Mr. Bingley?
4. What is Mr. Wickman?
5. How many daughters Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have?

**d) Keys.**

1. Mr. Bennet and Mr. Gardiner

2. Mr. Bennet
3. Mr. Darcy
4. Military man
5. Five

### **3.6 Thematic concerns:**

#### **3.6.1 Major and Minor characters.**

##### **Major Characters:**

1. Elizabeth Bennet
2. Fitzwilliam Darcy
3. Jane Bennet
4. Charles Bingley

##### **Minor Characters:**

1. Mr. Bennet
2. Mrs. Bennet
3. Mr. Collins
4. Mr. Wickman
5. Mr. Gardiner
6. Charlotte Lucas
7. Lydia Bennet
8. Mary Bennet
9. Catherine Bennet
10. Miss Caroline Bingley
11. Lady Catherine de Bourgh

## **Major Characters:**

### **1. Elizabeth Bennet**

Elizabeth Bennet is the protagonist of the novel. She is the second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. She is twenty years old when we meet her. She has an attractive face and her eyes are beautiful. She has a playful nature and a strong sense of humour. She is the most favorite child of Mr. Bennet. But for Mrs. Bennet she is a different child. According to Mrs. Bennet she is not beautiful like Jane or humorous like Lydia. But in reality, she is intelligent and a good judge of human nature. Her understanding of human nature is revealed in the first meeting of the families of Bingley and Bennet. She notices pride in their treatment of others. She does not like them. She understands that Miss Bingley is a woman of pride and she is very cunning. Her judgment is right. Later on Jane experiences the rude behavior of Miss Bingley when she is staying with her uncle in London. She also notices the pride of Darcy, when she sees him. She does not show any friendly feelings to him.

She is a controlled woman and has ability of handling the situation with patience. She is unnecessarily commented by Darcy in the party as ‘not good looking woman’. She is deeply hurt. She refuses to dance with Darcy when he asks her to dance with him. She is a dignified woman who is conscious of her manners. She rejects the marriage proposal of Collins as well as Darcy firmly but politely. She stands supreme among all characters in the novel. She is shocked with the new engagement of Collins and Charlotte. She knows nature of Collins. Elizabeth is a woman of reason and she does not allow herself to be carried away by emotions. This quality of Elizabeth differentiates her from other characters in the novel.

Elizabeth has a deep love for her sisters. She immediately walks to Netherfield to attend Jane as she is not well. She walks to the place without caring for her appearance. She attends Jane day and night and does not think of her comforts. She feels equally sad and unhappy like Jane following Bingley’s leaving for London with no hopes of coming back. Elizabeth is a different kind of woman who thinks of others. Jane is very dear to her. She calmly refuses the proposal of Darcy because he has played important role in detaching Bingley from Jane. Any woman would have accepted the proposal of Darcy who is a rich person.

As the novel proceeds, a positive change takes place in Darcy-Elizabeth relationship. At one point in the novel Elizabeth finds that Darcy’s eyes are fixed on

her. He wants to dance with her. Elizabeth refuses to do so. She comes to know that she has attracted Darcy. The note from Jane to Elizabeth takes her to Netherfield. She lives at Netherfield where she watches Darcy who is also living there. She finds Darcy very disagreeable. Meanwhile she gets attracted to Mr. Wickman. She wants to dance with Wickman at the ball. But he does not attend it. In the same ball she dances with Darcy. But they speak very little. After the dance Miss Bingley warns Elizabeth not to believe in what Mr. Wickman has commented about Darcy. The story that Darcy has wronged Wickman is untrue. When Darcy meets Elizabeth and expresses his love for her, she finds that his words are loaded with pride than love. His manners show his pride and he scorns the feelings of others. But Darcy's letter to Elizabeth reveals the truths. He writes about two charges thumped on him. The first charge is that he tried to separate Jane and Mr. Bingley. The second charge is that he has ruined the hopes of Mr. Wickman. After reading the letter, Elizabeth learns the real nature of Darcy and she begins feeling for him. Their relationship travels to mutual affection and understanding. Elizabeth rightly remarks about their relationship and marriage that they are to be the happiest couple in the world. She knows very well that she has misunderstood Darcy and wrongly judged Wickman. She weeps for what happened. She lives away from them and judge them in a cool manner. Her choice of Darcy shows that she is able to separate the noble from ignoble and good from bad. She is prejudiced but she does not allow her good sense to be conquered by the prejudice. This is another aspect of her character which other characters lack. Even she helps Darcy to shed his pride and to be a good human being. This nature of Elizabeth adds fragrance to her personality. She is a woman of wit and humor.

Elizabeth is an intelligent woman. Her observation of people and things is deeper and deeper than other characters. She does not hesitate to warn her father who never foresees any danger in sending Lydia to Brighton.. She does so because she has correct judgement of Lydia. The elopement of Lydia justifies Elizabeth's judgment and understanding of characters. While judging the character of Elizabeth, Bhattacharya remarks:

"Elizabeth is a sensible person living in a world composed largely of fools. There are few people whom she can love, and even fewer whom she can respect. She is the subject to the irrationality of her mother (who likes her list of all children) and to the embarrassments of belonging to an ill-regulated family . . . Her marriage to

Darcy rescues her from the world and places her in a proper setting. . . At the end Elizabeth is no longer an anomaly in her world. She is surrounded by people whom she likes and who appreciate her (100)"

In short, Elizabeth is most intelligent and sensitive character Jane Austen has ever produced. She is praised by many critics for her special appearance and characterization which places her high where a few characters can reach.

## **2. Jane Bennet.**

Jane Bennet is one of the important characters of the novel. She is the eldest daughter of Bennets. She is twenty- two years old. She bears different characteristics which give her a separate identification. Her simplicity, sweetness and purity attract attention of readers. She, for these qualities, is praised by readers. Jane is not intelligent like Elizabeth but she is charming and beautiful girl.

Bingley sisters get attracted to Jane when they visit to Bennet's house. Their brothers also admire Jane. Mrs. Bennet is pleased as Jane is admired by the Netherfield party. Mrs. Hurst is fond of Janet and calls her as a sweet girl. She is always respected by all. She is the favourite of her mother. Mr. Bennet holds high opinion about her good sense. Elizabeth feels anxious over the illness of Jane. She prefers to walk to Netherfield to attend sick Jane. Mr. Bingley becomes a prey to her beauty. Mr. Darcy and Miss Bingley also recognize her characteristics. They generally hold no high opinions for others. She is the centre of attraction in the party. Mr. Bingley, impressed by her beauty, dances twice with her.

The subplot of the novel is the love and marriage of Jane and Mr. Bingley. She loves Bingley very much but she hardly expresses her love for him. As a true lover, she continues to love Bingley. When Miss Bingley tries to separate her from Mr. Bingley, she does not feel anything about it. She has strong belief in human virtues. Jane is not like Elizabeth. Her mind is not prejudiced.

Jane Bennet can be praised as a woman of self-control. She never loses her self-control even in adverse situations. She never displays her inner feelings and never disturbs her outward personality. She never involves in a violent situation. Throughout the novel she moves as a quiet, well-mannered and a good woman. These qualities place her high among all characters in the novel.

She believes strongly in human goodness. When everyone, after the first ball, criticizes Mr. Darcy for his nature and pride, it is Jane who speaks in the favour of Darcy. It displays her positive attitude of Jane. In the case of Wickman- his duplicity is exposed- Jane shows her balanced nature. She does not believe in Darcy or Mr. Wickman. She thinks that whatever Darcy has written against Wickman is a result of misunderstanding.

Jane, throughout the novel, stands as a quiet, mild and a shy girl. So, she rarely appears with her individuality. But her presence cannot be neglected. Her beautiful characteristics add pleasantness in the novel. Apart from these characteristics, her feelings for others make her a woman of different nature. She has high respect for her parents. She is a great friend of her sisters. She is deeply involved in Elizabeth as she shares secrets with Elizabeth and vice-versa.

Jane appears to be a responsible person in several situations. She perfectly plays the role of supportive daughter after the elopement of Lydia. She takes all the responsibility of the family and behaves like a responsible person.

The affair between Jane and Mr. Bingley occupies much part of the novel. Readers are attracted to their romantic love. But they are doubtful about her love for Bingley. Jibesh Bhattacharya finally writes about Jane:

"It is Jane's sweet nature hiding her vulnerability, which leads to her being misunderstood and a loss of Bingley for a while. . . Through Darcy everything is resolved, but we all see that it is only Jane is so good a person that her romantic relationship works. Jane is a contrast to Elizabeth, but she also compliments Elizabeth as Bingley does Darcy (Bhattacharya. 112)"

Jane and Bingley, at the end of the novel, appear as hero and heroine of the novel. They successfully prove that they are very good friends and above all good human beings.

In short, Jane is the best character Austen has ever produced. Austen is very keen observer of human nature and she likes to watch her characters in every situation they face. As far as this matter is concerned, Jane qualifies herself as the best character as she never loses her humanly qualities even in adverse conditions. So Jane is the best character offered by Austen to English literature.



### 3. Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy

Darcy is the hero of the novel. He plays a very important role in the novel. He is very famous for his pride. At the first ball Darcy draws attention of everyone. He is a tall man with a noble face. It is also reported that he has an income of thousand pounds a year. He walks with pride and he is always conscious of his dignity and superiority. The character of Darcy is deliberately presented by Austen to show impact of money on human beings. Moreover he is a fine example of how a good human being is driven away from society by wealth. There are many incidents in the novel that show his superiority. At the ball he dances only with Mrs. Hurst and with Miss. Bingley. He refuses to be introduced to any other lady. He prefers to walk around the room.

It can be understood that Darcy maintains his superiority in his friendship. He is a good friend of Mr. Bingley as Mr. Bingley is of the same status. So he does not like Bingley's involvement in Jane Bennet. He feels that Bingley-being his friend-shatters the social status by falling in love with a girl from ordinary Bennet family. Readers, like Elizabeth Bennet, think of him as a prejudiced man. They are not wrong as Darcy's behavior make them to comment on him. When Elizabeth firmly rejects his proposal, Darcy begins to change and his nature begins to improve. In reality, Darcy is a good human being. But he struggles a lot to come to his true nature. He is the best example of human beings who carry false values which hide their true nature.

Prior to it, we experience Darcy's aristocratic nature. He tries to take Bingley away from Jane and Bennet family so that he may not marry Jane. But he finds that he is attracted towards Elizabeth. He is not ready to accept it as his aristocracy does not allow him to do so. But his emotions and sentiments are stronger than his reason. So he decides to disclose his love to Elizabeth. He frankly tells Elizabeth that he is unable to control his feelings and says, 'I admire and love you'. Elizabeth rejects the proposal which is a severe shock for Darcy. She has not forgotten his comment passed on her during the first ball. This incident proves to be a turning point in his life and his character adopts a different role in the post-middle part of the novel. The letter he writes to Elizabeth shows that he is no longer a man of pride. Elizabeth finds a change in his behavior. She also finds that her attitude to Darcy is also changed. He shows his helpful nature after the elopement of Lydia with Mr. Wickman. He sets out to search Wickman who has insulted him and his family. He asks Wickman to marry

Lydia so there will be no blot on Bennet family. Readers are surprised at his this behavior and they come to conclusion that love has conquered over his pride.

Lydia-Wickman matter brings out his good human nature that resides deeper and deeper in him. Readers are shocked to know that he does not want to disclose his name as a main settler of the matter. This is nothing but complete shed of his pride. Austen here shows the impact of devoted love over the pride. It is his ardent love for Elizabeth that has moved him from pride to a selfless man. Automatically he is rewarded for his generous behavior. His second proposal of marriage is accepted by Elizabeth. He is going to do the same thing. Earlier he tried to shun away Mr. Bennet from doing the same thing. His marriage to Elizabeth is a big symbol of removal of his pride. Love brings a change in him.

Darcy is the most complicated character Jane Austen has ever produced. At one point in the novel Elizabeth comments on Darcy that complicated characters are funny. Austen has skillfully painted this character and has shown his passage from aristocracy to normalcy. She has skillfully shown struggles of Darcy as he passes towards the change. Here lies the greatness of the novelist. It becomes clear that Austen loves humanity. She skillfully shows Darcy's passage from one state to the other. Jibesh Bhattacharya praises Austen for her skills of writing:

"It indeed goes to the credit of Jane Austen that a character who in the beginning looks like one who is most disagreeable and unpleasant, becomes in the end so noble and gentle that we begin to admire and love him ( Bhattacharya 106)."

Jane Austen believes in humanly qualities like nobility and gentility. She has deliberately sketched the character of Darcy. In doing so, Austen indirectly criticizes the human beings who wander with pride and false values. Darcy is an example of pride, false values and nobility also. People, as Austen comments, unnecessarily suppress their noble qualities and carry false ideas with them. Darcy is the fine example of this mentality. Austen deliberately brings him down to thump on readers that nobility and love are stronger than pride and false values. This is the core message or philosophy of Jane Austen. The character of Darcy and Austen's philosophy has offered the novel the unique place in the English literature where a few novels and novelist can reach. In short, readers cannot forget Darcy and this is the real success of the novel.

#### 4. Mr. Charles Bingley

Mr. Charles Bingley is the most important character in the novel. He is the lover of Jane. His relationship with Jane is the sub plot of the novel. He is a rich man having the income of five thousand pounds a year. He has an attractive personality and polished manners. He is a good-looking man and has gentlemanly qualities. It is he who arrives at Netherfield. The news of Mr. Bingley rented the Netherfield is passed to Mrs. Bennet by Mrs. Long. He is described as a rich young man from north of England. It is also said that he is an unmarried man of large fortune. Thus, we are introduced to Mr. Bingley at the beginning of the novel.

We first meet him at the ball where he gets acquainted with all the important people. Compared to Darcy, Mr. Bingley is an open minded person. When he sees Jane Bennet, he praises her as the most beautiful creature that he has ever seen. Apart from these qualities, there are some special characteristics of Mr. Bingley. He is not a man of pride. He is interested in good things of life. He is also interested in social life and does not carry the burdens of aristocratic life which Darcy carries. Jane gets attracted to Bingley. She points out that he is a sensible, good humored, lively and a man of happy manners. In short, Bingley is honoured and respected by the girls. No wonder when Jane falls in love with him.

Bingley is somewhat a weak character. We can see that Bingley on the insistence of his friend Darcy and his sister Caroline leaves Jane and departs for England. He is easily dominated by others. He depends on Darcy too much. He permits his friends to take decision about important things of his life. Even he stops loving Jane and resumes it when friends permit him to continue. *Pride and Prejudice* is famous novel for many things - theme, characterization and philosophy of the novelist. But it will be more remembered as it has weak character like Bingley.

But he has some good qualities. Unlike Darcy, Bingley is a social man who likes to arrange parties and holding balls at the house. He likes to invite his friends to participate in the party. He spends a lot of money on such parties and entertains his guests. He is a good dancer too. He dances twice with Jane in the first ball. He is a very popular in gatherings and parties.

Bingley is not praised by the critics. He can be looked upon as a fragile character. In this connection Bhattacharya comments:

"Bingley does not much influence the progress of the novel, though his leaving of Jane, imitated by Darcy, affects Jane, Elizabeth and Darcy himself. Instead, he offers an interesting contrast to Darcy who is temperamentally poles apart from him. The simple and docile Bingley serves as a foil to complex and authoritative Darcy (Bhattacharya 107)."

Although such is the case of Bingley, his genuine love for Jane is unforgettable. He always carries the true love for Jane beneath his actions and deeds. He may be called a fragile and meek character. But his deep love for Jane is of unmatched quality which rarely finds in other characters. Jane and Bingley love each other as if they are made for each other. Both stick to their love. This quality surpasses Bingley and Jane over all the characters in the novel. Elizabeth, Collins, and Darcy prove themselves as fickle minded as far as the matter of love is concerned. At one point in the novel Elizabeth feels for Wickman and later on shifts her love towards Darcy. She is not as strong as Jane and Bingley. Mr. Collins makes two proposals of marriage within three days. And he marries Charlotte. The relationship of Jane and Bingley is worth relationship compared to all other characters in the novel. They remain firm in their love and relationship.

In short, Bingley is very free minded man having a very good and attractive personality. Though he does not influence the story to proceed, his presence is always felt by the readers. Readers will not forget him. When a matter of true and genuine love is discussed, the name of Bingley will be first mentioned in the realm of English literature.

Jane Austen has proved herself in presentation of her characters. In *Pride and Prejudice* she presents strong and fragile characters. But these characters carry true humanly qualities deep down their hearts. Austen skillfully draws them out to thump on the readers that human beings are basically good. Driven by false values or by other persons, they forget their qualities. Only true or genuine love has the power to bring out the humanly qualities. Darcy and Bingley stands opposite to each other. But it is true love of their beloveds make them gentlemen and men of qualities.

In short, the character of Bingley will be remembered forever in the realm of English Literature.

## **Minor characters**

### **1. Mr. Bennet**

Mr. Bennet is one of the minor characters in the novel. He is a gentleman. He has income of two thousand pounds a year. We meet him at the beginning of the novel. He is known for his cleverness, humour, silence and unexpected changes of mind. He has not been understood by his wife.

Mr. Bennet has five daughters and no son. So his property is entailed to his cousin, Mr. Collins, a nearest relative. In his youth he was attracted to the youth and beauty of Mrs. Bennet. He married her. She is known as a foolish woman and a woman of liberal mind. In his later life Mr. Bennet is seen repenting over his foolish action of marrying Mrs. Bennet. The only place which offers him comfort is his personal library. He spends most of his time in his library. So he is not connected as expected to be with his family members.

One of the best characteristics of Mr. Bennet is his humour. The society around him is the source of his humour. The foolishness and silliness of people provide him entertainment. He is seen enjoying follies of Mr. Collins. The foolish behavior of his wife and younger daughter is a source of entertainment for him. He is seen teasing them.

Mr. Bennet's jokes are loaded with cynicism. There are many incidents in the novel which display that his jokes loaded with cynicism. His comment over the illness of Jane is a fine example of cynicism. He comments:

"If your daughter should have a dangerous fit of illness-if she would die, it would be comfort to know that it was all in pursuit of Mr. Bingley, and under your orders."

Moreover, the letter he writes to Mr. Collins is also the fine example of his wit with cynicism. Mr. Bennet does not leave his humorous nature even in the problematic and adverse situations of life. This is his strong capacity for which he will be remembered by the readers and critics forever. Jane Austen's characters major or minor emerge with some qualities, capacities or follies which make them unforgettable. Mr. Bennet is famous for his capacities. Moreover, he is a simple man and a man of responsibility. His restlessness over the elopement of Lydia and his determination to find out Lydia show him as a responsible father. He repents that he

is responsible for whatever has happened. He takes the elopement of Lydia very seriously and thrusts himself into the action.

In short, though Mr. Bennet is a minor character, he cannot be forgotten as he is a fine mixture of humour, wit and a serious father who loves his family very much. His humanly qualities always put him in the array of humorous characters depicted in novels of English literature.

## **2. Mrs. Bennet.**

Mrs. Bennet is a minor but important character of the novel. She helps the novel to proceed. She is described as a foolish woman. When she is anxious, she thinks that she is ill. She has five daughters and she is worried about the problems of their marriage. Jane Austen says of her, 'the business of her life was to get her daughter married; its solace was visiting and news'. She, after the news of Netherfield is rented by Mr. Bingley, forces her husband to visit him. She thinks of Mr. Bingley's marriage with one of her daughters.

Mrs. Bennet's father is an attorney in Meryton. He left for her five thousand pounds. She has a sister and a brother. Her sister married to Mr. Philips who was a clerk to her father. Her brother, Mr. Gardiner settled in London. He is in a line of trade.

She attracted Mr. Bennet to her youth and beauty. But she is a woman of mean understanding. Mr. Bennet repents over their marriage as she is a perfect contrast to him. She is also a woman of follies and vulgarities as she shows them often. There are incidents in the novel that show her stupidity. Her behavior at the supper table is an example of her stupidity. She speaks aloud at Jane's rapid conquest of Bingley's heart. When she comes to know about the engagement of Miss Lucas and Mr. Collins, she shows no courtesy to the family. This is another example of her vulgarity. Her behavior after the elopement of Lydia and Wickman and at their marriage shows her stupidity. While Mr. Bennet is serious, he feels very happy on hearing of Lydia's marriage. Furthermore, she thinks of celebrating the marriage beautifully. In short, these incidents show her vulgarity.

Mrs. Bennet is a fickle-minded woman. She can be easily driven into a state of anger. She feels that nobody has sympathy for her. She does not behave as she speaks. Her behavior before arrival of Collins is different. It seems that she does not like Collins. But the moment he comes, her behavior changes. She welcomes him as

a guest. Her fickle-mindedness reflects in Darcy-Elizabeth relationship. At one point in the novel she calls Darcy as a disagreeable man following his comment on Elizabeth. But when he is engaged to Elizabeth, she calls him as a charming man. Same is the case with Lydia's elopement. She feels to be horribly ill. But the moment the marriage is decided, she prepares to go out to give good news in her locality.

As it is mentioned earlier that Jane Austen's characters emerge with typicality which shapes their personalities. We can remember Mr. Bennet for his humor and wit. Naturally, his comments create humor. But Mrs. Bennet's stupidity and duplicity creates humor. In short, she is a comic character which amuses readers.

Like Mr. Bennet, Mrs. Bennet will be remembered by the readers. She, with her peculiarity, makes the novel comic one. In short, the character of Mrs. Bennet adds grace to the novel. Jane Austen has a mastery in creating such characters who last long on the lips of readers.

### **3. Mr. Collins**

Mr. Collins is a distant cousin of Mr. Bennet. He is working as a rector of Hunsford Parsonage. He appears to be a shrewd man. His attitude to life is practical so he is very practical minded. He is a tall, heavy looking man. He is twenty-five years old. He is a man of serious manners and a formal behavior. He will be the heir to Mr. Bennet's property after his death as the family does not have a son.

Like Mrs. Bennet, Collins is a peculiar character. He has got little education and has no experience of society. His father's influence has made him a very different kind of man. He is a selfish man and his selfishness reflects in his attitude towards marriage. He is a man of property so he wishes to marry. He visits the Bennets with the intention of getting married to one of their daughters. Collins is not a sensitive man and we give values to his own importance. He wants to marry Jane but he is told that she is to be engaged. He turns to Elizabeth and tells that he has made her his choice as the companion of his future life. He wants to marry her as it will add grace to his happiness. But he has no affection and respect for Elizabeth. She refuses the proposal. One day Charlotte Lucas comes to spend a day with Bennet Family. Collins' attention turn to her. Marriage is, for Collins, a game rather than a deep relationship. He shifts from Elizabeth to Charlotte and finally marries her. Readers learn the fickle-mindedness of Collins as far as marriage and love are concerned. He

has a property, placement and prestige so he wants to marry as early as possible. He begins his marriage campaign from Jane and finally ends with Charlotte Lucas.

He stands opposite to Darcy. The letter he writes to Mr. Bennet after the elopement of Lydia reveals his character. Darcy changes and comes forward to assist Bennet family. But Collins feels happy as he is not an ally of Bennet family. He also suggests to Bennet to throw off the unworthy child from his love. The letter reveals his lack of Christian charity. However he has some good qualities. He is a disciplined man. This aspect reflects in the organization of his house. In addition to this he is a punctual man and strictly adheres to his planning. He has manners. He is prompt and a formal person.

In short, Collins is a very important character. His contribution in the progression of the novel is noteworthy. It can be noted that Elizabeth's visit to Hunsford brings her very close to Darcy and it paves a road to their marriage. Thus Mr. Collins plays an important role in the novel. Austen shows her talent in portraying this character.

#### **4. Mr. Wickman**

Wickman is also important character in the novel. He also helps the novel to proceed. He is as young as Mr. Darcy and they are friends from their childhood. Denny, the army officer introduces Wickman who recently joined the army. He is a man with pleasant appearance, good manners and he impresses everyone in his first meeting. Wickman background is not good. He is the son of a manager. His father was the manager of Darcy's father. Wickman joined Law College but couldn't complete the course. He neglected his study and spent his time in doing nothing. He has income of thirty thousand pounds but he is involved in gambling and is in debt. In short, He always wishes to have a life of pleasure. At one point in the novel he applies for a church living after he squanders the money given by Darcy. But Darcy refused to do so. This is an insult for Wickman so he decides to do injury to Darcy. He tries to trap Georgiana, sister of Darcy in to marrying him. He also persuades her to elope with him. But his plan does not work as this matter is disclosed to Darcy by Mrs. Younge. He tries to impress Elizabeth. When he becomes unsuccessful with her, he turns to Lydia. He elopes with her and finally marries her.

Wickman is a villain of the novel. He is a deceptive man and appears before us as an opportunist. He has got a good personality and with help of it he impresses



others. At one point in the novel he impresses Elizabeth. He is a shrewd man. The moment he learns that Elizabeth has some prejudices against Darcy, he seeks this opportunity to slander the character of Darcy by telling false stories about him. But his hypocrisy is exposed by the letter of Darcy to Elizabeth. Wickman's attitude to women is not good. They are, for him, a means to satisfy his sexual desire. So he chases Georgiana, Elizabeth, Miss King and Lydia. Wickman does not repent on his act of elopement. He comes back to Longbourn but he behaves as if nothing has happened. He appears rarely in the novel but his role is very significant. Bhattacharya finely speaks of Wickman's significant role in the novel:

"His main role in the novel is to help us understand Elizabeth, and to change her by her realization of what he really is. Although no directly, yet it is through Wickman that Elizabeth realizes her own lack of good judgment, her prejudice, her susceptibility to flattery. Wickman shows us Elizabeth's romantic side and also provides a rival for Darcy (Bhattacharyya. 118-119)."

Wickman plays significant role in the novel. He is a complicated character. He stands as a complete contrast to Darcy and Elizabeth. He is perfectly suitable to the theme of the novel. His affair and marriage with Lydia is a sub-theme of the novel.

Thus, though Wickman is a minor character, he plays a significant role in the novel. Like other characters of this novel, Wickman is not forgotten by readers. The production of this creature is a result of Austen's observation of human beings. Austen finely pens goodness and badness of human beings and make them alive on the pages of the novel. So Austen's novels are worth reading. *Pride and Prejudice* is not an exception to this.

## **5 Mr. Gardiner**

Gardiner is a brother of Mrs. Bennet. He is a business man and has settled in London. He is an educated person. He has some good qualities. He is very kind and pleasant person. He loves his nieces very much. He always visits Bennet family at Christmas.

Gardiner is a good judge of human character. He finely judges Darcy and Wickman. His judgment about Darcy helps Elizabeth to change her attitude to Darcy. He praises Darcy and condemns Wickman. These things have a good effect on Elizabeth.

He takes Elizabeth with him on a tour to Derbyshire. The purpose is to strengthen her relationship with Darcy. On their tour they visit Pemberley estates where Elizabeth happens to meet Darcy. This tour is helpful for Elizabeth as she gets a chance to observe and understand Darcy's character. Gardiner knows very well that Darcy loves Elizabeth very much and he brilliantly supports it.

Gardiner is a very active and an enthusiastic person. These qualities are seen after the elopement of Lydia. Following this, every member of the family is in gloomy state. It is Gardiner who travels to London to find out the couple. He makes the arrangement of Lydia's marriage. Lydia proceeds to the church for marriage from his house.

Gardiner surpasses every character in the novel. He bears qualities that are rarely found in other characters. Darcy unnecessarily carries false ideas with him but he transforms himself and shows his noble ideas. Wickman is a deceptive and selfish man. He looks at marriage as a thing of profit. Gardiner maintains his goodness in adverse situations. Moreover, he is not a troublesome person for other people. These qualities of Gardiner make him stand high among all characters in the novel. He is always remembered for these rare qualities.

## **6. Charlotte Lucas**

Charlotte is the eldest daughter of William Lucas. She appears to be a practical woman as her approach to marriage is practical. She feels that security is important in marriage. She is also practical in the matter of love. Charlotte's this attitude is reflected in her advice to Jane. She tells Jane to express her love freely.

She meets Collins in the house of Elizabeth. She comes there to spend a day with Bennet family. Collins gets attracted to her, meets her and puts the proposal of marriage before her. She has also a strong desire to attract Collins. Charlotte knows that Collins is neither sensible nor agreeable but she has a little chance of other affairs. So she accepts the proposal. Charlotte does not expect very much from marriage and she is satisfied with a comfortable home. Here she proves her practical approach to life. She proves herself as a woman of understanding.

Though she is a minor character, she plays important role in the development of the novel. She is a good friend of Elizabeth and she remains loyal to her. Knowing that Elizabeth is upset with her engagement she continues her friendship. Even she

invites Elizabeth to Hunsford. This visit proves helpful for Elizabeth as she meets Darcy there. This provides an opportunity for Elizabeth to understand Darcy.

Charlotte appears to be a mature character comparing to all characters in the novel. Her decision of marriage with Collins proves her maturity. She is older than Elizabeth and naturally she has more experience of life. She knows the shortcomings of Collins's character but she accepts him as her husband. She does not take shocking of Elizabeth seriously as she has crossed the age of marriage. This thinking ability of Charlotte makes her to stand at high level with wisdom among all characters in the novel.

The character of Charlotte is the mixture of experience and wisdom. This characteristic with practical approach is an asset of Charlotte. Jane Austen has proved her mastery in penning the character of Charlotte. Readers will forever remember Charlotte who teaches other characters especially, Elizabeth that practical approaches are very important in marriage.

## **7. Lydia Bennet**

Lydia Bennet is the youngest daughter of Bennets. She is fifteen years old. She has an attractive personality. She, like Mary, is interested in dancing, dressing and in men. She is also a good companion of Kitty. Both like to visit Meryton where their aunt lives. Lydia and Kitty like to walk around Meryton and both of them like to dance and gossip with army officers. Lydia knows nothing of any soldier but falls in love with the appearance and personality of a soldier. She likes to flirt and she is not worried about its consequences.

Lydia gets attracted to Wickman because he is a man of military. Her elopement with Wickman occupies considerable part of the novel. Wickman is not a good man and not a real lover. Prior to this, he has made an attempt to elope with Darcy's sister.

Lydia proves herself as the weak character among all characters of *Pride and Prejudice*. She is an uncontrolled woman. All these things make her to elope with Wickman. She is so uncontrolled that she does not see the defamation of her family which follows the elopement. Eloped girls had to face many problems at the time of Jane Austen. They had to remain unmarried. They did not get support of others after death of their parents. But knowing these things, Lydia dares to elope with Wickman. Her ignorance of Wickman's character stamps on her as a thoughtless woman.

Lydia has nothing to do with the defamation she has brought to her family. She is not at all sensitive. When she comes home after elopement, she behaves as if nothing has happened. She giggles freely. She is selfish girl. She does not consider the way marriage has taken place. But she enjoys the moment a lot. Lydia is very selfish and she stands as opposite character to all other characters in the novel. Jane, Elizabeth and Charlotte bear some good qualities. Her marriage to Wickman is a symbol of lack of money and affection. At one point she writes a letter to Elizabeth requesting the help of Darcy in gaining Wickman's position at court. This incident also proves that she is a stupid and thoughtless woman. Failure of her marriage at the end of the novel is a criticism and warning of the novelist on those people who behave like Lydia.

The character of Lydia is no respectful and noteworthy but she gains sympathy of readers. Moreover, she is not aware of life and its problems. As a result, she has to marry the man who does not love her. Lydia helps the plot to develop. Her elopement brings Elizabeth and Darcy together which reunion them in marriage. Moreover, it brings together Jane and Elizabeth.

All the characters in the novel are memorable. They directly or indirectly help the story to proceed. Lydia is one of them. Though she has some defects and she is a problematic woman, she is memorable as her every action teaches us what not to do in our life.

## **8. Mary Bennet**

Mary Bennet is the third daughter of Bennets. Mary is a plain looking girl. She likes to read books. She has read many books and always quotes examples from the books she has read. Her reading has taken her away from people. She prefers the world of books to people. Jane Austen has deliberately penned her character. Austen, through the character of Mary, criticizes people who gain knowledge from books and who are cut off from real life. Mary Bennet is a representative of these types of people. Her communication to her family is limited one. But she takes care of her mother when her sisters leave Longbourn permanently. Though her character is minor one, she, with her peculiar characteristics, is cannot be forgotten by readers.

## **9. Catherine Bennet (Kitty)**

Catherine Bennet is the fourth daughter of Bennets. Seventeen years Kitty is a delicate girl. She, as Mr. Bennet remarks, is stupid. But she is a good companion of

Lydia. She is very much interested in dancing, gossiping and dressing. She loves discipline and she likes men in uniform. She is sick and her coughing annoys her parents. They have always a complaint about her coughing. She is targeted for coughing by Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. But apart from this, Kitty bears some good qualities including her devotion for dancing, dressing etc. She is a devoted friend and she remains loyal in her friendship. She remains loyal to Lydia. She knows about Lydia's elopement. But being loyal to Lydia, she never discloses it. This proves her true and genuine relationship with Lydia. After the Marriage of Jane and Elizabeth she lives with one or other of them. Though she is a minor character, her qualities distinguish her from other characters.

#### **10. Miss Caroline Bingley**

Miss Caroline Bingley is a minor character but she draws sympathy of readers. The reason is her love for Darcy. She reminds us of Mrs. Bennet who strives to find out wealthy husbands for her daughters. Miss Bingley's only aim is to get Mr. Darcy as her husband. She is continuously involved in praising Darcy. She praises Darcy's knowledge, estate, tastes and his sisters. She tries her level best to catch the attention of Darcy.

She does all efforts to adore and get Darcy as her husband. When all her efforts prove to be unsuccessful, she forces her brother to Love Darcy's sister. She hopes that their marriage will pave a road for her marriage to Darcy. But all her efforts fail. When she comes to know the relationship of Darcy and Elizabeth, she hates Elizabeth. When Darcy learns about it, he hates Caroline.

Miss Bingley is short-sighted and selfish woman. At one point in the novel she criticizes Elizabeth before Darcy. This incident takes Darcy away from her. She is a woman of pride. She is very much conscious of her beauty, social status and richness. Her efforts do not win Darcy but like Lydia, she wins sympathy of readers. She is also the most pathetic character in the novel.

*Pride and Prejudice* is a remarkable novel as the art of characterization by Austen is effective. All her characters occupy place in reader's mind. Their nature, object, pride and prejudice make them live permanently in reader's mind. Miss Bingley is not an exception to it.

## 11. Lady Catherine de Bourgh

Lady Catherine de Bourgh is a sister of Darcy's mother. She is the owner of Rosings Estate. She is a patroness of Collins. He has a deep respect for Lady Catherine. According to him Lady Catherine is kind, generous and a woman of fine behavior. He also mentions that she is a woman of high rank. She has a daughter. Catherine always dreams of her daughter's marriage to Darcy. Their marriage will, as Lady Catherine thinks, bring two rich families together- the family of Pemberley and Hunsford. So she looks at this marriage from a different angle.

Lady Catherine likes flattery very much. She also appears as a woman of ego. She thinks that she is always morally right. She is proud of her social rank. She thinks herself as a master of all things. She takes interest in these things and feels that everyone should take interest in the same things. Lady Catherine thinks herself as a woman of decision. Once the decision is taken, she does not allow others to interfere in it. She does not praise others. She likes Elizabeth's playing a piano. But she does not praise her.

Lady Catherine is a foolish woman and her foolishness is exposed when she rushes Longbourn after hearing the engagement of Darcy and Elizabeth. She thinks that Elizabeth will not dare to look so high for her marriage. She does not believe in it. So comes to Elizabeth to know the truth. She meets Elizabeth and demands her promise not to marry Darcy. But Elizabeth refuses to do so. She is shocked to be insulted by Elizabeth. She meets Darcy to make a complaint against Elizabeth. But it does not bring positive result for Lady Catherine.

Lady Catherine is a mixture of pride and prejudice. As mentioned earlier she is a stupid woman. But her stupidity brings Darcy and Elizabeth together. She encourages Darcy to propose Elizabeth.

In short, Lady Catherine is a peculiar woman ever penned by Jane Austen. Like her all characters in the novel, she will be remembered forever by the readers. By penning the character of Lady Catherine, Austen proves her ability of minute observation of human weaknesses and their absurd world. Moreover she has skillfully presented the character of Lady Catherine to criticize men and women who walk with burdens of social rank, richness and ego. The greatness of *Pride and Prejudice* lies in the presentation of characters in tune with the story line.

### 3.6.2 Plot construction of *Pride and Prejudice*

The novel has a main plot and three subplots. The main plot of the novel is love and marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy. They are brought together by Mr. Bingley. Their first meeting is marked by bitter comments, pride and prejudices. Darcy's attitude to Elizabeth is inferior one. She is also prejudiced against him.

As the novel proceeds, one finds that Darcy is attracted to Elizabeth as he observes her pleasing personality and manners and her wit. He learns the truth and he begins to love Elizabeth and her company. But Elizabeth is still deeply rooted in her prejudice against him. Wickman supplies her imaginative information which deepens her prejudice against Darcy. Moreover, the role of Darcy in the affair of Jane and Mr. Bingley deepens her prejudice against him. Their battle goes on as the story proceeds. Darcy feels that Elizabeth is not a good-looking woman. But their relationship takes a positive turn. At one point in the novel Elizabeth finds that Darcy's eyes are fixed on her. He offers her to dance with him. Elizabeth refuses to do so. But she learns that she has attracted Darcy.

The note from Jane to Elizabeth takes her to Netherfield. She lives at Netherfield where she watches Darcy who is also living there. She finds Darcy very disagreeable. Meanwhile she gets attracted to Wickman. She wants to dance with Wickman. But Wickman does not attend the ball. In the same ball she dances with Darcy but they speak very little. In the mean time Elizabeth learns that Darcy is playing a major role in separating Jane and Mr. Bingley. She also learns that he is a man of pride. When Darcy meets Elizabeth and expresses his love for him, she finds that his words are loaded with pride than love. His manners show his pride and he scorns the feelings of others. But Darcy's letter to Elizabeth reveals the truths. He writes about two charges- separating Jane and Bingley and spoiling the hopes of Wickman-made against him and he clarifies them brilliantly.

After reading the letter, Elizabeth learns about the real nature of Darcy and she begins to love him. In short, they move from prejudices to mutual understanding. Their relationship travels to mutual affection and understanding. Elizabeth rightly remarks about their relationship and marriage that they are to be the happiest couple in the word. The Darcy-Elizabeth relationship develops in such a way that their marriage is the only solution of their misunderstanding.

In addition to the plot, there are three sub-plots that link with the main plot of the novel. The affair of Jane and Mr. Bingley is one of the sub-plots of the novel. They first meet in the party and Mrs. Bennet finds that Jane is very much admired by everyone. She has been a thing of attraction for Bingley's sisters. Even Mr. Bingley has sincere feelings towards Jane. She is, for Mr. Bingley, the most beautiful woman he has ever seen. Jane is a simple, beautiful and a charming girl. Although she is not as intelligent like Elizabeth, her personality is very attractive.

Jane-Bingley affair is fringed with doubts, uncertainty and a lack of judgement. They love each other but they fail to express it. Bingley is easily driven away from her by his friends. But both of them do not feel anything about it. They also remain neutral at the time of crises. Finally they get married leaving some doubts in the minds of readers. They (readers) are not sure about happy life of this couple in future.

The affair between Jane and Bingley is brilliantly connected with the main plot. Their affair brings Elizabeth to Netherfield. Darcy is already staying in Netherfield. Placed in such close proximity, Darcy gradually falls in love with Elizabeth. The two affairs run simultaneously in the novel and proceed towards happiness.

Lydia-Wickman affair is also the sub-plot of the novel and it is related to the main plot. Lydia sees Mr. Wickman along with Mr. Collins.

He is a man with pleasant appearance, good manners and he impresses everyone in his first meeting. Lydia is a fourth daughter of Bennets. They run away before they get married. Lydia, it seems, is obsessed by his personality and under that obsession she takes the decision of elopement. Like the relationship of Mr. Collins and Charlotte, this relationship lacks love and is based on outer appearance. Wickman is not serious about marriage. He is compelled to marry Lydia. Their marriage is not a successful act but it is a symbol of lack of money and affection.

Lydia-Wickman affair changes nature of Darcy. He is no more a man of pride. He helps Bingley family but he does not want to disclose his name as the main settler of the matter. It is his ardent love for Elizabeth that has moved him from pride to a selfless man. All these things denote that Darcy respects and loves Elizabeth. Thus, Lydia-Wickman affair also supports the main plot to proceed.

Charlotte-Collins relationship is also the sub-plot of the novel. It is also brilliantly linked to the main plot. Collins is a man of property so he wishes to marry.



He is an heir to the property of Bennets after the death of Mr. Bennet. He visits the Bennets with the intention of getting married to one of their daughters.

Collins is not a sensitive man and has no education at all. He gives values to his own importance. He wants to marry Jane but he is told that she is to be engaged. He turns to Elizabeth and tells that he has made her his choice as the companion of his future life. He wants to marry her as it will add grace to his happiness. But he has no affection and respect for Elizabeth. But she refuses the proposal. One day Charlotte Lucas comes to spend a day with Bennet Family. Mr. Collins' attention turns to her. Marriage is, for Mr. Collins, a game rather than a deep relationship. He easily shifts from Elizabeth to Charlotte. She also gives response to his proposal. Finally they get married. Though, Collins has not good opinion about Charlotte, he marries her. This relationship is not genuine. It lacks true love which is very necessary in a marriage.

Collins' inconsistency in love and relationship reminds us of Elizabeth-Darcy relationship. It is a symbol of maturity, purity and sensitivity. These qualities we do not find in Collins-Charlotte relationship. Thus, this relationship is indirectly connected with the main plot of the novel.

Thus the main plot and the sub-plots of the novel are interlinked and interconnected. The characters are not as they appear to be. Darcy is not as he appears to be. He turns out to be a good person. Wickman appears to be a good man but in reality he is a villain. This dramatic appearance of the characters is significant and it helps the main plot to proceed. In addition to this, the theme of the novel-love and marriage- significantly links the plots together. Love and marriage is the theme of main plot as well as subplots. The marriage of Collins and Charlotte lacks love and devotion and it is based on financial matter. Lydia-Wickman marriage is a result of physical attraction. It reminds us of Bennet's marriage. So their (Lydia-Wickman) marriage lacks love and devotion. The marriage of Jane and Mr. Bingley loses strength, maturity and understanding. All these marriages decorate the marriage of Darcy and Elizabeth which is a fine mixture of emotional and intellectual binding. These marriages give thematic unity to the plot and they help Austen to propagate her moral outlook.

Thus, the main plot and subplots are interlinked and interconnected dramatically as well as thematically thereby propagating the moral viewpoint of the novelist.

### 3.6.3 Theme of the novel

#### Theme of Love and Marriage

Jane Austen emerged at critical juncture in the history of English literature. When she was born, England faced wars. Britain, America and France were involved in wars. Moreover, England shifted from agriculture Britain to Industrial Britain. This shift divided people in to three classes- aristocratic, businessman and laborer. England witnessed severe exploitation of the poor class. Surprisingly all these fast economic- social developments did not attract Jane Austen as we do not find these issues reflected in her novels. Wars and revolutions did not influence her much. However, Jane Austen took reference of war in brief in *Pride and Prejudice*. Perhaps Jane Austen was aware of the fact that the people at her time were not intersected in war and violence. But they got attracted to universal things like love, marriage and social festive etc. Jane Austen grew her interest in these things which were attracted by common people. Her every novel has the theme of love and marriage depicted on the backdrop of the upper middle class and minor aristocratic. It is clear that Jane Austen prefers to deal with the limited area. So her novels are fine portraits of three or four families. She deliberately does not speak about or relate her novels to important historical and political issues. Her novels emerge with universal domestic issues which make them universal novels. She does not depict about society she does not know. She prefers to depict the society in which she lived. She knows very well her area of writing. Obviously love and marriage is the major theme of *Pride and Prejudice*. This central theme is presented through five marriages in the novel. They are: Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, Charlotte and Mr. Collins, Lydia and Wickman, Jane and Bingley, Elizabeth and Darcy.

In the beginning we come across the old couple Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. They are not an ideal couple. Mrs. Bennet is narrow-minded and not intellectual. The chief business of her life is to get her daughters married. These things disappoint Mr. Bennet so he engages himself in books and nature. He is clever and a man of sharp humour. When the story begins we come to know that twenty three years of marriage life of this couple seems to be a failure as there is no rational understanding between them. It can be understood that the gap between them has widened and there is no chance of abridgement. In short, Mr. Bennet finds solace in nature and books where as Mrs. Bennet has narrowed down her world just to find good partners for her daughters.

Charlotte and Mrs. Collins are the first to get married. Collins is a man of property so he wishes to marry. He is an heir to the property of Bennets after the death of Mr. Bennet. He visits the Bennets with the intention of getting married to one of their daughters.

Collins is not a sensitive man and has no education at all. He gives values to his own importance. He wants to marry Jane but he is told that she is to be engaged. He turns to Elizabeth and tells that he has made her his choice as the companion of his future life. He wants to marry her as it will add grace to his happiness. But he has no affection and respect for Elizabeth. But she refuses the proposal. One day Charlotte Lucas comes to spend a day with Bennet Family. Mr. Collins' attention turns to her. Marriage is, for Mr. Collins, a game rather than a deep relationship. He easily shifts from Elizabeth to Charlotte. She also gives response to his proposal. Finally they get married. Though, Collins has not good opinion about Charlotte, he marries her. This relationship is not genuine. It lacks true love which is very necessary in a marriage.

The next couple getting married is Lydia and Mr. Wickham. He is a man with pleasant appearance, good manners and he impresses everyone in his first meeting. Lydia is a fourth daughter of Bennets. They run away before they get married. Lydia, it seems, is obsessed by his personality and under that obsession she takes the decision of elopement. Like the relationship of Mr. Collins and Charlotte, this relationship lacks love and is based on outer appearance. Wickham is not serious about marriage. He is compelled to marry Lydia. Their marriage is not a successful act but it is a symbol of lack of money and affection.

Jane and Bingley is an ideal couple in the novel. They first meet in the party and Mrs. Bennet finds that Jane is very much admired by everyone. She has been a thing of attraction for Bingley's sisters. Even Mr. Bingley has sincere feelings towards Jane. She is, for Mr. Bingley, the most beautiful woman he has ever seen. Jane is a simple, beautiful and a charming girl. Although she is not as intelligent like Elizabeth, her personality is very attractive.

Jane-Bingley affair is fringed with doubts, uncertainty and a lack of judgement. They love each other but they fail to express it. Bingley is easily driven away from her by his friends. But both of them do not feel anything about it. They also remain neutral at the time of crises. Finally they get married leaving some doubts in the

minds of readers. They (readers) are not sure about happy life of this couple in future.

The next very famous couple is Elizabeth and Darcy. Their journey to their marriage is marked by doubts, pride and prejudices. They are brought together by Mr. Bingley. Their first meeting is marked by bitter comments, pride and prejudices. Darcy's attitude to Elizabeth is inferior one. She is also prejudiced against him.

As the novel proceeds, one finds that Darcy is attracted to Elizabeth as he observes her pleasing personality and manners and her wit. He learns the truth and he begins to love Elizabeth and her company. But Elizabeth is still deeply rooted in her prejudice against him. Wickman supplies her imaginative information which deepens her prejudice against Darcy. Moreover, the role of Darcy in the affair of Jane and Mr. Bingley deepens her prejudice against him. Their battle goes on as the story proceeds. Darcy feels that Elizabeth is not a good-looking woman. But their relationship takes a positive turn. At one point in the novel Elizabeth finds that Darcy's eyes are fixed on her. He offers her to dance with him. Elizabeth refuses to do so. But she learns that she has attracted Darcy.

The note from Jane to Elizabeth takes her to Netherfield. She lives at Netherfield where she watches Darcy who is also living there. She finds Darcy very disagreeable. Meanwhile, she gets attracted to Wickman. She wants to dance with Wickman. But Wickman does not attend the ball. In the same ball she dances with Darcy but they speak very little. In the mean time Elizabeth learns that Darcy is playing a major role in separating Jane and Mr. Bingley. She also learns that he is a man of pride. When Darcy meets Elizabeth and expresses his love for her, she finds that his words are loaded with pride than love. His manners show his pride and he scorns the feelings of others. But Darcy's letter to Elizabeth reveals the truths. He writes about two charges- separating Jane and Bingley and spoiling the hopes of Wickman-made against him and he clarifies them brilliantly.

After reading the letter, Elizabeth learns about the real nature of Darcy and she begins to love him. In short, they move from prejudices to mutual understanding. Their relationship travels to mutual affection and understanding. Elizabeth rightly remarks about their relationship and marriage that they are to be the happiest couple in the world. The Darcy-Elizabeth relationship develops in such a way that their marriage is the only solution of their misunderstanding.

*Pride and Prejudice* finely presents the theme of love and Marriage. Some of her female characters marry men under economic pressure and they have no love for the persons whom they are going to marry. Such kind of marriage is perhaps not accepted by Austen. In a marriage and love money plays a vital role which may be disliked by Austen. Even she criticizes pride and prejudice- the inseparable part of human nature- becomes hurdle in forming true relationship. This can be experienced in the relationship of Elizabeth and Darcy. Jane Austen focuses on these matters.. A marriage should be based on pure understanding, relationship and respect for each other. Austen finely presents her philosophy through *Pride and Prejudice*.

### **3.6.4 Short notes**

#### **1. Jane Austen's viewpoint in *Pride and Prejudice***

Jane Austen's novels present her viewpoint. Her purpose behind writing novels is to give message to readers. In *Pride and Prejudice* Austen's viewpoint is moral one. Elizabeth is a symbol of prejudice whereas Darcy is of pride. The novel presents conflict between them and finally it leads to understanding and union in marriage. This can be another theme of the novel.

Austen here shows wrongness of human behavior. She either leads her character towards reorganization or presents the suffering of characters as a result of wrong behavior. Austen reveals her viewpoint through her characters and their actions. She shows the wrong action or behavior of her characters but never criticizes them. Her comment is associated with humor which keeps her away from being callous to foolish characters. Austen is interested in presenting characters as they are. She likes to observe her characters and their behavior in different situations. She appears to be serious author. Emotions, for her, have little value. Unlike romantic writers, she has different attitude to look at love. She judges love on the base of reason and discipline. She is not pleased with the love of Lydia and Wickman. It is not based on reason. Austen deliberately shows the journey of Elizabeth from immaturity to maturity, from ignorance to realization. She finally realizes her folly and arrives at truth. The truth based on reason is accepted by Elizabeth. This is the attitude of Austen. She presents it in the form of journey of Elizabeth and Darcy.

Her moral outlook is generated by her eighteenth century background. Human beings have to be good in their personal as well as in their public life. We are born to be unselfish, sincere, humble and neutral. These are ornaments of life as they qualify

our life. Austen is a practical woman who likes practical ideals. She dislikes emotions which never add happiness or benefit to mankind. The love, which is based on emotions and not reason, is discarded by Austen. She seems to be mocking at Mr. Collins who within three days makes two proposals of marriage. It seems that Mr. Collins is led by emotions and not reason. He suddenly changes the proposals. He wants to marry for his own comfort. He does not have respect for his life partner. Austen mocks at such nature and behavior of characters.

In short, Austen's novels are packed with her moral values and this novel is a fine illustration of her moral values.

## **2. Title of the novel**

The title of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* is not the original title of the novel. Its original title was *First Impressions*. But fifteen years later, in 1813 Austen revised the novel and gave a new title *Pride and Prejudice*. This is very appropriate title of the novel as it shows characters wrapping either in pride or in prejudice. The relationship between Darcy and Elizabeth swings between pride and prejudice. Darcy is a man of Pride. He hates Elizabeth for her lower social and cultural rank. They are prejudiced against each other that they pass bitter comments about each other. But both of them come together gradually. Darcy's pleasing manners and love shed the prejudice of Elizabeth and his pride is brought down by Elizabeth's personality. In short, Pride and prejudice play important role in the relationship of Darcy and Elizabeth. Hence it is an appropriate title of the novel.

Bingley sisters visit the house of Bennets where Elizabeth notices the pride in their treatment for everybody. She does not like them. Miss Bingley criticizes Elizabeth as a woman of poor manners, a mixture of pride and lack of good family. Furthermore she comments that she has no power of conversation, no taste and no beauty. At one point in the novel Mr. Wickman prejudices Elizabeth's mind against Darcy. She dislikes Darcy. Later on the truth is brought forward by the letter of Darcy to Elizabeth. Prior to this, Elizabeth grew her interest in Mr. Wickman. At the Thursday ball party Elizabeth looks for Mr. Wickman. She dresses with more care than usual. She feels unhappy as she comes to know that he has gone to London on his business. In the same party she dances with Darcy but speaks very little to him. Most of the characters judge others by their prejudice. They quickly believe in what others say. Later on they arrive at truth and reality. Most of the characters in the

novel move with pride and prejudice so the title of the novel is appropriate and significant.

### **3.6.5 Check your progress**

#### **a) Fill in the blanks.**

1. ----- is the protagonist of the novel.
2. This central theme is presented through -----marriages in the novel.
3. Catherine Bennet is the ----- daughter of Bennets.
4. Charlotte is the eldest daughter of -----
5. ----- is the hero of the novel.

#### **b) Keys**

1. Elizabeth Bennet.
2. five
3. fourth
4. William Lucas
5. Darcy

#### **c) Answer the following questions in one word/phrases/sentence each.**

1. What is the income of Darcy?
2. What is Mrs. Bennet's father?
3. What is Mr. Collins?
4. Who is Mr. Gardiner?
5. Who is the villain of the novel?

#### **d) Keys.**

1. thousand pounds a year
2. an attorney in Meryton
3. a rector of Hunsford Parsonage
4. a brother of Mrs. Bennet

5. Mr. Wickman

### 3.6.6 Exercises :

A) Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.

1. Draw the character sketch of Elizabeth Bennet.
2. Discuss the theme of *Pride and Prejudice*.
3. Examine the plot - construction of *Pride and Prejudice*.

B) Write short notes on the following in about 150 words each.

1. Mr. Bennet
2. Mr. Gardiner
3. Title of the novel
4. Jane Austen's viewpoint in *Pride and Prejudice*
5. Mr. Wickman





## Unit-4

### Neoclassical and Romantic Poetry (Selected Poems)

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#### 4.0 Objectives

- 4.1 Introduction : Neoclassical and Romantic Poetry
- 4.2 Alexander Pope: “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”, “The Dunciad”
- 4.3 Dr. Samuel Johnson: “Vanity of, Human Wishes”
- 4.4 Thomas Gray: “The Elegy Written in Country Churchyard”
- 4.5 William Wordsworth: “Tintern Abbey”
- 4.6 S. T. Coleridge: “Kubla Khan”
- 4.7 P. B. Shelley-“Ode to the West Wind”
- 4.8 John Keats: “Ode on a Grecian Urn”

#### 4.0 Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand literary history of the Neoclassical and the Romantic poetry.
- Explain the theme, language, form, literary devices, structure and various aspects in the select poems.
- Find relationship between the Neoclassical and the Romantic poetry.

#### 4.1 Introduction:

##### The Neoclassical and the Romantic Poetry :

The Neoclassical Period in English literature spans widely of about one hundred and forty years which starts after the restoration of Charles II to the English throne in 1660 and ends up to the last decade of 18<sup>th</sup> century. The period is known by various names like ‘Restoration Period’, ‘The Age of Reason and Good sense’, ‘Augustan Age’ as it resembled the age of Roman Empire Augustus in the flowering period of three Roman writers – Virgil, Horace and Ovid; ‘Eighteenth Century Literature’ according to the specific literary features within the period. The term ‘Neo-classical’

denotes the revival of classical forms and art. The term is applied to a literary, artistic movement originated in Europe which emphasized intense emotion and liberal spirit. The period begins in the latter half of the reign of George III. On the other hand, the Romantic period starts more particularly with the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 by William Wordsworth and S. T. Coleridge and continues up to the first three decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Metaphysical poetry had left the literary standards and values confused and complex. The Neoclassical period is a reaction to the Metaphysical poetry which abounds in complexity and higher learning. The Neoclassical poetry has its own features. The Neoclassical poets practised a strong tradition of classical writers of ancient Greece and Rome. These classical poets and their literary work had been considered as a model. Reason, good sense, rationality and knowledge are considered as major aspects of poetry. In this respect literature is considered as an art which requires talent and practice by adapting specific models. Next, correctness was the soul of their poetry. That is why they established 'rules of poetry' for stylistic decorum. The form poetry accepted and practised a set of rigid framework for poetry. The Neoclassical poetry centered round the imitation of human life and human nature. In other words it is a 'mirror of the society.' Thus, art for the sake of life or humanity was the central idea of the poetry. Their aim was to delight, instruct and correct man taking human nature as subject matter. Thus, we see a kind of universality in their writing. One can come across a kind of clarity, simplicity, good sense, wit in this type of poetry. The poetry represented the urban life. John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Dr. Samuel Johnson etc. are notable poets of the age.

There was a group of meditative poets at the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> century who considered human mortality with melancholy. They are known as transitional poets. It is also known as the Transitional period which deals with the Neoclassical traditionalism to Romantic liberalism and naturalism. The group includes Thomas Gray, William Blake, Robert Burns etc..

The Romantic poetry is marked by the rejection of the ideals and set rules of the Neo-classical poetry. This changed outlook is the result of the influence of the French Revolution and its three principles Liberty, Equality and Fraternity as well as the teachings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78). William Wordsworth's 'Preface' to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* proved as a poetic manifesto where he defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." The Romantic

poetry has its salient features. The external nature with its flora and fauna and refuge in simple primitive nature is the major feature of this type of poetry. Secondly the poetry was concerned with human experiences and miseries. Thus, it developed humanitarian outlook. The Romantic poetry concentrates on individualism. As a result of it individualism or subjectivity is a distinctive trait of the poetry. Representation of countryside people; interest in medieval age and the exotic are some other features of the poetry.

The elder generation of Romantics and younger generation of Romantics are the two generations of Romantic poets. The elder Romantics include William Wordsworth, Sir Walter Scott, S. T. Coleridge, Robert Southey etc. while the younger Romantics include P. B. Shelley, John Keats, Lord Byron, etc. The first generation that is elder Romantics is the group of 'Lake poets' as they all lived in the Lake district and are deeply influenced by 'French Revolution'. The younger generation seems more liberal in the expression.

## **4.2 SECTION I : Alexander Pope: “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”, “The Dunciad”**

### **4.2.0: Introduction to Alexander Pope:**

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) is the most illustrious writer of the first half of the eighteenth century who is best known for his satirical verse as well as for his translations of Homer. He was born in 1688 in London in a wealthy Catholic family. He, in one sense represents the social tone of the urban literary world of his time. His early education had been affected by the contemporary laws for Catholics. He was educated at Twiford near Winchester and a school at Marybone. But most of the part he was self-educated.

Pope's literary career begins with the publication of "Pastorals" in 1709. The "Essay on Criticism" which published in 1711 gave Pope a kind of literary identity. His literary work includes *The Rape of the Lock* (1712), *Windsor Forest* (1713) etc. Pope published a collected volume of his poems which included the poems like "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady", "Eloisa to Ablard" etc. His translation of Homer's *Iliad* in six volumes was published from 1715 to 1720. He later on published *Odyssey* (in five volumes between 1725-26), "Essay on Man", "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" (1734) and "Dunciad". Pope is known typically for his

satirical work like “Dunciad”. He is also famous for his translations of Homer’s *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and editions of Shakespeare’s plays.

#### **4.2.1: “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”:**

##### **Summary and Critical Analysis:**

The poem “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot” was written speedily by Alexander Pope and published in 1734 though some part of it had been written earlier. It is a verse satire in the form of dialogue between the poet and Dr. John Arbuthnot to whom he addresses the poem. Dr. Arbuthnot (1667-1735) was Pope’s friend, at one time physician, to Queen Anne, collaborator and the member of Scriblerus club along with Pope, Swift and Gay. Pope wrote this poem dedicating Dr. Arbuthnot after realizing his serious illness.

In the advertisement supplied at the beginning of the poem Pope expressed his intention and background behind this effort of composing poem. In the very beginning he describes this poem as ‘a sort of bill of complaint’ against those who attacked not only his writing but also on his personality, his morals and family.

The poem begins with Pope asking his servant John to shut the door. He wants to get rid of the false admirers and budding poets who everywhere follow him even to the church he is not left alone. Pope addresses Dr. Arbuthnot as ‘friend to my life’ and describes how he had been blamed by everyone. Pope advises these poets to wait for nine years as Horace used to give this advice but they are not ready to wait.

Pope continues to talk about the poetasters who are considered for writing inferior poetry. He uses ‘Midas’ image which represents unreliability. He directly attacks some poets like Colley Cibber, John Henley, Bavius, Bishop Philips referring to their names. But Dr. Arbuthnot interrupts him saying “No Names! be calm.” He also advises Pope to learn prudence. At this Pope exclaims how he has been ridiculed by others which were beyond hundred enemies. But he promises Arbuthnot to be honest and continues how he had been flattered by these poetasters. Then the poet turns towards his personal life. It is his self-portrayal where objectivity is observed. The poet desperately asks ‘Why did I write?’, ‘What sin to me unknown Dipt me in ink?’ He also confesses that no one compelled him to practice this ‘idle trade.’ He himself answered that he writes poetry as he had been encouraged by his friends like Walsh, Garth, and Congreve etc. He comments on his own writing as soft, pure, gentle and with correctness in punctuation. He welcomed the praises as well as

criticism softly. Pope now turns his attention to more formidable adversaries and speaks about Joseph Addison. His satirical comment on Addison is described in the sketch of the character 'Atticus'. In the beginning of his comment Pope praises Addison for his 'True Genius' which inspired fame. His talent is perfect with every literary art; that is 'born to write'. Such a man of genius in fact tries to dominate to "rule alone." He is compared with Turkish who did not allow his brothers near the throne. According to Pope Addison was jealous of his rivals. He uses the phrase 'Damn with faint praise' who did not disapprove openly but encourages others to disapprove. He calls Addison 'Atticus' which suggests his refined taste, philosophical mind but discriminating nature.

Pope mocks at Lord Halifax, Earl of Halifax (Charles Montagu) a British Statesman, poet, patron of poets and politician. He was described as 'Bufo'. As a patron of poets he is compared to Apollo. Pope ridiculed the affection of the patrons of letter who exhibited the headless trunks. According to Pope Lord Halifax loves being flattered and helps only to those who flatter him.

The focus of the poem now shifts towards Pope's attitude at life and career. He wants to live alone maintaining poet's own dignity and ease. He says that those who are liars will be afraid of his satire and will attack but a man with good intention will not be afraid of.

Alexander Pope attacks Lord Hervey in the name "Sporus". Lord Hervey, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron was an English courtier, political writer and memoirist. Dr. Arbuthnot scolds him as 'thing of silk' and "mere white curd of ass's milk", 'who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel.' He can't distinguish between satire and other forms. Pope uses various animal images to portrait Sporus. Pope scolds him as amphibious thing and 'Eve's tempter'. Hervey values glamour, sensual pleasure and social climbing. The poem ends with Pope's self-portrait describing his virtues like bold and courageous, having peace loving parents and happy domestic life.

Satire is a kind of literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous which invokes attitudes of amusement, contempt or indignation. "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" is a kind of satire of Horacian model as it goes close in its features like use of proper names as examples. Next in the poem Pope scolds and satirizes at man's follies. There is a kind of amusement than stern indignation. The speaker is urban and witty in the presentation of his characters.

The poem is notable for its thematic and structural unity. There is a kind of logical connection among various verse stanzas. The poem was written using heroic couplet.

#### **4.2.2: The Dunciad:**

##### **Summary and Critical Analysis :**

“The Dunciad” is a mock-heroic by Alexander Pope which marked a turning point in his literary career. It is a collection of three books according to the first edition published in 1728 and four books according to 1743 edition, each book of the poem is a self-contained unit. The episodes in four books brilliantly deal with literary dullness and pedantry in general particularly with the writers of these vices. The poem published in different versions since 1728 to 1743. In the beginning in 1728 with three books of ‘Dunciad’ anonymously. The second version ‘Dunciad Variorum’ in 1729 and the new “The Dunciad” in four books was published in 1743 where the hero Thibaldor Theobald had been replaced and Colley Cibber ( Bays) is taken as the new hero.

Pope had been attacked for various reasons especially his literary works like translating Homer’s literary work or editing Shakespeare’s plays. To be particular the appearance of Lewis Theobald’s “Shakespeare Restored’ or “A Specimen of the Many Errors As Well Committed as Unamended by Mr. Pope in his Late Edition of this poet’s\_\_\_” severely criticized Pope for presuming to meddle with Shakespeare merely to make money. It caused Pope intense annoyance. So Pope considered Thibald (Theobald) as the King of Dulness. In the “New Dunciad in Four Books” earlier hero Theobald had been dethroned and Colley Cibber crowned in his place because Cibber’s celebrated pamphlet. “A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope” angered Pope for his dishonouring reference in it.

Structurally the poem has been modeled on Dryden’s *Mac Flecknoe* as it celebrates and revolves round the theme of crowning of a new King of Dulness. However, Pope takes freedom as his poem consists wide-ranging subjects from politics to culture.

Book I deals with the proposition, the invocation and the inscription. The poem begins with the invocation which was not directed at Muse but at Patricians and Patrons. Here, the hero is the principal figure. The poem in the very beginning describes the Goddess of Dulness as mighty mother which suggests her as the

principal agent. Her son, 'who brings the Smithfield' Muses to the ear of kings'. Smithfield is a place and the person referred to is Elkanath Settle. The poet describes the Goddess of Dulness as 'Daughter of Chaos' and 'eternal night' and her power is so great that "Time himself stands still at her command, shift their place and Ocean turns to land." The Goddess contemplates her realm of confusion and bad poetry on the day of the Lord Mayor's show. On that day that is Lord Mayor's day the Goddess announces the death of the present King of Dunces, Elknath Settle. She now thinks of the long succession of bad poets like Thomas Heywood, Daniel Defoe, Ambrose Philips, Nahum Tate etc. as her favourites. She dreams to control poetry. So she decides of Bays (Cibber) as the obvious successor to the throne of Dulness. She fixed her eye on Bays to be the instrument of the great event. This is the main theme of the poem. In the earlier editions Theobald had been announced to be the new king however in 1743 edition Theobald had been dethroned and Colley Cibber(Bays) crowned in his place. Theobald's name had been referred to within two lines, though there are occasional references to him. Cibber was a poet Laureate, celebrated actor and dramatist. The poet presents how Cibber is the most suitable new hero to be the King of Dullness with 'monster breeding breast' who 'plung'd for his sense, but found no bottom there,/Yet wrote and flounder'd on, in mere despair' (P 278, *The Poems of Alexander Pope* Vol. V Dunciad). Cibber has been described as unpopular and despairing.

The scene shifts to the Gothic library which is divided into three parts. Cibber decides to sacrifice his works which included Quartos, Octavos and Odes to the Goddess. He raises towards the altar. He sets fire to the heap of books. At that time Goddess of Dullness appears and snatches a sheet of "Thule", a poem by Ambrose Philips and drops on the fire. The queen then crowns Cibber as King of the Dunces. The book ends with a hail of praise "God save king Cibber".

Book II deals with the announcement of public games and sports of various kind on the occasion of proclamation of the new king. The Goddess herself instituted these games to celebrate Cibber's coronation. Since the beginning the poet uses mock heroic elements skillfully. It echoes the funeral games for Anchises (Aeneid V). Everyone including poets, critics gathered at the place. The first game is for booksellers. She creates a phantom poet by giving empty words, a fool so just a copy of wit and named him the phantom Moore (James Moore Smythe). All the participant booksellers run to catch Moore. Among them Bernard Lintot takes lead

with a roar “This prize is mine”, but he is challenged by Edmund Curl who wins the race and awarded with a tapestry showing the fates of famous Dunces. The next game was for a Poetess, Eliza. Osborne and Curl accept the glorious strife in which Osborne through perfect modesty overcomes and is crowned with the Jordon. Then follow the exercises for the poets tickling, vociferating and diving. Tickling holds forth the arts and practices of dedicators. The game tickling include getting money from patrons by flattery. A youth unknown to Phoebus which means without artistic abilities wins the match by using his sister. At the end the Goddess proposes exercise for the Critics. They are not expected to participate in any game but the exercise will evaluate their patience in hearing the works of two voluminous authors one in verse and the other in prose deliberately read without sleeping. Three college sophs (students) and three lawyers from Temple Bar participate in the task. They are expected to raise query, answer and debate. But not only the participants but the entire company slowly fall asleep. Finally folly herself is killed by the Dulness of works which were being read aloud. As a result of it there is no judge for Dulness.

The content of Book III in the earlier versions and the latest one is the same except some changes. It deals with Cibber’s vision, past, present and the future triumphs of Dulness. Now all the persons have been disposed in their proper places of rest. The Goddess transports the King to her temple. There Cibber rests laying his head on Goddess’s lap. He is immediately carried on the wings of fancy. In his dream he goes to Hades and visits the shade of Elkanath Settle. He was led by a mad Poetical Sibyl to the Elysian Shade where on the banks of Lethe, the soul of the dead are dipped by Bavius, before their entrance into this world. Bavius dips each soul in Lethe to make it dull before sending it to a new body. Millions of souls are waiting there for new bodies as their souls transmigrate. Cibber meets the ghost of Settle there and by him Cibber is acquainted with the wonders of the place and other personalities which he himself is expected to perform. Then Settle tells him about his past. He takes Cibber to a Mount of vision from where he shows the past victorious Empire of Dulness; describes its present condition and future of Dulness. He assures that Grub street will be Dulness’s ‘Mount Parnassus’ and the Goddess will “Behold a hundred sons and each a dunce (*The Dunciad*)”. In the survey of the formless poets waiting to be born Pope refers to various personalities like orator Henley Settle who shows the happy triumph of Dulness over the theaters and even at court. The book ends with Cibber waking from his visions.



Book IV is added in 1743 version of 'The New Dunciad'. Pope himself calls the book with four books together as 'Greater Dunciad'. It begins with an invocation. Book IV presents a grand drawing room, which is appropriate for royal majesty, at which title or orders of merit are bestowed by the Queen of Dulness. Though the scene is from the drawing room it explores an academic meeting. Queen of Dulness mounts her throne on her lap where Laureate son is reclined. It follows the allegorical description. The Goddess is destined to destroy order and science and to substitute the Kingdom of Dulness upon the earth. The poet describes "Beneath her foot-stool, science groans in chains / And Wit dreads Exile" (P 342, Dunciad). Logic is gagged and bound. Rhetoric is languished on the ground. Morality is draped in a gown that is bound by fur (ermine robes of the Judges) and lawn (fine linen used for the sleeves of a bishop). Morality dies when the Queen gives her Page (hanging judge) word. Muses are of being watched by Envy and Flattery. After that the poet gives his attitude towards Italian Opera - its nature and genius, its effect, practice of patching up these Operas with favourite songs. The poet addresses it as , "a Harlot form". As per the warning of Opera. Dulness banishes Handel (reference to Handel's oratories, a form of musical composition). Now the action changes. Fame blows her posterior trumpet and all the dunces gather at the throne of Dullness. The dunces have been divided into three categories - naturally dull, people who wish to be dunce and false to Phoebus. The last group includes Sir Thomas Hanmer (The decent knight, suggested Hanmer's Pompous manner) but he is outwitted by Benson (the man endeavoured to raise himself to fame by erecting monuments, striking coins, setting up heads and procuring translations of Milton). Dullness tells her followers to imitate Benson. Then the poem deals with different aspects of contemporary education. There is reference to Spectre (Dr) Busby, the famous headmaster of Westminster school) who used to whip everyone in the hall. He informs the Queen of Dulness that he is true champion he ply the memory, load the brain and bind wit with double chain by confining thought. The Queen wishes that for some pedant Reign, some gentle James I is needed to bless the land again to give law to words. At this the logicians rush to the Queen to claim to be true champions. It is followed by the fine arguments on letters, textual variants, correcting authors etc.

The French governor tries to speak with the Queen but his voice was drowned in the French horn. So the pupil said that the Governor is an English nobleman who attended school without learning. He visited various countries but as the end he

spoiled his own language and acquired nothing. "All Classic learning lost on Classic ground". He returned to England with a nun pregnant with his child. Dullness receives all the three. After traveler an idle, lazy lord appears who is tired of sitting on an easy chair. The book ends with the consummation of all in the Restoration of night and chaos. Thus, the poem concludes with the picture of victory of the Dulness which results into the disintegration of civilization. Instead of the satiric tone the poem ends with tragic note.

The central theme of the poem is the crowning of the new King of Dulness. However it focuses on wide ranging subjects like political and cultural attack, literature, historical context, attack on writers and publishers etc.. Pope uses allegorical theme to criticize on various personalities and field. The political attack is on the Whigs.

The poem is divided into four books according to 1743 version. It has a simple plot. The Goddess of Dulness appears at a lord Mayor's Day in 1724 and announces Bays (Cibber) to be the new King. It is a book I. Book II deals with the games and sports in honour of the crowning of the King. Book III deals with the vision of the new King which takes him to the past, present and future region of Dulness. The last book IV presents a grand drawing room. It shows the Goddess coming in her Majesty to destroy order and science and to substitute the Kingdom of Dulness upon the earth. The structural pattern is of mock heroic with its own innovations. It is seen specially in book IV, Book I is modeled on Dryden's *Mac Fleknoe*, book II echoes the *Aneid V*, book III echoes the prophetic visions of the *Aneid VI* as well as *Paradise Lost*.

It is a mock heroic poem. A mock heroic poem is a type of parody which imitates both the elaborate form and the ceremonious style of the epic genre, but it is applied to a common or trivial subject matter. Pope's "The Rape of Lock" is considered as a typical mock-heroic poem. "Dunciad" though a mock heroic, it hasn't fully developed form of mock heroic action. The poem is divided into four books each one self-contained unit and deals with literary Dullness and pedantry in general focusing specific writers. The poem begins with an invocation. Secondly, it is written in the tradition of epic. The characters like Queen of Dulness, Bays (Cibber) or Theobald have been exaggerated. The poem however ends with a kind of melancholy note. Satirical tone has been observed, which is the core of mock epic, from beginning to end. There are allegorical elements in it. The Queen of the

Dullness is the central character. She is the daughter of the Chaos and Night. She is surrounded by other allegorical figures. She also presides the games. We see past, future and present history of Dulness. At the end she reigns supreme over art and science. Theobald (Lewis Theobald) is the hero of the earlier version while Bays (Colley Cibber) is replaced as the hero of 1743 version of “The New Dunciad”.

#### 4.2.3 : Check Your Progress:

##### I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. How does Pope describe the poem “ Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot” ?
2. Whom does the poet address as “Atticus”?
3. What does the poet mean by the phrase ‘damn with faint praise’?
4. Who was Thibald?
5. What is the theme of Book II of the poem “Dunciad”?
6. What does the King of Dulness, Cibber visit in his dreams?
7. Who dips each soul of dead into the Lethe?

##### II) Match the pairs from group ‘A’ with group ‘B’:

- | A                     | B                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Atticus            | A) Lord Hervey             |
| 2. Bufo               | B) Colley Cibber           |
| 3. Sporus             | C) Poem by Ambrose Philips |
| 4. Bays               | D) Earl of Halifax         |
| 5. Goddess of Dulness | E) Mighty Mother           |
| 6. Thule              | F) Addison                 |

#### 4.2.4 Key terms:

**Epistle-** Letter, a poem or other literary work in the form of a letter or series of letters.

**Satire** - A literary art which derogates a subject by making it ridiculous and evokes amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation.

**Mock – Heroic** – A type of parody which imitates; in a sustained way, both the elaborate form and the ceremonious style of the epic genre but applies it to narrate, a common place or trivial subject matters.

**Chaos** – Complete disorder and confusion.

**Allegory** – A narrative in prose or poem in which the agents and actions and sometimes the setting as well are contrived by the author to make coherent sense on the “literal” or primary level of signification and at the same time it communicate a second, hidden meaning.

#### **4.2.5 Key to Check Your Progress:**

- I) 1. a sort of bill of complaint.  
2. Addison.  
3. Those who did not disapprove openly but encourage others to disapprove.  
4. New King of Dullness, Lewis Theobald in earlier versions.  
5. Announcement and celebration of public games and sports on the occasion of coronation of the new King.  
6. He goes to Hades and visits the shade of Elknath Settle.  
7. Bavius.
- II) Match the pairs:
1. --- F)
  2. --- D)
  3. --- A)
  4. --- B)
  5. --- E)
  6. --- C)

#### **4.12.6 Exercises:**

- I) 1. Describe “Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot” as a satire.  
2. How does the poet attack on Addison, Lord Halifax and Lord Hervey in the poem “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”?  
3. Write critical appreciation of the poem “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot”.

4. Write a note on the thematic and structure form of the poem “The Dunciad”.
5. What are the different themes of the poem “The Dunciad”?
6. Describe “The Dunciad” as a mock-heroic poem.

**II) Write short notes on the following :-**

- 1) Allegorical elements in “The Dunciad”
- 2) Character of Queen of Dulness.
- 3) Colley Cibber in “The Dunciad”.

### **4.3 SECTION II :**

**Dr. Samuel Johnson: “Vanity of Human Wishes”**

#### **4.3.0 Introduction to Dr. Samuel Johnson:**

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) who is familiarly known as Dr. Johnson gave a new dimension to the poetical tradition of the mid-eighteenth century. He is a versatile writer whose fame rested on his prose but his poetical work is also remarkable. He was born in Lichfield. Since his childhood he showed signs of great talent. He was educated at Lichfield Grammar School and Pembroke College. Johnson’s working in his father’s book shop and stitching books there developed interest in him to read literary books earnestly. He tried various jobs. Then he started working on translations. His first literary work is thus a translation. His *A Dictionary of the English Language* is one of the notable dictionaries in the history of English language which was published in 1755. He is known for *Lives of the English Poets* (1783) and his eight volume editions of Shakespeare’s work, his most famous poetical work “The Vanity of Human Wishes” (1749), fictional work *The History of Rasselas: a Prince of Abissinia* as well as numerous essays published in various periodicals.

In his writings Johnson focused on variety of topics including matters of historical, scientific, biographic, legal, political views. He focused on specific areas like philosophy, religious, humanity etc. He died in 1784. James Boswell, a

biographer wrote a biography on the life of Samuel Johnson *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791) which is considered as a memorable literary work.

#### **4.3.1 Vanity of Human Wishes : Summary and critical analysis:**

“The Vanity of Human Wishes” which is subtitled as “The Tenth Satire of Juvenal, Imitated” is well known poem by Dr. Johnson. It is a poem of nearly three hundred seventy lines which was first published in 1749. As the subtitle suggests it is an imitation satire X by the Latin poet Juvenal. It is a philosophical poem where Dr. Johnson portrays the futility, inability of the heroic and virtues deeds in the life of human beings and the worldly life with a message of importance of Christian values at the end.

In the very beginning the poet announces the central idea -‘The absurdity of people’s prayers’- of the poem which is applicable universally. The poet refers to how man is betrayed by ‘Vain’ rous Pride’, ‘paths without Guide’, influence of corruption, power etc. The things which we most desire—gain and grandeur—in fact lead to destruction. The poet invokes Democritus, a Greek philosopher who mocked at human folly and boasting.

The poem latter on, prescribes a series of futile desires. At first he focuses his philosophical thoughts on the vanity and hollowness of political power. According to Johnson unnumbered people prefer to be great with wealth and fortune in political field. The poet ridicules at the tendency of people and their vain efforts to prove political power. The allusion ‘Morning worshipper’ typically signifies the pomp or showiness of political power. Nor the poet praise the heroic deeds worth as divinely. Many people seek supreme political power but it is short lived. To prove this Johnson attacks on the parliamentary corruption using the phrases like ‘Price of votes’, ‘with weekly Libels’, ‘Septennial Ale’ etc. To show hollowness of political power he gives example from history by referring to well-known political personalities like Thomas Wolsey, Robert Harley. Thomas Wentworth and Edward Hyde, Thomas Wolsey, an English Statesman, churchman was favourite of Henry VIII who suffered from misery at the end. He was extremely powerful in church and attained highest political position. Johnson describes his power as Law in his voice and fortune in his hand. But soon he had been abandoned from power and died lonely in a monastery. The poet also gives example of other political persons like

Robert Harley, Thomas Wentworth and Edward Hyde who despite political power suffered from misery at the end.

According to Dr. Johnson wisdom, though one of the greatest virtues in the world, also does not provide permanent joy. Their hard work for knowledge is described in the words like 'Bodley's Dome', 'Bacon's Mansion' in the poem. They had to face many obstacles like doubts, melancholy etc. However, the wisdom does not give guarantee of success but it presents 'toil, envy, want the garret or patron and the jail'. To prove his thought he cites the example of the life of Thomas Lydiat and the end of Galileo.

Next, the poet concentrates on the emptiness of the military glory and vigour. He begins with the glory in war which is found in Greek, Asia as well as with Romans and Britons. The military glory supplies the universal charm. But the poet reasonably expresses its grave side. The glory is short lived which is suggested by the line – 'to rust on Medals or on stones decay'. The poet illustrates it by referring to the life of great warriors like Alexander, Marlborough, Charles II of Sweden, Xerxes and the Emperor Charles VII.

After these references Dr. Johnson describes that everyone prays for long life. However, old age is wretched due to sickness. The poet says that life protracted is protracted woe and the life shuts up the passages of joy. It is very sad thing to see the death of loved ones in the old age. The poet states – 'Decay pursues Decay'. He also speaks of the misfortunes of Anne Vane and Catherine Sedley, mistresses of royal families. The poet describes their misfortunes due to beauty. The poet further describes that if virtue neglected the qualities like pride, prudence, beauty prove in vain.

At the end Dr. Johnson takes freedom from Juvenal's imitation and comments on Christian values. The poet asks to seek peace of mind in religious truth. He also trusts God. That is why he says 'Secure whatever he gives, he gives the best'. He concludes with the thought that this celestial wisdom makes the mind calm and happy.

The poem gives new dimensions to the moral poetry of the eighteenth century. It centers round the man. In the beginning the poet describes greedy nature of human beings who always want more and more, which keeps them far from happiness. The poet describes the vanity of various qualities like political power, wisdom, and

military glory. At the end the poet presents necessity of belief on God and his power. Though the poet freely imitates Juvenal, the present verse has its own innovation. The reference to various personalities and their heroic nature, miserable life and the end awakens sympathy. The satiric vein in the verse runs through the beginning. But the poet is not ironical at particular personality or period. Dr. Johnson goes on to establish its historical inclusiveness by taking examples of vanity of human wishes from different periods.

The poem is also notable for its structure and the use of poetic devices. The poem is kind of series of verse paragraph where each part coherently builds up complete picture and all the series are linked together in a common theme which title itself suggests is the vanity of human wishes. Again the poem is notable for its skillful use of various poetic devices like personification, where the virtues like wisdom hope and follies like prudence, hate, desire are personified. The device personification is used with skill, tact and with the suggestion of vivid image. The parody is presented through the use of antithesis. Besides, there is remarkable use of abstract nouns.

#### **4.3.2 Check Your Progress:**

**I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:**

- 1) What is the subtitle of the poem “The Vanity of Human Wishes”?
- 2) When did the poem “The Vanity of Human Wishes” publish?
- 3) Who is the writer of *Life of Samuel Johnson*?
- 4) What example of the life of Thomas Wolsey is associated with?
- 5) What difficulties the learned people have to face?
- 6) What does the line ‘To rust on medals or on stones decay’ suggest?

#### **4.3.3 Key terms:**

**Morning worshipper-** reception of visitor after rising from bed.

**Thomas Lydiat-** a great English scholar during the civil war who died in severe poverty.

**Galileo-** The astronomer who suffered from ill health.

**The rapid Greek –** Alexander the Great.



#### **4.3.4 Key to check your progress:**

- 1) The Tenth Satire of Juvenal, imitated
- 2) 1749
- 3) James Boswell
- 4) Emptiness of political power
- 5) Doubts, melancholy, toils, envy, garret, patron.
- 6) The military glory is short lived.

#### **4.3.5 Exercises:**

1. Describe in detail the theme of the poem “The Vanity of Human Wishes”.
2. Comment on the philosophical thoughts in the poem “The Vanity of Human Wishes”.
3. Write a note on the use of poetic devices in the poem “The Vanity of Human Wishes”.

### **SECTION III:**

#### **4.4 Thomas Gray: Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard**

##### **4.4.0 Introduction to Thomas Gray:**

Thomas Gray (1716 - 1771) is one the well-known British poets who occupies a distinctive place among the transitional poets in England between the Neoclassical and Romantic era during the eighteenth century. He was born on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1716 in London and educated in Eton and Cambridge. In the year 1739, Gray set on a continental tour visiting France, Italy and Switzerland with his friend Horace Walpole. After his arrival in England he found his father seriously ill who died in 1741. He came to live in a small village Stoke Poges. He spent some period there and then shifted to Cambridge. He was a scholar and studied various subjects like architecture, botany, music, etc. Apart from that painting, zoology, history and heraldry gripped his attention. In 1768, he was appointed as Professor of History at Cambridge. Before that in 1757 he refused the offer of laureateship. He died in 1771

after a short illness and was buried at Stoke Poges in Bucks, the place which inspired him to write his famous poem “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”.

Though Gray was a man of poor physique, he proved to be a great scholar and loved to be reclusive, sincere person. In fact Gray published few poems in his lifetime but what he wrote is not only exquisite in quality and finish but also curiously interesting in the period of transition. Gray experimented with a number of different kinds of poetry. His earlier poems include “Ode on a Spring”, “The Alliance of Education and Government”, “Hymn to Adversity”, “On the Death of a Favourite Cat” etc. His early poetical works was written in conventional style. At the same time, one can find a melancholy tone and human nature. “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” published in 1751 marks a stage in the evolution of Gray’s genius. The two odes “The Progress of Poesy” and “The Bard” have been written in different tradition and proclaim the beginning of new era of independence.

Thomas Gray remains an important poet in the second half of the eighteenth century between Alexander Pope and William Wordsworth. Though his total poetic output is small, he ranks high as a poet. We can see the glimpses of human emotions cultivated with great care and artistic style. Gray was interested in presenting the sights and scenes of nature. His poetry reveals his love for rustic, simple people. There is a note of melancholy and gloominess in his poems. He was the most cultivated and refined man of his period. To conclude, Gray’s poetry is a kind connection between the classical period of Alexander Pope as well as a precursor of Romantic revival.

#### **4.4.1 Summary and critical analysis:**

Elegy is one of the popular lyrical types which originated in Greek. In a broad sense an elegy is a poem or a song of lament and praise for the dead in a highly serious tone. It mourns on the death of an individual personality. It is a direct expression of personal sorrow. In short, elegy is a poetic form which contains mournful sentiment. It is a poem of lament which commemorates the death of someone. Generally elegies have been written in a highly serious, mournful and sad tone. Though the lament on the death of a particular person is the main theme, it also deals with dark and grave themes like fall, unsuccessful love, personal loss etc. It has some specific characteristics like seriousness of tone, dejected mood, melancholy, philosophical thoughts, digression from the main theme etc. Though the themes

regarding death and mourning are at the core of this type of poetry, after its initial description, the poet can invent different themes like life after death, political and social views etc.. Besides, while writing elegies the poet can take some liberty by including some discursive reflections. The poet presents his philosophical views in elegy. Such type of digressions is considered as an integral part of elegy. Pastoral elegy is another type of elegy where the poet speaks as a shepherd lamenting for other fellow shepherds. The most famous English elegies include Milton's "Lycidas", Shelley's "Adonais", Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" and Tennyson's "In Memoriam" etc.

"Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" written by Thomas Gray is one of the most famous elegies in English literature. Gray started writing this elegy in 1742 at Stoke Poges and completed in 1750. It was published by Dodsley in 1751. Here the speaker mourns the death of all men particularly the poor, humble rustic, simple villagers who remained his forefathers. It also deals with poet's reflections on the lives of the humble poor forefathers. The time is the dusk and the poet sitting in a village churchyard observes the graves of the people buried there and meditates on their lives. The poet describes the surroundings with vivid details and emphasizes both aural and visual sensations.

The poem begins with the sound of church bell as it announces the approach of night. The poem begins with the line "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day". The cattle and the tired ploughmen return homeward. Darkness engulfs the landscape and the poet is left alone. The calm and quiet atmosphere is disturbed only by the humming beetles and tinkling bells tied around the neck of the cattle. The poet observes the graves of the simple, poor villagers and begins to meditate about the simple rustic life of village people lying in their narrow graves forever. The poet presents the contrast between the life before and after death. The poet thinks that these people are dead and nothing like the fragrant morning breeze, twittering of the birds, crowing of the cock can awake them from their eternal sleep. Neither their wives will care to attend them in the evening nor will their children run to welcome them. Again the poet describes their simple occupations like reaping, ploughing in their life. The poet addresses the ambitious and showy people and asks them not to mock at the simplicity of these people. The poet is not frustrated on the poor conditions of these dead villagers. Because he refers to the uselessness of worldly happiness and glory in the words "The paths of glory lead but to the graves". Here,

one may come across poet's philosophy of nihilism which focuses on the meaninglessness of life and a kind of philosophy that nothing is of permanent value.

The poet now broods over the lost opportunities of these people. According to the poet perhaps some of the buried forefathers that is the dead villagers might have distinguished themselves in various virtues if they had been given the proper opportunity. If proper opportunities would have received they might have been brave men, poets and patriots as great, bold and courageous as Hampden, poet like Milton or a great statesman like Cromwell. But poverty and lack of opportunities marred their life. They failed to develop their bright career. They might have proved great senators or rulers but poverty obstructed their development. However, Gray does not lament on their lost opportunities. According to him if fate and good fortune shut them out from the glories of greatness, they had been confined from their crimes. The poet says that poverty not only suppressed their great talent and genius but also saved them from so many possible crimes. They did not indulge in violence to capture throne nor they became cruel. They never concealed truth so they did not feel ashamed. They never indulged in false praise. They lived a sober uneventful life, "far from madding crowd's ignoble strife". They were buried in the neglected spot with frail memorials with poorly composed poetic lines and shapeless sculptures which represented their longing to be remembered even after death.

After meditating about the simple life and obscure fate of the villagers the poet shifts his attention and begins to imagine about himself. He also wishes to be remembered after death like the simple villagers. His imagination is led by fancy and the poet meditates that like him some other day some other poet may enquire about the dead poet that is Gray. Soon that poet might receive information from some old villager about his moving swiftly across a lawn, wiping off the dew drops to enjoy sunrise, his lying down beside of the river at noon or uttering his whimsical thought. The villagers will also inform about his sudden disappearance and his last journey to graveyard. At the end of the poem the poet refers to how he too leads quiet, simple unnoticed life like the simple poor dead villagers.

The epitaph given in the last three stanzas fits the simple unnoticed life of the poet himself. Gray speaks of his grave where his head is 'upon the lap of earth'. He describes himself a youth who was unknown to fortune as well as fame but learned, generous and sincere. The epitaph ends by telling the readers not to ask more about his merits and frailties but to leave him to God.

“The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” is one of the most famous elegies in English literature. It has the thematic elements of the elegiac genre as it deals with mourning and pathos. The poem has major features of traditional elegy. However, it has a marked difference also. The poem hardly follows other features of traditional elegy like innovation, mourners, shepherds etc. Nor does it mourn on the death of an individual one. In this sense the poem marks a change as it deals with other features like use of nature as a background, atmosphere of dusk which suits to the melancholy mood, the contrast between country and town life that is peasant’s simple life contrasted against ‘madding crowd’ of city, sense of human value, democratic spirit etc. Its picturesque tradition makes the poem as a coloured landscape. In short, the lament on the death of simple rustic villagers, pathos, melancholy, universality, philosophical preaching on life and death, epitaph and poet’s imagination on his own death all these features make the poem one of the greatest elegies.

Another noteworthy feature of the poem is the representation and fusion of classical and romantic qualities. The poem is transitional. It has many features of classicism like didactic tone, use of personifications, structure and style, moral tone, the elements of pathos and melancholy etc. At the same time, description of nature, countryside life, portrayal of simple, poor rustic villagers, democratic spirit, etc. anticipated romantic revival.

As it is an elegy, pathos is one of the distinctive features of the poem. There is a kind of seriousness and melancholy throughout the poem. The element of pathos deals with the simple rustic dead villagers. What is more important here is the element of pathos connected with the nature and it is applicable with all mankind. The poet mourns for the people living calm and quiet life of countryside, who could not prove their talent and greatness due to poverty and lack of opportunities.

The poem is notable in terms of form and structure. Gray had skillfully connected neoclassical form with romantic sentiment. The poem has been composed in iambic pentameter (four unstressed/stressed syllables one after another) with a rhyme scheme *abab*. There are four lined stanzas with alternate rhyme scheme. The last three stanzas are titled as ‘Epitaph’. Another noteworthy feature is the use of figurative language like personification or synecdoche.

What is more striking in the poem is the didactic or moral tone. There is morality in the poem when the poet preaches the meaninglessness of life. It is a kind

of philosophy which focuses that nothing is permanent in life and inevitability of death. The poem touches when the poet speaks about the lost opportunities of the people and how they were saved from the cruelties of life. To conclude, all these features make the poem one of the greatest elegies in English literature.

#### **4.4.2 Check Your Progress:**

**I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:**

1. Whom does the poet mourn for in the poem?
2. What does the phrase 'the drowsy tinklings lull' suggest?
3. Why could the poor dead villagers not make their virtues bright?
4. Why is the poet not frustrated at the poor conditions of the dead villagers?
5. When did the poem "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" publish?
6. With whom does the poet describe himself unknown?

#### **4.4.3 Key terms :**

**Elegy**- a poem of lament or a poetic expression of personal sorrow

**Churchyard** – an enclosed area surrounding a church especially used as graveyards.  
Here, it refers to Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire.

**Curfew**– the evening bell used to be rung at 8 o'clock each night as a warning to put out the domestic fires.

**Nihilism** – a kind of philosophy which points out meaninglessness of life

**Madding crowd** – crazy population of cities who strive for mean competition

**Epitaph**– a poem or a text inscribed on a tomb

#### **4.4.4 Key to Check Your Progress:**

1. Poor, neglected humble people of countryside lying eternally in graveyards
2. The sound of the bells around the neck of drowsy cattle.
3. Due to poverty they lost opportunities.
4. Poverty saved them from committing many possible crimes.
5. 1751.

6. with fortune and fame.

#### **4.4.5 Exercises :**

1. What is elegy? Describe the features of Gray's 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard'.
2. Write in brief the classical and romantic qualities in 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard'.
3. Describe the use of pathos and melancholy in 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard'.

### **SECTION IV**

#### **4.5 William Wordsworth : “Tintern Abbey”**

##### **4.5.0 Introduction to William Wordsworth:**

William Wordsworth (1770 - 1850), one of the major poets of Romanticism, is considered as one of the greatest lyric poets in English literature. He was born on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1770 at Cocker mouth in Cumberland and had his education at the Grammar School of Hawks head and later at St. John's College, Cambridge. He completed his graduation degree in 1791 and after a year of postgraduate work, he decided to go to France. When he left Cambridge he spent some time in France and he had deep influence over the Revolution. Afterwards he received a legacy by a friend which made him adopt literature as his profession. In 1795 Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy came to live together at Dorsetshire in Southwest England. In the same year that is 1795 Wordsworth and Coleridge met in Bristol. In 1799 Wordsworth and Dorothy moved to Grasmere, the centre of Lake District. In this village he spent nearly thirteen years. In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson and settled and lived a peaceful life at Dove Cottage at Grasmere. In 1813 he moved to Royal Mount, about miles from Grasmere and spent the last thirty seven years of his life. In 1843 he was appointed Poet Laureate of England. He died in 1850.

The poetical career of Wordsworth covers enormous period of more than sixty years. He started writing poems since his school days. When he was at the university he composed some poems like “An Evening Walk” (1793) and “Descriptive Sketches”. His glorious period started with the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798)

written in collaboration with S. T. Coleridge. Wordsworth is known for some well-known poems like “The Prelude”, “Ode on Immortality”, “To the Cuckoo”, “Lucy Gray” etc. Apart from that Wordsworth is known for his sonnets also. He continued to write up to his death left behind nearly five hundred sonnets.

William Wordsworth is rightly considered as a nature poet because of his deep love for nature and country life. He is considered as the worshipper of nature. Secondly, he is known for his humanitarian outlook and democratic liberalism. His love for simple, rustic life is one of the noteworthy features of his poetry.

#### **4.5.1 Tintern Abbey: Summary and Critical Analysis**

The poem “Tintern Abbey” which is actually titled as “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting The Banks Of The Wye During A Tour July 13, 1798” is one of the greatest poems written by Wordsworth. It is the star poem of the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* which was published in 1798. The poem was written after Wordsworth’s second visit to the place near Tintern Abbey. It was written in 1798 when Wordsworth was on a walking tour in the area of the river Wye valley along with his sister Dorothy. It is not only a landscape poem but also illustrates the influence of nature on the poet and poet’s attitude towards nature. Written in the style of monologue Tintern Abbey is a meditative verse which expresses three stages of poet’s love for nature. There are autobiographical elements in it which helps us to understand different stages of his love for nature. Poet’s attitude towards nature is expressed in the poem more clearly than any other poem.

Wordsworth twice visited the place a few miles away above Tintern Abbey. He first visited the area in 1793 in the course of his journey from Salisbury Plains to Wales. This previous visit is referred to at the beginning of the poem when the poet repeatedly uses the word ‘five’ when he refers to ‘five years have been passed’. Even after five years since his first visit, the poet did not forget the memories of the beautiful spot. The poet emphasizes it with the expression ‘once again’ which suggests his ardent will to revisit the place and poet’s feeling about the first visit. His second visit revived his memories about the beautiful landscape. He was delighted to see the natural beauties of the place once again. He describes the landscape in detail like orchard tufts, pastoral farms, houseless woods etc. This visual description is refreshing to poet’s mind.



The poet afterwards turns to meditative mood and describes the memory of the landscape and its sweet sensations which 'felt in the blood and felt along the heart'. It has affected his whole being. Wordsworth then turns to sublime, spiritual effect of nature on his mind. It gave him pleasure by relieving him of his pressures of life. Nature proved a special significance as 'tranquil restoration'. Nature had such a deep influence on the body that it turns the body 'a living soul' and the deep power of joy can be experienced.

Wordsworth now concentrates to his first visit to this place. The poet in the poem illustrates the influence of nature on the boy, growing youth and man. It gives an account of poet's attitude to nature which shifts from coarser pleasures of boyish days through adolescent passion for the wild and gloomy attitude to mature adult awareness with spiritual beauty and morality. In his boyhood the poet was moved by the external beauty in the nature. He moved from one beautiful object to another. Its colour, sound and all external objects made him happy. He bounded over the mountains by the sides of the deep river. These animal movements gave him a kind of coarser pleasure. At that time to him nature was 'all in all'. Thus, his first boyish stage to look at nature was coarser, sensual, immediate limited with physical objects only. But in his second visit his attitude was completely changed. In his second visit he looks at nature with maturity. He had become conscious of the sorrows of humanity and discovered the divine law in nature. Nature gives a kind of courage and spirit to stand with a sense of sublime pleasure. It enabled him to feel the joy of elevated thought and a sense of sublimity. This is the stage of Pantheism when he feels a sense of sublime and the working of the supreme power in the light of the setting sun, in the blue sky and in the mind of man. The poet expresses total dedication to nature when he describes nature as the anchor of his purest thoughts, the nurse, the guide, the guardian of his heart and the soul of all his moral being. Thus, nature becomes a source of inspiration for the poet. The poet discovers the universal spirit in nature.

In the last section, the poet refers to his sister Dorothy who was accompanying him on his walking tour to the place for the second time. He addresses her with the words 'My dear, dear friend', blesses and advises her about what he has learnt from nature. He says that in her voice he catches his own language of his former heart and in her wild eyes he can see his former pleasures. He tries to look at nature through her eyes and refreshes himself. He advises her to understand the benevolent side of

nature. He asserts his belief that nature is so designed as to lead man from 'joy to joy' and protects him from evil. He says that nature never betrays his heart. It feeds with lofty thoughts. At the end, the poet asks nature to bestow his sister with blessings.

Thematically the poem is divided into five sections. The first section forms a background with the reference to poet's first visit and the physical beauty of the landscape; the second one is a kind of poet's meditation over nature; the third section deals with the three stages of nature; fourth one traces poet's pantheistic view towards nature and the last one addresses to his sister Dorothy in whose coarse pleasure that is her attitude at nature he sees his own image.

The poem is written in blank verse. Its style is natural, simple, low toned and familiar. The poem is written as a kind of monologue. It is imaginatively spoken by a single speaker to himself. The poet refers to the specific objects, imaginary, scenes and occasionally addresses to the spirit of nature as well as his sister Dorothy. The poem is also noteworthy for the use of poetic devices like metaphor, alliteration etc. The metaphors like the memory are 'the anchor of poet's purest thought' and the mind is a 'mansion' of memory are used aptly. The alliterations like 'sensations sweet' add a kind of melody to the poem.

The poem has some religious sentiment also. The very title "Tintern Abbey" suggests it. The mention of the abbey – the place of the holy spirit of nature – makes the poem to look with religious sentiment. The idea of supreme power the poet feels in the setting sun and in the mind of man links the ideas of the Supreme power, nature and the human mind.

To sum up, the poem is notable for poet's love for nature and the various stages of his love for nature. It deals with deep knowledge of the development and the poet's attitude to nature. In the first stage the poet found coarse pleasure in roaming. At the last stage poet's love for nature became spiritual and intellectual. In this adult stage he found a deeper spiritual meaning in the beauty of nature. At the same time, he tries to look at nature through the eyes of his sister Dorothy and wants to experience the two stages simultaneously. At the end the poet advises her to understand the benevolent side of nature. Thus, the poet describes a serene and blessed mood in the poem 'Tintern Abbey'.

### 4.5.2 Check Your Progress:

I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:

1. When did the poet visit the place near the river Wye for the second time?
2. What does the line 'Five years have passed' refer to?
3. How many stages of Wordsworth's love for nature are described in the poem?
4. How does the poet describe the influence of nature in the first stage?
5. What do we find in Wordsworth's third stage?

II) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. The poem "Tintern Abbey" has been written in ----- mood.  
a) meditative    b) elegiac    c) gloomy    d) satirical
2. The line 'thou my dearest friend' refers to Wordsworth's -----.  
a) friend    b) sister    c) beloved    d) mother
3. The memories of the nature had such a deep influence on the poet's mind that the body turns as a ----- .  
a) sky    b) ocean    c) living soul    d) gloomy soul
4. The metaphor 'mansion' in the lines  
'When thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms' stands for ----- .  
a) Lucy Gray    b) Dorothy  
c) People    d) memories of the beautiful scene of the place

### 4.5.3 Key terms :

**Tintern Abbey** – a monastery in Gloucestershire, Monmouth shire, near the river Wye

**Orchard** – tufts—rows of fruit trees

**Vagrant dwellers**—wandering people whose residence is not fixed

**Pantheism** – saying that God and the creation are one

#### **4.5.4 Key to Check Your Progress:**

- I) 1. 1798.  
2. Poet's previous visit and the gap between the first and second visit.  
3. Three.  
4. Coarse pleasure.  
5. The feeling of Pantheism.
- II) 1. a) meditative.  
2. b) sister.  
3. c) living soul.  
4. d) memories of the beautiful scene of the place.

#### **4.5.5 Exercises :**

1. Write a critical appreciation of the poem "Tintern Abbey".
2. Describe the three stages of Wordsworth's love for nature in the poem "Tintern Abbey".
3. Write a note on the meditative mood of the poet in 'Tintern Abbey'.

### **SECTION V**

#### **4.6 S. T. Coleridge: "Kubla Khan"**

##### **4.6.0 Introduction to S. T. Coleridge:**

It is observed that every poet has specific motifs and these motifs seem to reflect in their poetical works. Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) was a great Romantic poet. He had versatile personality as a poet, critic, psychologist, philosopher, theologian, lecturer, journalist etc. He was born in 1772 in the town of Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, England. Since his childhood he used to read incessantly. He was educated at Christ's Hospital and Cambridge University. He was interested in reading romances and fairy tales. At Christ's Hospital, he was acquainted with exalted idea of poetry. In 1791, he joined Jesus College, Cambridge. Though he studied there passionately in the beginning caused dejection leading to indolence. He

left Cambridge in 1794 without taking a degree. Meanwhile he met Southey and both developed a good friendship. Coleridge married the sister in law of Southey but the marriage was short-lived due to marital discord. He eventually separated from her. In 1795, Coleridge met the poet William Wordsworth. The two developed a close friendship. In 1798 they published in collaboration *Lyrical Ballads*, a volume of poetry. Later on he settled in London and gave lectures on English poets. Apart from poetry he proved himself as one of the finest critics. However, though one of the gifted and talented man of literature, he could not produce ample work due to his excessive indulgence to addiction. His addiction to opium clouded his intellect and literary talent and made him incapable of sustained work. He died in London in 1834.

In spite of little poetical career Coleridge's place in the history of English literature is indisputable. He published three volumes of verse. However his fame rests on his most celebrated poems like "Rime of Ancient Mariner", "Kubla Khan", "Christabel", "Dejection – An Ode" etc.. Coleridge possessed such a creative talent to handle supernatural things in a realistic style so as to look it natural. The supreme quality of his verse is its marvelous, creative dream quality. He possessed an unusual gift of evoking mystery skillfully. His poetry is also known for vigorous imagination, interest in medieval ages, minute observation of nature, meditative note, humanitarian outlook, musicality, skill in narration, etc. In short, the poetry of S.T. Coleridge can be considered as an important treasure of English literature.

#### **4.6.1 KublaKhan :Summary and critical analysis :**

"Kubla Khan" is one of the excellent poems written by S.T. Coleridge. It was written in 1797 but published in 1816 by Coleridge. In a brief preface to the poem Coleridge described the poem as 'A Vision in a Dream, a Fragment'. Also he refers to the incident when he wrote the poem. He had retired to a small farm-house in the summer in 1797. Under the influence of an anodyne prescribed for his illness he fell asleep in his chair while he was reading the following sentence from a book *Purchas's Pilgrimage*: "Here the Kubla Khan commanded a palace to be built and a stately garden there unto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed with a wall."

The poem itself is fragmentary. It presents two pictures. In the first part or picture the poet describes Kubla Khan's palace, the sacred river Alph, the chasm,

hills and sweet smelling trees while in the second part the poet refers to the music of the Abyssinian maid and the poetic inspiration.

The poem begins with the description that in Xanadu, Kubla Khan the great oriental king once ordered to build a magnificent palace where sacred river Alph flows through immeasurably deep caves which ultimately sank into a dark, subterranean sea. Ten miles of fertile land was enclosed with walls and towers. There were bright gardens with winding streams and sweet smelling trees. There were forests also as old as the hills. But what is more remarkable is the deep romantic chasm that slanted down a green hill across a screen made by cedar trees. The poet describes this place as 'savage place' which is as holy and enchanted as a place visited by a woman wailing for her demon lover. Thus, it is a kind of place which is frequently visited by a love stricken woman desperately wandering in the light of waning moon and searches for her demon lover who after making love deserted her. A powerful fountain was gushing out from this chasm. It makes continuous noise as the powerful outburst of water threw up huge fragments of rocks that fell on the ground. Out of this fountain began the sacred river Alph which flows in a zigzag manner for five miles through woods and valleys. It enters the deep caves and finally sinks into the sunless sea with a loud, tumultuous noise. Amidst this noise Kubla Khan heard the voices of his ancestors prophesying future war. This palace of pleasure was built somewhere at the midway between the powerful fountain and the icy caves. The pleasure dome was a miracle as it had 'a sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice'.

In the concluding part or picture of the poem the poet refers to an Abyssinian maid playing on her dulcimer singing a sweet song of Mount Abora. The poet further describes the spell of that maid's song which inspired his poetic talent. The poet one day saw the maid in dream and had been under the deep influence of her sweet song of Mount Abora. The poet says that if he could reproduce the sweet song of the Abyssinian maid he would become a great poet in the world and he would build Kubla Khan's pleasure dome in the air. In other words he focuses reader's attention to the powerful and skillful poetic talent. He meant that he would describe Kubla Khan's pleasure dome with such a vivid description that the listeners would perfectly begin to see in their imagination. The poet would be then divinely inspired. So people would consider him as a powerful magician with floating hair and flashing eyes. They would weave three circles around him to protect themselves. People

would say that he is a true inspired poet who fed on honey-dew and drink the milk of paradise. Thus the idea of poetic inspiration transfers the poet as a superhuman being.

The poem is fragmentary as it joins two separate parts. There are mixed critical responses about its fragmentary nature. Critics like Hazlitt describe it a poem with fragmentary nature which comes to no conclusion. While other critics like Leigh Hunt recommends that it is not a poem but ‘a psychological curiosity’. Though the poem is fragmentary, there is a kind of emotional and psychological coherence between the two parts. The pleasure dome is a kind of dominant link between the two pictures.

Many critics believe that it is typical Coleridgean poem. It has all the qualities like blending of natural and supernatural, vision, fancy, interest in medieval period, mystery, poetic style etc. we come across in the poetry of Coleridge.

S.T. Coleridge is different from other Romantic poets in his consideration of nature and depiction of supernatural elements in his poetry. Unlike Gothic romances his concept of supernaturalism does not deal with horror or violence. He excelled in linking nature with supernatural. That is why there is a kind of sense of probability and realism we come across in the description of pleasure dome, the haunted place, ancestor’s prophecy etc. Again the scene takes place at Xanadu which is remote unfamiliar place. Coleridge never describes supernatural directly but refers to it suggestively and leaves it on the readers’ imagination. For example the woman wailing for her demon lover. Here we also come across a kind of mystery.

The poem is notable for its Romantic elements. Apart from supernaturalism the poet presents nature with accurate details like the flowing of river Alph, hills and forests, powerful fountain etc. There is a sense of mystery about the place Xanadu, ancestor’s warning about future war, demon lover etc. Sensuous phrases and pictures like measureless caves, garden bright with sinuous rills, incense bearing trees, forests as ancient as the hills etc. are used in the poem so skillfully that it appears typical Romantic poem.

#### **4.6.2 Check Your Progress:**

##### **I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:**

1. Where did Kubla Khan order to build a pleasure dome?

2. What did Kubla Khan order?
3. Whom does the woman wail for?
4. What did Kubla Khan hear amidst the noise of gushing water of the fountain?
5. Who is playing on the dulcimer ?

**II) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:**

1. Kubla Khan is described as a ---- by the poet.  
 a) Great oriental king                      b) duke  
 c) writer    d) soldier
2. To build the palace, ----- miles of fertile land was enclosed with walls and towers.  
 a) two                      b) ten                      c) twenty                      d) five
3. The sacred river ----- flows through woods and valleys in a zigzag manner.  
 a) Thames                      b) Nile                      c) Ganga                      d) Alph
4. ----- was playing on the dulcimer.  
 a) Venetian girl                      b) an old woman  
 c) an Abyssinian maid                      d) Kubla khan

**4.6.3 Key terms :**

**Kubla Khan-** The grandson of Chengiz Khan, the Mongol ruler.

**Pleasure dome-** palace of pleasure

**Chasm-** deep cleft in the earth, valley

**Dulcimer-** a kind of stringed musical instrument

**4.6.4 Key to Check Your Progress:**

- I)**
1. In Xanadu.
  2. To build a pleasure dome.
  3. For her demon lover.



4. The voices of his ancestors prophesying future war.
5. An Abyssinian maid.

- II)**
1. a) Great oriental king.
  2. b) ten.
  3. d) Alph.
  4. c) an Abyssinian maid.

#### **4.6.5 Exercises :**

1. Write a critical appreciation of the poem “Kubla Khan”.
2. Bring out the Romantic elements in the poem “Kubla Khan”.
3. Write a brief note on the blending of nature with supernatural in the poem “Kubla Khan”.

## **SECTION VI**

### **4.7 P.B Shelley : “Ode to the West Wind”**

#### **4.7.0 Introduction to P.B. Shelley:**

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was one of the major poets of the second generation of Romantic poetry. He did not live to be old and respectable as he received very short life. He was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1792 in Sussex, England in a very rich family. He was educated at Eton College and University College, Oxford. At Eton he developed keen interest in science, philosophy and literature. He began writing poems while at Eton. He also published his first novel *Zastrozzi* (1810) which was a Gothic novel. When he was at Oxford he wrote a prose pamphlet. “The necessity of Atheism” (1811) for which he was expelled from Oxford. He married Harriet Westbrook in 1811 but left her within four years. He came in contact with the philosopher Godwin eloped with Mary Godwin, later married with her and resided in Italy. On July 8, 1822, Shelley died by drowning in sudden storm on the Gulf of Spezia while returning from Leghorn when he was in his sailing boat.

Shelley’s poetical work includes *Alastor* (1815), *Revolt of Islam* (1818) *Masque of Anarchy*, *Prometheus unbound* (1820), *Adonais* (1821) and *Hellas* (1822). But

he is well known for his classic poems like “Ozymandias”, “Ode to the West Wind”, “To a Skylark”.

Shelley is regarded as one of the finest lyric poets in English. There is a kind of musicality and sweetness in his verse. His poetry is less didactic as it deals with his favourite attitudes of mind, explored moods of mystery and ecstasy. One can see the mixture of abstraction and passion, moralizing and emotional self-indulgence in his poetry.

The word ‘ode’ in English has been derived from the Greek word which means to sing. In a broad way the lyrical form ‘Ode’ was a poem written to be sung. It is a lyric poem usually of some length. Gradually it developed with its new features. Ode is considered as a lyric poem, rhymed or unrhymed typically addressed to some person or thing and usually characterized by lofty feeling, elaborate form and dignified style. M.H. Abrams defines the form ode as , “ In its traditional application “Ode” denotes a long lyric poem that is serious in subject and treatment, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure.” (*A Glossary of Literary Terms* (P.262). *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* defines Ode as, “a lyric poem usually of some length”. (*The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p 488). The form was established by the Greek poet Pindar who lived in the fifth century B.C. His odes were modeled on the songs by the choirs in Greek drama and the movements of the chorus in Greek drama. The movements of chorus were reflected in the structure of the ode. The stanzas are patterned in three sets-strophe, antistrophe and epode. The strophe includes the movement of chorus turning from the right to the left. Antistrophe includes the dance rhythm from the left to the right while epode consists standing still position.

The English Ode has following types:

### **1] The Regular or Pindaric Ode:**

This type of ode is a close imitation of Pindar’s form which includes strophe, antistrophe and epode. The strophe and antistrophe are written in one stanza pattern while epodes in another. This type of ode was introduced in English by Ben Jonson. e.g. Thomas Gray’s “The progress of poesy”.

## **2] The Irregular Ode :**

It is also called as Cowleyan ode as it was introduced by Abraham Cowley in 1656. Actually this type of ode is also an imitation of Pindaric style and matter but dispensing with strophic arrangement. The stanzas were free and varied which allowed each stanza to establish its own pattern, number of lines and rhyme scheme. Thus, there is kind of flexibility. e.g Wordsworth's ode : "Intimations of Immortality" (1807).

## **3] The Horatian Ode :**

This type of ode was originally modeled on the matter, tone and form of the odes of the Roman Horace. It is calm, meditative and colloquial with self-discipline, a cultured tone and restrained emotion. It is homostrophic that is written in a single repeated stanza form. It is shorter than the Pindaric ode. e.g Keats' ode "To Autumn" (1820).

The form ode has some specific characteristics. The subject matter of the ode is elevated in tone and style with a kind of seriousness. The form ode is longer than lyric poetry. It is because there should be gradual development in the expression of emotion. Next, the ode is a kind of an address to the person or being or object it treats. The opening lines often contain an appeal. e.g Shelley begins his "Ode to the West Wind" with the line. "O Wild West Wind ! Thou breath of Autumns' being". Sometimes odes are written for some special occasions.

### **4.7.1 Summary and Critical Analysis of "Ode to the West Wind":**

"Ode to the West Wind" written by P.B. Shelley has been considered as one of the finest odes in English literature. Shelley refers to the origin of the poem as it was written in the wood that skirts the Arno near Florence. It was originally published in 1820 in the volume of *Prometheus Unbound*. The poem written in five cantos describes the effect of west wind on the earth, in the air and on and under the sea. At the same time, it has self-pitying and the apocalyptic note with an exultation at the end.

The poem begins with an address to the west wind "O Wild West Wind! thou breath of Autumn's being." The use of alliteration in 'O wild west wind' and personification of west wind make the poem more effective. The poet describes the action of west wind on the earth. With unseen presence it destroys the dead leaves of

various colours like yellow, black and pale like a ghost. The west wind scatters seeds which are to germinate in spring after remaining inactive in winter. Thus, at once the west wind is destroyer (destroys dead leaves) as well as preserver (scatters seeds). The second stanza describes the effect of west wind on the sky. The loose clouds are driven by west wind like decaying leaves. The poet addresses west wind as 'Angels of rain and lighting' and which causes storm also. The whistling sound of the wind appears to be the sad song of the dying year. In the third stanza the poet presents the effect of the west wind on and under the water. It wakes up the blue Mediterranean from its summer dreams. The wind also has the power to disturb the Atlantic in which the vegetation change colour and grow gray out of fear. Thus, the wind had its effects on the earth (destroyer of dead leaves) and preserver (scattering of seeds); in the air or sky as an angel of rain and lighting and on and under the water as it wakes up the blue Mediterranean and vegetation growing gray out of fear. Thus, the wind changes and acts both horizontally and vertically within each element. In the fourth stanza the focus is not on the west wind but at the poet himself. The poet expresses his will of being one of the elements of the nature like dead leaf, swift cloud or a wave. He wanted to enter in his beyond in the world of innocence and be the comrade of wandering wind over heaven. He prays the west wind to lift him like a wave, a leaf or a cloud because the poet is injured due to the thorns of life. There is autobiographical reference when the poet expresses his painful life burned with miserable conditions in life. He wants a healing power for which he selects the west wind. In the last fifth stanza the poet achieves the peace of mind and triumphantly accepts his mature humanity. He prays for the total possession by the wind and asks him to be his spirit to drive dead thoughts like dried leaves to quicken a new birth. He longs to be west wind's lyre and become one with the forest. He aspires for integration with the west wind. He sought a kind of unification with the wind to be inserted in his soul - "Be thou me." Here, one can see Shelley's hypnotic power. There is magnificent optimism at the end. 'If winter comes can spring be far behind?'. This shift from winter to spring is harmonious climax and a triumph of mind. Finally the poem ends with a splendid hope and aspiration for spring,—the season of fertility and love. He paves the way for revolution and sparks the minds to change miserable reality.

It is an outstanding poem by Shelley. Thematically also there is kind of force which runs from beginning upto the end. This may be the reason that most of the

stanzas are without full-stop. This kind of energy is one of the features of Shelley's poetry. The poem also focuses on Shelley's attitude towards nature. He looks at nature as a life force.

"Ode to the West Wind" is a typical example of regular ode. It is a long lyric poem serious in subject and treatment. There are five sections written in terza rima. Each section has 14 lines which consists four tercets with an ending couplet. It opens with an address to the west wind. The first three sections describe effect of the west wind on land, sky and water while the last two sections deal with an invocation and the relation between the west wind and the poet. Thus, the ode is characterized by a cultured tone and restrained emotion. One can see a feeling of self-pitying and the apocalyptic note.

#### **4.7.2 Check Your Progress:**

##### **I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:**

- I] 1) Who is the breath of Autumn's being ?  
2) Identify the figure of speech used in the phrase 'O wild west wind'.  
3) Why is the west wind considered as preserver?  
4) Why is the west wind a trumpet of prophecy?  
5) What is meant by the phrase 'the thorns of life'?

##### **II) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:**

1. The west wind is considered as the breath of ----- .  
a) Autumn's being                      b) the earth  
c) the sun                                d) the spring's being
2. The poet wanted to be in his boyhood and be the ----- .  
a) comrade of Autumn  
b) comrade of west wind's wanderings over Heaven  
c) comrade of family                  d) comrade of sky

#### **4.7.3 Key terms:**

**Enchanter** – magician

**Chariotest**– carry

**Maenad** – female worshippers of Bacchus in Greek mythology.

**Thorns of life** – burdened with miserable condition.

#### **4.7.4 Key to Check Your Progress:**

- I]** 1) west wind.  
2) Alliteration and personification.  
3) It scatters the seeds which are to germinate in spring.  
4) It brings the promise of spring.  
5) Burden of miserable condition.  
6) Spring.
- II]** 1) a) Autumn's being.  
2) b) comrade of west wind's wanderings over Heaven.

#### **4.7.5 Exercises :**

- 1) Describe the features of ode with the help of P. B. Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind".
- 2) Discuss Shelley's views on nature reflected in "Ode to the West Wind".
- 3) Bring out the theme of the poem "Ode to the West Wind".

### **SECTION VII:**

## **4.8 John Keats : "Ode on a Grecian Urn"**

### **4.8.0 Introduction:**

John Keats (1795-1821) is one of the greatest and the most influential poets of the second generation of Romantic poets. He is a poet who blossomed early and died young. He was born in 1795 in London. He attended the school of Rev. John Clare at Enfield where he received sound base of his general education. After the death of his parents John Keats at the age of fifteen was apprenticed to a surgeon. While studying medicines he continued his education which helped to develop his interest in

literature. His deep passion for poetry enabled him to give up a surgery. Though opposed by family he decided to do his career with poetry. His friends like Leigh Hunt, Charles Cowden Clarke helped him to establish his contact with literary circle . Keats published his first long poem “Endymion” in 1818. Before that his first volume of poetry *Poems by John Keats* was published in 1817. “The Eve of St. Agnes” was written in 1819. After publishing “Endymion” he came across a kind of rapidity in his writing. Perhaps he sensed the uncertainty of his life even before the first coughing up of blood in 1820. He wrote his famous short Lyric “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” in 1819. During the same time he engaged himself in composing odes. Out of six odes, five except to “To Autumn” were written in 1819. It includes odes like “On a Grecian Urn”, “To a Nightingale”, “On Melancholy”, “On Indolence” and “To Psyche”. His health already delicate was broken by his unsuccessful love with Fanny Browne. In 1820 he left for Rome and died on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1821. Keats’s reputation as a poet stands higher due to his notions of poetry. His disciplined sensuality in imagery is excellent. Some of the poems like “Ode to a Nightingale” focus on his self-indulged melancholy. Keats had a passionate love for beauty. He was interested in Greek myth and medieval romance.

#### **4.8.1: Ode on a Grecian Urn: Summary and critical analysis :**

“Ode on a Grecian Urn” is one of the finest odes that John Keats wrote. Urn means vase which was used in ancient Greece to keep the ashes of the dead. However, Keats does not describe any specific urn used for specific purpose in this poem. Perhaps, a marble urn belonging to Lord Holland which still preserved in the garden at Holland House, Kensington proved inspiring for the poet. Keats published the poem in 1820 anonymously. The poem captures poet’s meditation to the pictures carved on the urn. The poet also focuses on the glorification of art, ideal nature of art and fleeting nature of life. The poem is well structured within five stanzas.

In the very first stanza the poet addresses the urn as “still unravished bride of quietness”, “foster child of silence” and “sylvan historian.” The first two metaphors involve the idea of quietness. It may be because of its secret while the third deals with the scenes depicted on the urn. The word ‘still’ suggests unmoving position of the urn. The poet raises various questions which flash upon answers at the same time. The poet asks questions like ‘What men or gods are these?’, ‘What maidens loth?’ or ‘What mad pursuit’ refer to the pictures carved on the urn. The questions which are pictures itself suggest both eternal and mortal things. Then the poet passes to the

direct consideration of the person in the sculptured legend. These are the flute player, bold lover etc. He also depicts their activities full of motion and sound. There is paradox when the urn possesses dual nature that is a static quality of art and the dynamic process of life. It presents the contrast between the permanence of the scenes in the pictures and transitory period of human joys. For instance, the lover painted in the picture can never suffer from setback, nor the trees will shade leaves. According to the poet the life of the persons carved on the urn such as, bold lover will never succeed in his goal to kiss his beloved etc. After all this life of imagery is more happier than the real life. That is why the poet says that heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are sweeter. The boughs, the spring season, the music of the pipe, happy love are eternal and it is contrasted with the mortality of life. In the fourth stanza the scene on the urn changes and poet describes other pictures. The urn possesses variety of artifacts. The poet describes the new scene where the priest leads a heifer to sacrifice and the people moving to the scene of sacrifice. This scene of silence is different from the earlier one which referred to the ecstasy of joy. At the end the urn, the scenes, pictures and personalities carved on it transcend into artistic renderings. The poet focuses on the superiority of art. The poet addresses the urn and says that generations of human beings will come and go due to old age but you (urn) will live as a friend to men amidst all sorrows. Urn transcends time and goes beyond the time. The urn had a message that beauty and truth are inseparable. The ode presents the theme of the relation between art, death and life. It represents an escape from change and decay into immortality.

The poem has some features of the form ode. In the beginning the poem is addressed to the Grecian urn. Next the thought is presented in the theme with higher seriousness. Its style is elevated with elaborate structures of stanzas. The pictorial quality and use of phrases are amazing.

Structurally also the poem has been composed neatly. The poem is divided into five stanzas. Thematically these five stanzas can be divided into three parts. The first stanza introduced the subject matter. Second, third and fourth elaborate the main theme while the last fifth one is a conclusion. The poem is notable for its rich imagery and apt phrases like ‘unravished bride of quietness’, ‘truth beauty’, ‘cold pastoral’ etc..



#### 4.8.2 Check Your Progress:

**I) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:**

- 1) Who is considered as 'the unravished bride of quietness'?
- 2) Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard are ----- .
- 3) Why did the poet address urn as 'Sylvan historian'?
- 4) Who wrote the poem "Ode on a Grecian Urn"?

**II) Say whether the following sentences are true or false:**

1. The Grecian urn is compared as unravished bride of quietness.
2. The pictures carved on the urn suggest permanence of art.
3. According to the poet beauty is truth and truth beauty.
4. The poem does not present the transitory life of human joys.

#### 4.8.3 Key terms :

**Urn-** A vessel or vase often with a cover used for various purposes.

**Sylvan historian-** recorder of woodland history, the urn depicts the forest scene.

**Unravished bride of quietness-** The secrets of the urn are new and unknown and not yet has been given up.

#### 4.8.4 Key to Check Your Progress:

- I.
  1. The Grecian urn.
  2. Sweeter.
  3. Because the urn depicts by recording history of wood
  4. John Keats.
- II.
  1. True
  2. True
  3. True
  4. False

#### 4.8.5 Exercises:

- 1) What is the theme of the poem “Ode on a Grecian Urn”.
- 2) Compare and contrast Keats’s ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ with Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind”.

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