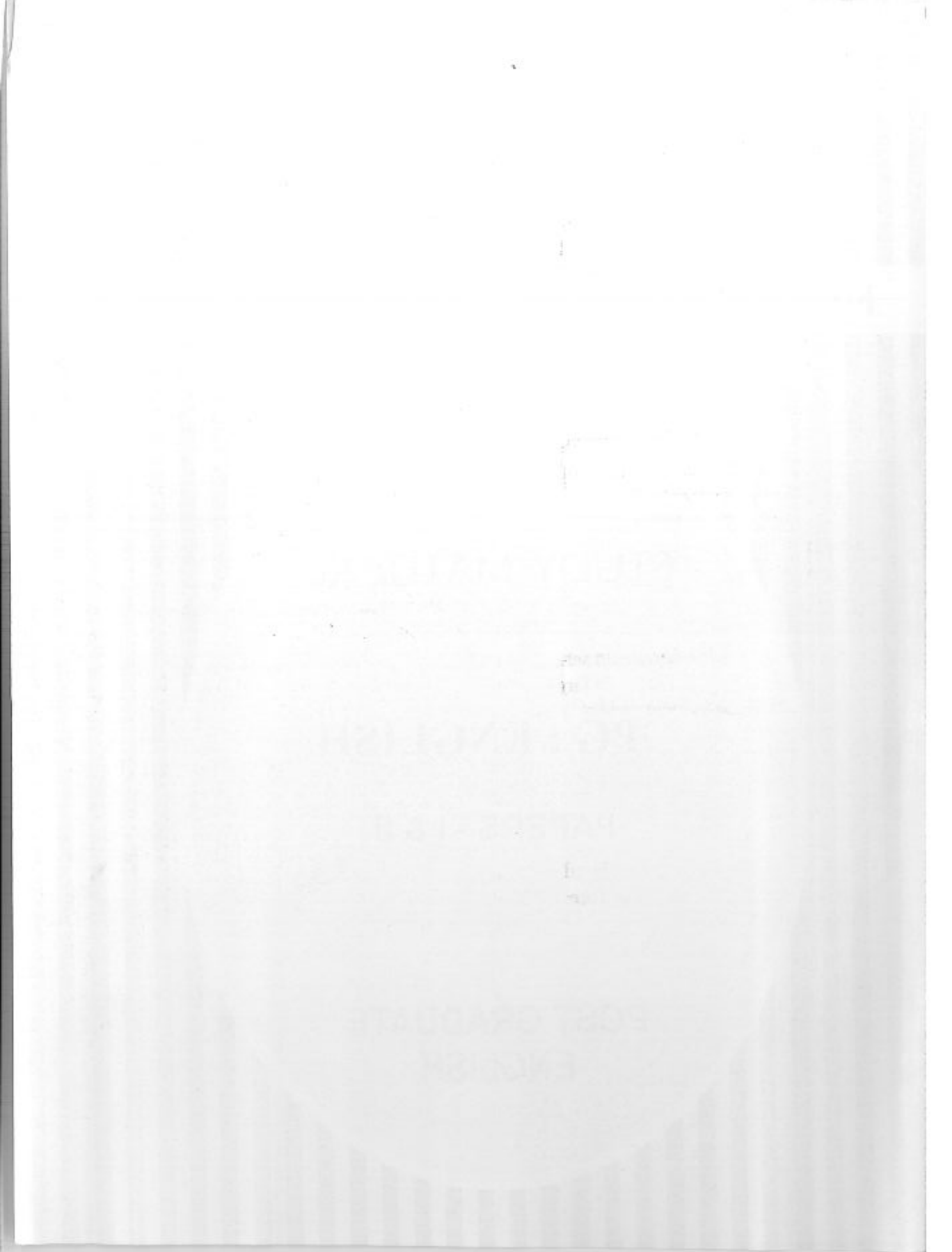# NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY

STUDY MATERIAL

PG : ENGLISH

PAPERS - I & II

POST GRADUATE ENGLISH

PREFACE

In the curricular structure introduced by this University for students of Post-Graduate Degree Programme, the opportunity to pursue Post-Graduate course in subjects introduced by this University is equally available to all learners. Instead of being guided by any presumption about ability levels, it would perhaps stand to reason if receptivity of a learner is judged in the course of the learning process. That would be entirely in keeping with the objectives of open educaiton which does not believe in artificial differentiation.

Keeping this in view, study materials of the Post-Graduate level in different subjects are being prepared on the basis of a well laid-out syllabus. The course structure combines the best elements in the approved syllabi of Central and State Universities in respective subjects. It has been so designed as to be upgradable with the addition of new information as well as results of fresh thinking and analysis.

The accepted methodology of distance education has been followed in the preparation of these study materials. Co-operation in every form of experienced scholars is indispensable for a work of this kind. We, therefore, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to everyone whose tireless efforts went into the writing, editing and devising of a proper lay-out of the materials. Practically speaking, their role amounts to an involvement in 'invisible teaching'. For, whoever makes use of these study materials would virtually derive the benefit of learning under their collective care without each being seen by the other.

The more a learner would seriously pursue these study materials, the easier it will be for him or her to reach out to larger horizons of a subject. Care has also been taken to make the language lucid and presentation attractive so that it may be rated as quality self-learning materials. If anything remains still obscure or difficult to follow, arrangements are there to come to terms with them through the counselling sessions regularly available at the network of study centres set up by the University.

Needless to add, a great part of these efforts is still experimental—in fact, pioneering in certain areas. Naturally, there is every possibility of some lapse or deficiency here and there. However, these do admit of rectification and further improvement in due course. On the whole, therefore, these study materials are expected to evoke wider appreciation the more they receive serious attention of all concerned.

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Professor (Dr.) Subha Sankar Sarkar
Vice-Chancellor

</div>

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POST-GRADUATE : ENGLISH

[PG : ENG.]

Paper – I

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Unit - 1 to 3	Prof. Akram H. Mollah	Prof. Amitava Roy
Unit - 4 & 6	Prof. Papia Mitra	Prof Sisir Kumar Das
Unit - 1,4 & 5	Prof Subir Dhar	Prof. Sankar Chatterjee
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Unit - 6 & 7	Prof. Santanu Majumdar	Prof. Pralay Deb
Unit - 8,9 & 10	Prof. Sanatan Chatterjee	Prof. Sisir Kumar Das
Unit - 2	Prof. A. S. Guha	Prof. Shanta Mahalanobish

Paper – II

Module — 5 – 8

Aspects of Language

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Module - 6	Prof. Sisir Kumar Das	Prof. Subhadra Kumar Sen
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PAPER I

Module - I

Module - II

Module - III

Module - IV

Paper – II

Unit -1 ❑ Chaucer : Prologue to Canterbury Tales

Structure

1.1 ❑ Objectives

This unit/module introduces you to Geoffrey Chaucer (c.1340—c.1400), his life and works and to his artistic masterpiece, The **Prologue** to his **Canterbury Tales**. Reading the various sections you will begin to have a detailed knowledge of various dimensions of the Prologue (eg. characterization, humour, social life in the fourteenth century). Chaucer wrote in Middle English and, as this particular mode and style of English may at first be a little unfamiliar to you the first two hundred lines of the Prologue have been appended at the end (the original Chaucerian language together with an interlinear modern English translation) so that you may become familiar and comfortable with Middle English.

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1.2 ❑ Introducing Chaucer : Life and Works

Though **The Canterbury Tales** and **Troilus and Criseyde** are the most widely known of Chaucer's poems, he also wrote four ambitious dream allegories (two of which were left unfinished), a considerable body of lyric poetry, translations of Boethius and at least a part of the **Romance of the Rose**, and a technical scientific treatise on the use of the astrolabe in astronomical observations and computations. The volume and variety of his literary production are all the more remarkable when we remember that, though his poetry won royal favour and thus aided his career as a civil servant, it was never his primary occupation. His life was crowded with public business ranging all the way from soldiering in France and carrying out diplomatic missions in Italy to serving as a member of Parliament from Kent, as Controller of Customs of the Port of London, and as Clerk of the King's Works, in charge of docks, walls, bridges, sewers, etc., on the lower Thames.

The England in which Chaucer played his many roles was in transition between the Middle Ages and the modern world. The feudal system still existed, but it was becoming increasingly easy for serfs to run away from the estates where they belonged and find employment in the cities, or, with the seller's market in labour created by the Black Death, to hire themselves out as independent agricultural laborers. The king still exerted tremendous power, but the rise of the cities and of large-scale manufacturing and trade had created a wealthy and influential middle class of merchants and artisans who governed London. The royal court however, was still a source of power and pageantry, and it continued to give an artistic and intellectual stimulus to the courtiers. Also, a number of complex causes, including the Hundred Years' War with France, were producing a national consciousness quite different from the earlier regional and personal loyalties. Englanf was becoming a nation, and her citizens were proud of her.

Chaucer's father was a member of the rising middle class, a prosperous wine merchant with modest connections at court. We know nothing of the poet's formal studies (if any), but we do know that at some time during the course of his life he acquired a good deal of knowledge of bookkeeping, civil law, philosophy, and astronomy, and learned to handle French, Italian, and Latin competently. In his teens he served as a page in the household of King Edward III's second son. Later he rose to the rank of Esquire in the royal household and received a stipend for life from the royal exchequer.

It is customary to divide Chaucer's literary production into three periods, according to the dominant influence under which he was writing : a **French period** (to 1372), an **Italian period** (1373-85), and an **English period** (1386-1400). This division is useful and essentially true if we remember that the periods are not so much successive as cumulative. **The Canterbury Tales,** for example, belongs to the English period and is dominated by

the contemporary English scene, but it still owes a great deal to both French and Italian models; and many of the Tales themselves are directly based on French and Italian sources.

Chaucer began his literary career under the influence of a medieval French literature which included satires, romances, fabliaux, and such contemporary poets as Deschamps, Machaut, and Froissart and the allegorical mode of literary expression. Under French influence he began his translation of the **Romance of the Rose,** and, more important, produced his first ambitious original poem, **The Book of the Duchess** (1369). This is an elegy on the death of Blanche, the wife of Chaucer's patron John of Gaunt, written in the form and manner of contemporary French poets, and with considerable borrowing from them. But already in this poem, as in the other dream-allegories that followed, there are distinctive marks of Chaucer's individual genius—the use of the setting to intensify the dreamlike mood of the poem, the sense of immediacy in the portrait of the bereaved knight, and the characteristic flashes of psychological insight. With remarkable originality and tact, Chaucer made himself merely a well-meaning but obtuse listener and put the praise of Blanche into the mouth of her husband.

In 1372-73 Chaucer went to Italy (probably for the first time) to arrange a commercial treaty with the Genoese. This journey, reinforced by another visit to Italy in 1378, had a tremendous effect on Chaucer. Dante, dead for half a century, was already a classic, and Petrarch and Boccaccio were nearing the end of their literary careers. Not only did Chaucer draw heavily on the works of these men for the rest of his life, but they taught him to understand the importance of narrative structure and technique, to individualize his characters and give them dramatic intensity, and to seek the rhythms and idioms of popular speech. Thus the poems of Chaucer's Italian period show progress in his mastery of rhetoric, technique, style, and meter. **The House of Fame** (c. 1377-86) and **The Legend of Good Women** (1380-86) are still dream-allegories containing many of the old familiar features of this French literary type, but Chaucer breaks with the conventional patterns with his broader range of ideas, his greater subtlety of characterization, and h'is attitude of humorous detachment. In **The House of Fame** the poet is carried by an eagle to the House of Fame, where he is to hear important tidings of love. The poem breaks off just as these tidings are about to be announced, but the ostensible purpose of the poem could hardly have been as rewarding as the comic characterization of the learned, vicacious, and somewhat pedantic eagle. **The Parliament of Fowls** tells how the birds assemble on St. Valentine's day to choose their mates, and the courtly and chivalrous eagles, platitudinous goose, common-sense duck, romantic dove, and jibing cuckoo are masterpieces of comic satire. The poem give a more comprehensive picture of society as presented through the different birds. Though still allegorical in mode, Chaucer is moving out of the limited aristocratic world of courtly love. **The Legend of Good Women** ("Legend of Cupid's Saints") has a remarkably fresh and original prologue telling how Chaucer came to write

a set of accounts of women who—whatever their other failings—were faithful in love even unto death. Chaucer left it unfinished, and it is not hard to see why. It calls for too much repetition of what is essentially the same story, and the poet admits at one point that he is becoming bored with writing about these melancholy jilted females. The great masterpiece of Chaucer's Italian period, however, is **Troilus and Criseyde,** an amazingly rich and original work inspite of the fact that it is based on a narrative poem by Boccaccio and follows the well-worn conventions of courtly love. A brief summary of the story could be given. **Troilus** and **Criseyde** comes before the **Legend of Good Women** which was written as a kind of expiation for having created the character of Criseyde who became a prototype of the faithless women.

The great work of the English period is **The Canterbury Tales,** with its realistic setting in contemporary England. Here we immediately notice a difference from the other periods : the1 English influence is not a literary one, like the French and Italian, but is simply the influence of the breadth, scope, and zest of Chaucer's own land and age. The specific literary influences are still French, Italian, and Latin, but the setting is no longer in dreamworlds or in ancient Troy : it is on the road between London and Canterbury. Into this setting Chaucer could pour the whole wealth of his reading, his knowledge, his wide experience of men, and his humorous tolerance.

Even when following earlier writers, Chaucer was always an innovator. He introduced Italian literatrue to England. He was the first to use many of the meters and stanza forms which have become standard in English poetry. He was the first English poet to deal extensively with the contemporary scene, to draw sharply individualized portraits, to analyze his characters psychologically, to impress his readers as a personality in his own right. It is a tribute to him that since his death each age has admired him, but for different reasons ranging all the way from his satire on religious corruption to his humanism and his realism. Even at his funeral he made an innovation which established a new tradition, for he was buried in what has come to be "The Poets' Corner" of Westminister Abbey.

1.3 ☐ Canterbury Tales : A Brief History

The **Canterbury Tales,** is Chaucer's most celebrated work probably designed about 1387 and extending to 17,000 lines in prose and verse of various metres (though the predominant form is the rhyming couplet). **The General Prologue** describes the meeting of 29 pilgrims in the Tabard Inn in Southwark (in fact they add up to 31; It has been suggested that the prioress's "preestes three" in line 164 may be an error since only one 'Nun's Priest' is mentioned in the body of the work). Detailed pen-pictures are given of 21 of them, vividly described but perhaps corresponding to traditional lists of the orders of society, clerical and lay (see J. Mann, Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire. 1973). The host Harry Bailley proposes that the pilgrims should shorten the teduins of the road by

telling four stories each, two on the way to Canterbury and two on the way back; he will accompany them and award a free supper on their return to the teller of the best story. The work is incomplete; only 23 pilgrims tell stories, and there are only 24 stories told altogether (Chaucer tells two). In the scheme the stories are linked by narrative exchanges between the pilgrims and by prologues and epilogues to the tales; but this aspect of the work is also very incomplete. It is uncertain even in what order the stories are meant to come; the evidence of the manuscripts and of geographical references is conflicting, as is the scholarly interpretation of that evidence. The order generally followed is that of the Ellesmere MS, followed in the best complete edition of Chaucer, F.N. Robinson's (2nd edn, 1957)

1.4 ☐ Them Narrative Framework

The narrative framework for a series of tales had a far-reaching ancestry. The medieval world knew the oriental collections of **The Thousand and One Nights** and **The Seven Sages,** and Ovid's **Metamorphoses** where the device also occurs. Chaucer and his friend, John Gower, were both experimenting in the late fourteenth century with the form which, some years before, Boccaccio had used repeatedly, in his **Filocolo, Admeto,** and **Decameron.** As in **The Canterbury Tales,** Boccaccio's excuse for the collection, the real purpose of the work, is the entertainment of a social group brought together by external circumstances; Boccaccio's tales are linked by connecting passages of narrative and conversation; all is under the direction of a presiding officer. Chaucer elsewhere drew considerable inspiration from Boccaccio, but with the narrative framework the resemblances are superficial. Boccaccio's tales are told in a garden in the **Filocolo,** in a wooded meadow in **Admeto.** In the **Decameron** some movement from place to place occurs, but there is doubt as to whether Chaucer knew the **Decameron.** Anyhow, Boccaccio's company in each work is only slightly individualized and the narrators belong all to the same social class as, in Decameron, to the attendants who accompanied the courtly travellers. There is nothing in Boccaccio's framework comparable with the vivid representation from most walks of English medieval life in the lively company of "sondry folk" who won literary immortality at the Tabard. It seems even less likely that Chaucer drew his chief inspiration from the framed tales of **Giovanni Sercambi** of Lucca. Sercambi's **Novelle,** C. 1385, based on an earlier work now lost, also described a large party of many callings and classes, journeying together, visiting shrines, and telling tales both on the road and when they stopped at an inn. Sercambi's people, however, are a characterless crew, and it was Sercambi himself who related all the stories.

It was surely the inspiration of genius when Chaucer made his framework a pilgrimage and introduced all sorts and conditions of men whom he had met and observed in his own busy life. The secular pageant from actual workaday England as well as the church figures could be plausibly assembled with such a common devotional intent.

A. series of portraits was not a novelty. **Benoit de Sainte-Maure's Roman de Troie,** one of the sources for Chaucer's own **Troilus and Criseyde,** contained an unbroken sequence of thirty heroes, but they all turned out very much alike in rank and occupation. More individualized portraits are to be found in the various series of allegorical figures after the manner of the **Roman de la Rose** or in the processions of the personified Deadly Sins; these were clearly a formative influence. Book V of **Piers Plowman** depicted the seven Deadly Sins one after the other without intervening narrative or connective, and also assigned them to different occupations and professions.

1.4.1 The Narrative Framework : Continued

In the **Canterbury Tales** narrative art is at the point of becoming drama. The poem is the culmination of Chaucer's dramatic-poetic development of English speech; and something unaccountably new in mediaeval literature. The pilgrims are first presented in the great Prologue with a vividness not attained before in English, even by Chaucer, and seldom since. Thereafter, in the comic interludes between the tales, they begin to move talk and act react. The **Wife of Bath's** preamble—which is twice, the length of her tale—is the Wife herself talking, enacting scenes and dialogues between herself and her several husbands, dramatizing her private life in front of an audience; her tale itself is an Arthurian romance. The **Pardoner's Prologue** and Tale are another character's self-dramatization **The Canterbury Tales** thus presents a company of distinct and individual people talking; the tales are a part of themselves and their talk. The interest is not simply in the tale—vivid as it nearly always is in itself—but, at the same time, in the teller, The variety of the tales reproduces and fulfils the initial human variety. Each tale and the prologue that precedes it dramatically projects a distinct person. The poem is the beginning of English dramatic and fictional literature as a whole. It is an indication of the depth and maturity of Chaucer's daringly achieved vision of human life.

The Canterbury Tales is the Human Comedy of the Middle Ages. The tone of Chaucer's company of English folk is as a whole one of jollity; and, scandalously careless in relation to eternity as several of the company appear to be, this jollity accords with the attitude of grateful acceptance of life which is the tone of the **Canterbury Tales** as a whole. The characters of the comedy are so vivid that we feel them (as Dryden did) to be our immediate contemporaries and are apt to miss the depth of difference of their background. Life in its totality—both 'good' and 'evil'—is accepted as exactly what it is observed to be.

1.5 ❑ Aspects of Chaucer's Prologue

1.5.1 Prologue : The Opening Lines

In the opening lines of the Prologue [see text of Prologue—first 200 lines with paraphrase—appended later] springtime is characterized in terms of procreation, and a pilgrimage of people to Canterbury is just one of the many manifestations of the life thereby produced. The phallicism of the opening lines presents the impregnating of a female March by a male April, and a marriage of Water and Earth. The marriage is repeated and varied immediately as a fructifying of "holt and heeth" by Zephirus, a marriage of air and earth. This mode of symbolism and these symbols as parts of a **rite of spring** have a long background of tradition. Out of this context of the quickening of the earth presented naturally and symbolically in the broadest terms, the **Prologue** comes to the pilgrimage and treats pilgrimage first as an event in the calendar of nature, one aspect of the general springtime surge of human energy and longing. There are the attendant suggestions of the renewal of human mobility after the rigor and confinement of winter, the revival of wayfaring now that the ways are open. The horizon extends to distant shrines and foreign lands, and the attraction of the strange and far-away is included before the vision narrows and focusses upon its "English specifications and the pilgrimage to the shrine at Canterbury with the vows and gratitude that send pilgrims there. One way of regarding the structure of this opening passage would emphasize the magnificent progression from the broadest inclusive generality to the firmest English specification, from the whole western tradition of the celebration of spring (including, as Cook pointed out, such a non-English or very doubtfully English detail as "the droghte of March") to a local event of English society and English Christendom, from natural forces in their most general operation to a very specific and Christian manifestation of those forces. And yet one may regard the structure in another way, too; if, in the calendar of nature, the passage moves from general to particular, does it not, in the calendar of piety, move from nature to something that includes and oversees nature? Does not the passage move from an activity naturally generated and impelled to a governed activity, from force to telos? Does not the passage move from Aphrodite and amor in their secular operation to the sacred embrace of "the hooly blisful martir" and of **amor dei?** Combination of religions and secular instincts leads on to the sustained ivory of whole poem.

The translation from nature to supernature is emphasized by the contrast between the healthful physical vigour of the opening lines and the reference to sickness that appears in line 18. On the one hand, it is physical vitality which conditions the pilgrimage; on the other hand, sickness occasions pilgrimage. It is, in fact, rather startling to come upon the word 'seeke' at the end of this opening passage, because it is like a breath of winter across the landscape of spring. "Whan that they were seeke" may, of course, refer

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literally to illnesses of the winter just past, but; in any event, illness belongs symbolically to the inclement season. There is also however, a strong parallelism between the beginning and end of this passage, a parallelism that has to do with **restorative power.** The physical vitality of the opening is presented as restorative of the dry earth; the power of the saint is present as restorative of the sick. The seasonal restoration of nature parallels spiritual kind of restoration that knows no season; the supernatural kind of restoration involves a wielding and directing of the forces of nature. The **Prologue** begins, then, by presenting a double view of the Canterbury pilgrimage; the pilgrimage is one tiny manifestation of a huge tide of life, but then, too, the tide of life ebbs and flows in response to the power which' the pilgrimage acknowledges, the power symbolized by "the hooly blisful rnartir."

After line 18 the process of particularizing is continued, moving from "that season1 just defined to a day and to a place and to a person in Southwark at the Tabard, and thence to the portraits of the pilgrims. The double view of the pilgrimage is enhanced and extended by the portrait where it appears, in one aspect, as a range of motivation. This range of motivation is from the sacred to the secular and on to the profane—'profane' in the sense of motivations actually subversive of the sacred. All the pilgrims are, in fact, granted an ostensible sacred motive; all of them #re seeking the shrine. The distances that we are made aware of are both within some of the portraits, where a gulf yawns-between ostensible and actual motivation, and between the portraits, where the motivation of the Knight and the Parson is near one end of the spectrum, and the motivation of the Summoner and the Pardoner near the other end. There is such an impure but blameless mixture as the motivation of the Prioress; there is the secular pilgrimage of the Wife of Bath, impelled so powerfully and frankly by Saint Venus rather than drawn by Saint Thomas, and goaded by a Martian desire to acquire and dominate another husband; in the case of the Prioress, an inescapable doubt as to the quality of amor hesitates between the sacred and secular, and in the case of the thoroughly secular Wife of Bath, doubt hesitates between the secular and the profane while the portrait shows the ostensible motive that belongs to all the pilgrims shaken without ever being subverted, contradicted perhaps, brazenly opposed, but still acknowledged and offered.

Notes :

1. Chaucer's English countryside and English pilgrims are inspired by the vitalising and creative forces and powers of spring - in the same way as Rabindranath found spring knocking at his door ("Aji Basanto jagrato daarey") to make his heart leap up with joy like a dancing peacock in springtime. This is an universal feeling that spring is a creative, festive time of joy when even the birds sleep with one eye open in order not to miss the sights and colours of a spring night: "And smale fowleys maken melodye/That sleepen al the nyght with open eye."

2. Another representative and great Anglo-American poet 7 centuries later opens his

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mini-epic of modern man's spiritual pilgrimage from draught to restoration with poignant nostalgia for the lost wholeness of Chaucer's world. For Eliot "April is the cruellest month/ Mixing memory and desire". Wars, catastrophes, loss of ideals and illusions, the break-up and colia'pse of cultures and civilizations, decadence and disintegration, spiritual and emotional atrophy and the Death of God have all intervened during the last 7 centuries making Eliot's world far removed from Chaucer's. For us trapped in the modern wasteland spring fails to come and revive us—we can only feel nostalgia for a lost springtime of life. (But later in the closing stages of the **Wasteland** the rain impregnates the dry, arid earth as it does in the opening lines of Chaucer's Prologue, and vitality and restoration return to the Wasteland.

This is a significant example of what postmodernists call **Intertextuality**—Eliot plays a counterpoint with Chaucer's text: a great modern poet begins his great modern poem playing upon (and drawing and deriving from) a great medieval poet's greatest medieval-modern poem (between the two Aprils is a vast gap as also a deep and resonant relationship).

1.5.2 Prologue as Protrait-Callery/Social Document/Picture of Men and Manners

A great poet like Chaucer reflects the ethos, the body of his age in his works. As Pope's poetry helps us to understand the 18th Cent.; as Tennyson and Browning's the Victorian Age: as Eliot's the 20th Cent, post-war wasteland of Europe, so too Chaucer's poetry in the Prologue and Canterbury Tales gives us a clear picture of 14th cent, men and manners. If in his Divine Comedy Dante presents the spirit of the Medieval Age, Chaucer presents us with its body.

1. Chaucer's 29 pilgrims include all the different sections of society except the highest and the lowest classes. Chaucer was unwilling to be dragged into any kind of political controversy so he left out the king & his Court (the Noblemen) and Hie serfs from his Prologue. These two sections were in bloody conflict with each other in Chaucer's time (cf. the Peasant's Revolt of the 1380s alluded to in the Nun's Priest's Tale). Also it is not probable, that the Nobles and the serfs would have accompanied the pilgrims (the Noble would have made their own V.I.P. arrangement, while the serfs being like bonded-labour did not have the freedom—economic or otherwise—to travel about and so Chaucer does not bring them into the Prologue.

2. In his Prologue Chaucer represents the three main orders of society :

(a) The Chivalric order or the Military class (represented by the Knight-Squire-Yeoman) which protected the life and property of the medieval people.

(b) The clerical, Ecclesiastical ftrder or Priestly Class (represented by 9 Church functionaries—Monk, Friar, Prioress, Parson though protected the souls of the Medieval people.

(c) The Agricultural Order or the Farming class (the Plowman) on whom depended the whole economy of the country.

3. Most of the professions of the day have their representatives among the pilgrims—the Medieval astrologer-Doctor, the lawyer, the guildsmen, the Merchant (testifying to the rise of England as a commercial and trading power cf. England being called "a nation of shop-keepers" and Shakespeare's play **Merchant of Venice**—pointing to the development of Mercantilism during the 14th to 16th cents.); the pirate-shipman (pointing to the rising sea-power of England); the scholar of Oxenford (symbolising the passion for learning that animated Europe during the late Medieval Age and the Renascence); the Millef, the Reeve et al.'

Most of Chaucer's characters are both individuals and types (i.e. representatives of the class to which they belong)—theirparticular faults and foibles and idiosyncracies are blended with their general and typical qualities. The pilgrims are not only individual and typical, they are also universal because fundamental human qualities that da riot change from age to age, are revealed their individualised pilgrims so that we can recognise ourselves in them. An exception is the Wyf of Bath - perhaps the most vital, and enjoyable character among all the pilgrims. With her unbounded zest for life (five husbands at church-door apart from other childhood sweethearts), her arrogance and dominating personality (she always led the church procession, dressed finely and colourfully, loved mixed company during pilgrimages) she is a far-cry from the subjugated women of the Middle Ages. She is not a "type" but a powerful individual character whose dynamic personality prefigures the New Women of the Renascence and Shakespeare's dominating heroines. "Gattoothed", highly-experienced in the arts of the sex war she remains the most engaging and human of all Chaucer's pilgrims.

4. Chaucer was perhaps influenced in his plan for the Canterbury Tales by Boccacci but the Prologue as a portrait—gallery of the tellers of the Canterbury tales is highly original —an yet unsurpassed mirror held up to 14th Cent, life and society, men, morals and manners—a work of creative realism where the whole body of the age is contained in concrete terms. If Dante gave us the "Divine Comedy", then Chaucer gives us the "Human Comedy" of the Medieval ages.

1.5.3 Art of Characterisation

1. Medieval characterisation was primitive and one-dimensional in technique eg. the Miracle & Morality plays where personified abstractions of virtues & vices, abound. Characters like **Hate, Love, Malice, Justice, purity, cleanliness, Mercy** are "flat", one-dimensional, symbolic figures. They lack the "round" flesh and blood solidity of post - Renascence characters of poetry or drama. Chaucer started his apprenticeship in letters under this primitive medieval influence—cf. the characters in his translation **of Romance**

of the Rose. But he soon outgrew this primitive technique and in the Prologue and Tales we have rounded personalities of flesh and blood, multidimensional and complex.

2. Chaucer's characters have two faces: they are both **typical** (representative of their class and age) and **individual,** possessing particular and specific characteristics, expressing a unique personality. Chaucer sees his characters from this **double perspective** of the specific and particular, the generic and typical this is his **double vision** or **bifocal technique** eg. **Prioresse (Individual features** : name, schooling and origin in a particular village. specific jewellery and inscription with mono, physical features. **Typical features:** negligence of religions duties, keeping pets against the law, imitating court ladies and elite etiquette at meals etc.)

3. Chaucer's characters **are the vehicle of his Humour.** Chancer's humour arises from his characters failing to practice what they preach, from the incongruity between their public mask and their private face eg. the money—the hungry Doctor for whom epidemics are like festivals; or the church characters who keep a moral exterior but are inwardly rotten, corrupt, and irresponsible; the Lawyer who seemed more busy than he was: the Merchant who dressed elegantly and lived fashionably but was actually in debt.

Chaucer's humour also inheres in the ideosyncrasies of his characters, their tricks of speech (the drunken Summoner who keeps on repeating one Latin phrase) and their particularised physical features (the wart on the Miller's nose, the cook's boil).

4. To define his characters Chaucer sometimes utilises two basic kinds of imagery : **beast imagery and nature imagery** eg. the **Miller's description** (hairlike those on a sow's ear) and the squire ("as fresh as is the month of May") and **Franklyn** ("whose beard was white as is a daisy'-).

5. For purposes of comparison and contrast Chaucer at times groups his characters together by profession or mentality into **"character clusters"** eg. the **military group** (knight, squire, yeoman who belong to the same profession but to different classes, and have different mentalities and attitudes—the sober knight, the gay squire, the loyal yeoman); the **ecclesiastical group** eg. **Summoner and Pardoner** (partners in crime and villainy): the **Farmyard group** (Miller, Reeve).

Chaucer's art of characterization then shows a fine, creative realism and sharp psychological insight. Following the proper medieval tradition he begins the description and analysis of his characters from t-he head (top) and concludes at the toe. While following the medieval technique he also blends remarkable modern approaches to character—thus his cliaracterization is a blend of the medieval and the modern.

Note : It has been suggested by some scholars that Chaucer based some of his characters on real-life figures eg. the person is supposed to have been based on the English Reformer

Wycliff. Whether true or not Chaucet's characters are remarkably life-like and real.

1.5.4 Chaucer's Humour: In the Prologue

Humour as a literary element was notably absent in the Middle Ages. Life was so difficult and religious passions so straitened man's outlook that few had the time or the inclination to laugh. Chaucer's contemporary **Langland** is a case in point. The reformative zeal in Pier's Plowman led to satires which is also humour, but of a different kind. In **Pier's Plowman** all is sternness and dedication, moral earnestness and ascetioism. Langland's inspiration flows from moral righteousness and reformistic zeal. Chaucer had no such moral reformism in mind when he wrote the Canterbury Tales. He does not wish to change men and women, life and manners and morals—rather he presents men as-they-are, not men as-they-should/ought-to/-be. Chaucer's outstanding qualities are a cosmopolitan benevolence and an indulgent tolerance (for fallen man)—he is **England's first great humorist** in a most serious and stern age.

1. There are two aspects to Chaucer's Humour : an elegant, polished, urbane, Frenchified sophisticated wit and an Elizabethan or Shakespearian breadth, vigour and zest for life, in the prologue there are emamples of .both—the polished, tongue-in-cheek mocking of the elegant Prioress who spoke the French, not of Paris, but of the remote English village of Strittbrd-at-Bowe is a contrast to the'almost vulgar, broad, semi-farcical account of the Miller (who had a nose on which was a wart, on which grew a tuft of hairs red as the bristles in a pig's ears) and the corrupt Summoner and Pardoner.

2. Character is the vehicle of Chaucer's Humour. Chaucer's Humour is expressed through the medium of character and personality rather than through the narration or description of incidents and events (at least in the Prologue). Here, Chaucer's humour arises from his characters failing to practice what they preach i.e. from the incongruity (or gap) between the public mask and the private face of his pilgrims eg.

(a) The **Church characters** who lead corrupt and dissolute lives in reality but present a dedicated public mask eg. Monk, Friar, Summoner and Pardoner (who make fools out of simple village-folk-by selling them "pigs' bones" as relics) et al.

(b) The **Sergeant-at-law** who appears more busy than he actually is; a dedicated Doctor who is actually money-hungry and makes profit out of the plague; the **Shipman**, who is a thief and a pirate but appears to be a patriotic Seaman; the rich flashy **Merchant** who is actually in debt.

3. Chaucer uses the techniques of oblique Satire and irony, puns, inversions, anticlimax in the Prologue. He seldom directly attacks anyone but mildly rebukes, gently reveals and exposes the follies of men and their manners.

Irony is more indirect and more tolerant and present in the expose of the Prioress and

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her courtly habits, in the portrayal of the Monk, the Squire, the Merchant, the Doctor. Puns and condensed couplets produce humour in the descriptions of such characters as :

The Doctor of Physic : "For Gold in physics is a cordial. Therefore he loved gold in special/"

The Clerk of Oxenford : "Although he was a philosopher. He had but little gold in cofie."

The Shipman : "When that he fought and had the higher hand. By water he sent them home to every land." ^

The Wyf of Bath : "Of remedies of love she knew per chance/For she koude of that art the olde daunce."

The Merchant: "For sooth he was a worthy man with-alle, But sooth to slyn. I hoot how men hym calle."

At the end of the prologue Chaucer turns his humourous glance towards himself and his readers. In a self-mocking, half-serious vein the most learned poet of his times confesses "my wit is short" and apologises to us his readers for his dullness, lack of intelligence and associated limitations. He jokes at his own expense (and ours too) and thus expresses a generous and truly humourous turn of mind.

1.6 □ Style

If the **Canterbury Tales** were written today the prologue would be in prose, although some of the Tales require an elevated and ritual style.

The Prologue is written in rhyming petameter—in a simple and colloquial style. Normally it avoids the elevation and use of imagery and allusion which are sometimes poetic, although the opening is elaborate and formal; occasionally we come across similes too. The language is lucid, swift, almost transparent. Chaucer's expository in the General prologue is recognized as a model of simplicity and elegance: it gives the illusion of a varied stream of discourse, lively, free from pedantry and vulgarity.

If the style is some times off-hand, this is partly because of the intimacy Chaucer establishes with his readers, his popularity and sanity, and partly a rhetorical skill. If art is to conceal art, Chaucer's art is to profess artlessness. The strength of his art or style lies in its confident ability to do whatever is required of it. The most easily isolated poetic quality of the prologue is the crispness of the rhymes. This is evident in the self-contained couplet:

"She was so charitable and so piteous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe........"

Many of the best rhymes are for the purposes of ironic wit: eg. Cloystre/oystre, hoot/goot and bledde/fedde/deep/breed. Each rhyme is a comment—witty and fantastic. It is through the rhymes that we feel the sharpness that plays beneath Chaucer's lofty of homely tone.

1.7 ☐ Text of Proiogue : Lines 1-207

[An Interlinear Translation]

1. Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
   When April with its sweet-smelling showers
2. The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
   Has pierced the drought of March to the root,
3. And bathed every veyne in swich licour
   And bathed every vein of the plants) in such liquid
4. Of which vetru engendred is the flour.
   By the power of which the flower is created;
5. Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
   When the West Wind also with its sweet breath,
6. Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
   In every wood and field has breathed life into,
7. The tendre croppes. and the yonge sonne
   The tender new leaves, and the young sun
8. Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne.
   Has run half its course in Aries.
9. And smale foweles maken melodye.
   And small fowls make melody.
10. Thai slepen ai thenyght with open ye
    Those thai sleep all the night with open eyes
11. (Sepnketh them Nature in hir corages).
    (So Narnre incites thein.in their hearts;..
12. Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.
    Then Talk long to go on pilgrimages.
13. And paimeres for 10 seken s.iraunge strondes.
    And professional pilgrims (long) to seek foreign shores,
14. To feme halwes, kowlhe in sondry londes;
    To (go to) distant shrines, known in various lands :

15. And specially from every shires ende
    And specially from every shire's end
16. Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,
    Of England to Canterbury they travel,
17. The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
    To seek the holy blessed martyr,
18. That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.
    Who helped them when they were sick.
19. Bifil that in that seson on a day.
    It happened that in that season on a day.
20. In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
    In Southwerk at the Tabard Inn as I lay
21. Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
    Ready to go on my pilgrimage
22. To Caunterbury with ful devout qorage,
    To Canterbury with a very devout spirit,
23. At nyght was come into that hostelrye
    At night had come into that hostelry
24. Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye
    Well nine and twenty in a company
25. Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
    Of various sorts of people, by chance fallen
26. In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
    In fellowship, and they were all pilgrims,
27. That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
    Who intended to ride toward Canterbury.
28. Thechambres and the stables weren wyde,
    The bedrooms and the stables were spacious.
29. And wel we were-n esed atte beste.
    And we were well accommodated in the best way.
30. And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
    And in brief, when the sun was (gone) to rest,
31. So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
    I had so spoken with everyone of them
32. That I Was of hir felaweshipe anon.
    That I was of their fellowship straightway,
33. And made forward erly for to ryse,
    And made agreement to rise early,
34. To take oure wey ther as I yow devyse.
    To take our way where I (will) tell you.

35. But nathelees, whil I have tyrhe and space,
     But nonetheless, while I have time and opportunity,

36. Er that I ferther in this tale pace.
     Before I proceed further in this tale,

37. Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
     It seems to me in accord with reason

38. To telle yow al the condicioun
     To tell you all the circumstances

39. Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
     Of each of them, as it seemed to me.

40. And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
     And who they were, and of wnat social rank,

41. And eek in what array that they were inne,
     And also what clothing that they were in;

42. And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.
     And at a knight then will I first begin.

43. A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
     A KNIGHT there was, and that (one was) a worthy man,

44. That fro the tyme that he first uigan
     Who from the time that he first began

45. To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
     To ride out, he loved chivalry^

46. Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
     Fidelity and good reputation, generosity and courtesy.

47. Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
     He was very worthy in his lord's war,

48. And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
     And for that he had ridden, no man farther,

49. As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
     As well in Christendom as in heathen lands,

50. And evere honoured for his worthynesse;
     And (was) ever honored for his worthiness;

51. At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne.
     He was at Alexandria when it was won.

52. Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
     He had sat very many times in the place of honor,

53. Aboven alle nacions in Pruce;
     Above (knights of) all nations in Prussia;

54. In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
     He had campaigned in Lithuania and in Russia,

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55. No Cristen man so ofte of his degree
    No Christian man of his rank so often (had done so).

56. . In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
    Also he had been in Grenada at the siege

57. Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
    Of Algeciras; and had ridden in Morocco. .

58. At Lyeys was he and at Satalye,
    He was at Ay ash and at Atalia,

59. Whan they were wonne, and in the Crete See
    When they were won, and in the Mediterranean

60. At many a noble armee hadde he be.
    He had been at many a noble expedition.

61. At mortal batailles hadde he been fiiiene,
    He had been at fifteen mortal battles,

62. And foughten for oure feith at Tramyssene
    And fought for our faith at Tlemcen

63. In lysles thries, and ay slayn his foo.
    Three times in formal duels, and each time slain his foe.

64. This like worthy knyght hadde been also
    This same worthy knight had also been

65. Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
    At one time with the lord of Balat

66. Agayn another hethen in Turkye;
    Against another heathen in Turkey;

67. And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys.
    And evermore he had an outstanding reputation

68. And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
    And although he was brave, he was prudent,

69. And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
    And of his deportment as meek as is a maid.

70. He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde
    He never yet said any rude word

71. In al his lyf unto no maner wight,
    In all his life unto any sort of person.

72. He was a verray, parfit.gentil knyght.
    He was a truly perfect, noble knight.

73. But for to tellen yow of his array,
    But to tell you of his clothing,

74. His hors were goode, but he was nat gay.
    His horses were good, but he was not gaily dressed.

75. Of fustian he wered a gypon
    He wore a tunic of coarse cloth
76. Al bismotered with his habergeon,
    All stained (with rust) by his coat of mail,
77. For he was late ycome from his viage,
    For he was recently come (back) from his expedition.
78. And wente for to doon his pilgrymage.
    And went to do his pilgrimage.
79. With hym ther was his sone, a young SQUIER,
    With him there was his son, a young SQUIRE,
80. A lovyere and a lusty bacheler,
    A lover and a lively bachelor,
81. With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
    With locks curled as if they had been laid in a curler.
82. Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
    He was twenty years of age, I guess.
83. Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
    Of his stature he was 0l rhoderate height,
84. And wonderly dely vere, and of greet strengthe.
    And wonderfully agile, and of great strength.
85. And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
    And he had been for a time on a cavalry expedition
86. In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
    In Flanders, in Artois, and Picardy,
87. And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
    And conducted himself well, for so little a space of time.
88. In hope to stonden in his lady grace,
    In hope to stand in his lady's good graces.
89. Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
    He was embroidered, as if it were a mead
90. Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and reede.
    All full of fresh flowers, white and red.
91. Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;
    Singing he was, or fluting, all the day;
92. He was as fresh as is the month of May.
    He was as fresh as is the mon'h of May.
93. Short was his growne, with sieves longe and wyde.
    His gown was short, with long and wide sleeves.
94: Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde.
    He well knew how to sit on horse and handsomely ride.

95. He koude songes make and wel endite,
    He knew how to make songs and well compose (the words),
96. Juste and eek daunce, and weel purtreye and write.
    Joust and also dance, and well draw and write.
97. So hoote he lovede that by nyghtertale
    He loved so passionately that at nighttime
98. He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
    He slept no more than does a nightingale.
99. Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
    Courteous he was, humble, and willing to serve,
100. And carf biform his fader at the table.
    And (he) carved before his father at the table.
101. A YEMAN hadde he and servantz namo
    He (the Knight) had A YEOMAN and no more servants
102. At that tyme, for hym liste ride so.
    At that time, for it pleased him to ride so,
103. And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
    And he (the yeoman) was cla^ in coat and hood of green.
104. A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,
    A sheaf of peacock arrows, bright and keen,
105. Under his belt he bar ful thriftily
    He carried under his belt very properly
106. (Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly;
    (He well knew how to care for his equipment as a yeoman should;
107. His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),
    drooping feathers).
108. And in his hand he baar a myghty bowe.
    And in his hand he carried a mighty bow.
109. A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage.
    He had a close-cropped head, with a brown face,
110. Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
    He well knew all the practice of woodcraft.
111. Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
    He wore an elegant archer's arm-guard upon his arm.
112. And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler.
    And by his side a sword and a small shield,
113. And on that oother syde a gay daggere
    And on that other side an elegant dagger
114. Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;
    Well ornamented and sharp as the point of a spear;

115. A Cristopher on his brest of silver sheene.
   A Christopher-medal of bright silver (was) on his breast.

116. An horn he bar. the bawdryk was of grene;
   He carried a horn, the shoulder strap was green:

117. A forster was he, soothly, as I gesse.
   He was a forester, truly, as I guess.

118. Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
   There was also a Nun, a PRIORESS,

119. That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
   Who was very simple and modest in her smiling;

120. Hire gretteste ooth was but by Seim Loy;
   Her greatest oath was but by Saint Loy;

121. And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
   And she was called Madam Eglantine.

122. Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne.
   She sang the divine, service very well,

123. Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
   Intoned in her nose in a very polite manner;

124. And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly, .
   And she spoke French very well and elegantly,

125. After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
   In the manner of Stratford at the Bow,

126. For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe.
   For French of Paris was to her unknown.

127. At mete wel ytaught was she with alle;
   At meals she was well taught indeed;

128. She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
   She let no morsel fall from her lips,

129. Ne wette his fyngres in hir sauce depe;
   Nor wet her fingers deep in her sauce;

130. Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe
   She well knew how to carry a morsel (to her mouth) and take good care

131. That no drope ne fille upon hire brest.
   That no drop fell upon her breast.

132. In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest.
   Her greatest pleasure was in good manners.

133. Hir over-lippe wyped she so clene
   She wiped her upper lip so clean

134. That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
   That in her cup there was seen no tiny bit

135. Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
    Of grease, when she had drunk her drink.
136. Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.
    She reached for her food in a very seemly manner.
137. And sikerly she was of greet desport,
    And surely she was of excellent deportment,
138. And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port.
    And very pleasant, and amiable in demeanor.
139. And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
    And she took pains to ir ;tate the manners
140. Of court, and to been estatlich of manere,
    Of court, and to be dignified in behavior,
141. And to ben holdeh digne of reverence.
    And to be considered worthy of reverence.
142. But for to speken of hire conscience,
    But to speak of her moral sense,
143. She was so charitable and so pitous
    She was so charitable and so compassionate
144. She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
    She woul'd weep, if she saw a mouse
145. Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
    Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bled.
146. Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde
    She had some small hounds that she fed
147. With rosted flessh. or milk and wastel-breed.
    With roasted meat, or milk and fine white bread.
148. But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed.
    But sorely she wept if one of them were dead,
149. Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte;
    Or if someone smote it smartly with a stick;
150. And al was conscience and tendre herte.
    And all was feeling and tender heart.
151. Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
    Her wimple was pleated in a very seemly manner,
152. Hir nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,
    Her nose (was) well formed, her eyes gray as glass,
153. Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed.
    Her mouth very small, and moreover soft and red.
154. But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
    But surely she had a fair, forehead;

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155. It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;
     It was almost nine inches broad, I believe;
156. For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
     For, certainly, she was not undergrown.
157. Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.
     Her cloak was very well made, as I was aware.
158. Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
     About her arm she wore of small coral
159. A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene.
     A set of beads, with large green beads (to mark divisions).
160. And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene.
     And thereon hung a brooch of very bright gold,
161. On which ther was. first write a crowned A,
     On which there was first written an A with a crown,
162. And after Amor vincit omnia.
     And after "Love conquers all."
163. Another NONNE with hire hadde she,
     She had another NUN with her.
164. That was hir chapeleyne, and preestes thre.
     Who was her secretary, and three priests.
165. A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrie,
     There was a MONK, an extremely fine one,
166. An outridere, that lovede venerie,
     An outrider (a monk with business outside the monastery),
     who loved hunting,
167. A manly man, to been an abbot able.
     A virile man. qualified to be an abbot.
168. Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable.
     He had very many fine horses in his stable,
169. And whan he rood, men myghte his brydel heere
     And when he rode, one could hear his bridle
170. Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere
     Jingle in a whistling wind as clear
171. And eek as loude as dooth the chapel belle
     And also as loud as do^s the chapel belle
172. Ther as this lord was kepere ot the celle.
     Where this lord was in charge of the cell (subordinate monastery).
173. The reule of Seint Maure or of Seint Beneit—
     The rule of Saint Maurus or of Saint Benedict—

174. By cause that it was old and somdel streit
     Because it was old and somewhat strict
175. This like Monk leet olde thynges pace,
     This same Monk let old things pass away,
176. And heeld after the newe world the space.
     And followed the broader customs of modern times.
177. He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen,
     He gave not a plucked hen for that text
178. That seith that hunters ben nat hooly men,
     That says that hunters are not holy men,
179. Ne that a monk, whan he is recchelees,
     Nor that a monk, when he is heedless of rules,
180. Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees—
     Is like a fish that is out of water—
181. This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloystre.
     This is to say, a monk out of his cloister.
182. But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre;
     But he considered that same text not worth an-oyster;
183. And I seyde his opinion was good.
     And I said his opinion was good.
184. What sholde he studie and make hymselven wood,
     Why should he study and make himself crazy.
185. Upon a book in cloystre alwey to poure,
     Always to pore upon a book in the cloister,
186. Or swynken with his handes, and laboure,
     Or work with his hands, and labor,
187. As Austyn bit ? How shal/he world be served ?
     As Augustine commands ? How shall the world be served ?
188. Lat Austyn have his swynk to hym reserved !
     Let Augustine have his work reserved to him !
189. Therfore he was a prikasour aright;
     Therefore he was indeed a vigorous horseman;
190. Grehoundes he hadde as swift as fowel in flight;
     He had greyhounds as swift as fowl in flight;
191. Of prikyng and of huntyng for the hare
     Of tracking and of hunting for the hare
192. Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
     Was all his pleasure, by no means would be refrain from it.
193. I seigh his sieves purfiled at the hond
     I saw his sleeves lined at the hand

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194. With grys, and that the fyneste,of a lond;
     With squirrel fur, and that the finest in the land;

195. And for to festne his hood under his chyn.
     And to fasten his hood under his chin,

196. He hadde of gold ywroght a ful curious pyn;
     He had a very skillfully made pin of gold;

197. A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
     There was an elaborate knot in the larger end.

198. His heed was balled, that shoon as any glas,
     His head was bald, which shone like any glass,

199. And eek his face, as he hadde been enoynt.
     And his face did too, as if he had been rubbed with oil.

200. He was a lord ful fat and in good poynt;
     He was a very fat lord and in good condition;

201. His eyen stepe, and rollynge in his heed,
     His eyes were prominent, and rolling in his head,

202. That stemed as a forneys of .a leed;
     Which (the eyes) gleamed like a furnace under a cauldron;

203. His bootes souple. his hors in greet estaat.
     His boots (were) supple, his horse in excellent condition.

204. Now certeinly he was a fair prelaat;
     Now certainly he was a handsome ecclesiastical dignitary;

205. He was nat pale as a forpyned goost,
     He was not pale as a tormented spirit.

206. A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
     A fat swan loved he best of any roast.

207. His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.
     His palfrey (saddle horse) was as brown as is a berry.

1.8 ☐ Questions

Questions and Topics :

(a) Consider Chaucer's Prologue as a social document from which we learn of the men, manners and morals of 14th century society.

(b) "Chaucer's art of characterization is both medieval and modern".—Discuss.

(c) What are the themes and ideas presented in the opening 18 lines of the Prologue?

(d) "Chaucer is the one great humorist of the Medieval Age. Discuss with reference to Chaucer's use of irony, satire, puns and other humorous devices.

NB : For short questions couplets and other portions of the text of the °rologue quoted in this unit may be extracted and students may be asked to match the lines to the character.

1.9 □ Select Bibliography (References)

1. Text of the Prologue Edited by A. W. Pollard; R. T. Davies; F. N. Robinson.
2. Chaucer : Essays in Criticism Ed. by Wagenecht.
3. Chaucer the Maker by John Speirs.
4. A Commentary on Chaucer's Prologue by Muriel Bowden.

3

Unit -2 ❑ Spenser: Amoretti, Prothalamion. The Faerie Queene

Structure

2.1 ◻ Objectives

1. To introduce you to areas you to areas you need to negotiate for a better understanding of a few Spenserian and Shakespearean poems.

2. To acquaint you with Edmund Spenser and help you to understand, analyze and appreciate some of his poems namely, 2 sonnets from his *Amoretti, a* stanza from his *Prothalcunion* and 2 excerpts from *The Faerie Queene.*

3. To acquaint you with William Shakespeare as a poet and help you to understand, analyze and appreciate 6 Shakespearean Sonnets.

4. To increase your awareness of some of the more modern responses to these 'old' verses.

2.2 ◻ Introduction:

This Section takes a close look at some poems of Edmund Spenser (15527-1599) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616), easily two of the greatest and most popular poets not just of their age but of all times. As Spenser was an Elizabethan poet and Shakespeare's career as a poet was confined more or less to the Age of Elizabeth, you do need to know a little about the period in general and some factors/aspects in particular.

2.3 ◻ Edmund Spenser : Life and Works

Born in or near 1552, Edmund Spenser was perhaps the son of John Spenser of East Smithfield in London, though this relationship is far from certain. Edmund Spenser's education and educational achievements have been well documented. He began writing sonnets when he was at Cambridge and later along with Philip Sidney and a few others formed the literary club *Areopagus.* In 1579 he began writing his masterpiece, *The Faerie Queene.* By 1580 Edmund Spenser had a definite political identity as well. It was Ralegh who, after reading through Spenser's draft of *The Faerie Queene,* encouraged the poet to join him on a trip to London. In 1590, Ralegh presented the celebrated poet to the Queen and this meeting and the court patronage thereafter boosted his poetic career. His close association with Leicester and Essex too yielded results. Spenser married Elizabeth Boyle in 1594. By 1596 most of Spenser's work was completed. Soon after, misfortune struck the Spenser femily and his castle was burnt, forcing him to flee. His final home was London and he died there on a Saturday in January 1599 'for lake of bread', according to Ben Jonson. To pay their tribute to him, poets carried his coffin and threw their verses and pens into his grave. Edmund Spenser lies close to Geoffrey Chaucer in Westminister Abbey.

Some of Edmund Spenser's best known works are *The Shepherd's Calendar, Colin Clouts Come Home Again, Amoretti, Epithalamion, The Faerie Queene, Prothalamion,* short *Hymns* etc. *View of the Present State of Ireland* is his controversial prose work.

Influences

Many poets of great renown have unknowingly contributed to the making of this "prince of poets". Humanist education had already introduced Spenser to Homer, Cato, Caesar. Horace, Lucan, Cicero, Erasmus, and Vives. To Plato and Aristotle Spenser owes his concept of Perfection and Justice. For the idea of Beauty being synonymous with Truth, Spenser had to turn to Plato and Pico Delia Mirandola. *The Faerie Queene* is a strong reminder of Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Ariosto, Tasso, Ronsard and Boiardo to name a few. Let us not forget the influence of the Bible, Castiglione's *Il Cortegiamo*, Malory's *Le Morte Darthur,* the Bestiaries as well as that of the anonymous writers of *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Geoffrey Chaucer about whom he writes, "thine own spirit, which doth in me survive". John Erskine Hankins considers Francesco Piccolomini i\ very strong influence on Spenser, especiauy in *The Faerie Queene.*

2.4 ❑ Background

The Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)

As is evident from the name, this is the period in British history when Queen Elizabeth I, daughter of Henry VIII, was at the helm of affairs. After some turbulence and religious unrest, England, in her Age, witnessed unprecedented mobility and transformation and perhaps the "most impressive surge forward" to emerge as a powerful nation, second to none. She shaped itself into a "mercantile, industrialized Protestant country". No age, as you are aware, is quite without its anxieties but notwithstanding disturbances and bloodshed, England's military power, maritime success, explorations, colonization, strengthening economic system aroused such fervour that to the Elizabethans, theirs was a "brave new world", a world that was on its way to becoming truly 'modern'.

2.5 ❑ The Renaissance and The Reformation

The impact of two highly complex movements, the Renaissance or "rebirth" and the Reformation (led by Martin Luther), on the culture of this nation as a whole, one may say, was tremendous. Though the movements were not confined to this Age, I must mention a few of the features for they will be of help in your understanding of the two poets. Renaissance England (arbitrarily said to have stretched from More's *Utopia* to Milton) witnessed the steady rise of the vernacular and the development as well as the enrichment of the English language. Increasing literacy and "intellectual interests" sent the young to Universities and many of them took to writing eagerly and instinctively. In fact, the "first

demonstration of England's literary power was in poetry." Manuscripts were widely circulated among the "literati in courtly society" and the printing press made texts available. The humanists or classical scholars of the Renaissance directed attention towards Greek and Roman literature, a veritable treasure-house for all ambitious writers who not only studied the masters carefully but also imitated their style. Translations of the classics into the vernacular made them more accessible to readers.

Another important feature was increasing individualism, fuelled by the Renaissance as well as the Reformation. It was a "man-centred" world so to say and the Renaissance man was the "complete man" with a spirit of adventure, dynamism and optimism and the desire to live life to the fullest by striving, seeking and achieving. The Reformation, a religious movement that advocated a direct interaction between man and God, "sought a return to the Scriptures" and demanded strict piety and engagement in theological discussions. The many translations of the Bible and the bulk of religious writings bear evidence to this urge. However, the Reformation had once been closely related to Nationalism when England as a nation had been expected to break away from the Roman Catholic Church. These two movements, with certain basic similarities as well as broad differences, shaped both England and the English in the Elizabeth Age.

2.6 ❑ Women : History and Poetry

As seven of the eleven poems in your Syllabus are directly/indirectly on or about women, it is imperative for you to have some idea of the social position of "the lady1' of the Renaissance.

It was no privilege to have been born -a woman in-the Elizabethan Age even though the Age was named after one. How many of today's women, I wonder, can even think of existing in comfortable homes with no voice, no identity and no legal rights'over money and property after marriage? The Elizabethan lady could. She had to. Not for nothing did Joan Kelly question, "Did women have a Renaissance?

The Elizabethan Age frowned on and at female ffeedom and did not spare either the English Queen or Mary Queen of Scots. Men like John Knox and Giovanni Correr stated with vehemence, "it is more than a monster in nature that a woman shall reign and have empire over man" *(Is1 Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous regiment of Women,* 1558), or lashed out, "to govern states is not the business of women". So England's Queen had to announce before her troops at Tilbury, "...I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England".

But within the aristocratic families in particular, men ruled unchallenged, their authority endorsed by the Church, by Elizabethan society as well as by Bible. In that fiercely patriarchal set up, daughters were their fathers' property, to be disposed of at will. Remember

Portia and the caskets left by her father in *The Merchant of Venice?* Thereafter in her husband's home a woman was expected to justify her existence by being a good wife— docile, submissive, obedient, virtuous and, of course, silent. A vocal woman was suspect. Read Spenser's *Epithalamion* which publicly celebrates the poet's achievement in fashioning his proud mistress into a humble, virtuous Christian wife. Still most women of the Age had to look upon marriage and child-rearing as their only vocation and only a few like the Queen, the Countess of Pembroke, and Elizabeth Gary went ahead and wrote verses and plays like their male counterparts. But let me mention that Gary's play *The Tragedy of Miriam* (the central issue was a woman's right to speak) was neither performed on the public stage nor did it carry the female playwright's name on the title page for obvious reasons.

It was in such an Age and within such a society that, in their poems, Philip Sidney Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel chose to place women on a pedestal and to woo her with the ardour of a devotee and thereafter wait patiently and endlessly for one kind word or a single tender glance from her. Hear Spenser professes in *Amoretti* VII that if the lady looks "askew" he dies "as one with lightning fired". The lady of the Sonnet was indeed empowered to captivate her man (at times men) and reduce him to sighs and tears by refusing to reciprocate his love and adoration. So there is Sidney appealing to his Stella in Sonnet LIX :

> Deere, why make you more of a dog then me?
> If he doe loue, I burne, I burne in loue;

and Daniel, as though in agreement, laments, "Fair is my love, and cruel as she's fair".

Of the many influences, secular as well as religious (the Cult of Virgin Mary), the medieval courtly love tradition may be considered an important factor influencing these English poets in fashioning their sonnets. It was "a doctrine about love between the sexes, including an elaborate code governing the aristocratic lovers" and it demanded that the lover played the worshipper and the lady deified, as it were, basked in such attention and adulation. The desire for physical intimacy was subservient to the enrichment of the mind and the spirit. For such a lady the lover did peak and pine, sigh and cry. Just look at the yawning gap between fact and fiction. So when you read Elizabethan sonnets idealizing women, do spare a thought for the lady of the Renaissance for whom there was little respite from male domination and suppression.

2.7 ❑ Sonnets

Eight of the eleven prescribed poems are Sonnets and it is thus essential for you to learn more about the Sonnet tradition, recurrent themes, structure etc. Do refer to this section when you take up individual Sonnets for study.

(a) Sonnet Tradition

> A WITLESS gallant a young wench that wooed
> (Yet his dul! spirit her not one jot could move),
> Entreated me, as e'er I wished his good,
> To write him but one sonnet to his love;

These four lines from Michael Drayton's *Idea* (Sonnet 21) fixes the Sonnet as a lover's weapon. The formula is as follows: If you happen to fall in love write a sonnet, idealize your mistress, deify her if you can and then wait for results with hope and expectations. (For a female-voiced 'complaint' read *A Lover's Complaint* attributed to Daniel). In a way Sidney's ardour for Penelope (Stella) set the trend and with great zeal poets began to write about unrequited love, and sigh, like a furnace as Shakespeare .says, and yearn for a mistress, both indifferent and uncaring. In Elizabethan England such sonnets generally came in groups or sequences *(Astrophel and Stella* (108 sonnets), *Amoretti* (88) *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (154), and with no sustained narrative.

While writing *Loving in Truth* Sidney may have rebuked himself with the lines, " 'Fool', said my Muse to me, 'look into thy heart and write' ", but when it actually came to writing most sonneteers, Sidney included, looked into the works of their predecessors and contemporaries more keenly and attentively than into their own "hearts". Alighieri Dante (1265-1321) and Francesco Petrarca or Petrarch (1304-74) of Italy have been the strongest influence on sonnet writers of Elizabethan England. Once two enterprising Englishmen, Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard Surrey, introduced England to this form of personal poetry in the early sixteenth century and, to quote Tillyard, "let the Renaissance into English verse", sonneteering became a fashion, as it were, with almost every poet in the country writing, borrowing, imitating, plagiarizing as and when required. If Dante had a Beatrice as the subject of his Sonnets and Petrarch his Laura, the English poets could not lag far behind. Surrey's lady Elizabeth appears in his verses as "fair Geraldine", Penelope Devereux is Sidney's Stella, Elizabeth Boyle is Spenser's mistress and so on. For the present I have omitted the name of William Shakespeare, that too quite deliberately.

2.8 ☐ Themes

Your reading of these Sonnets will make you sense the two poets' preoccupation with Love and Time, the former constructive, capable of rejuvenating and the latter destructive, eager to deface and erase.

(!) Love:

Much of Sonnet writing of the Elizabethan Age amounts to composing love poems addressing one closest to the lover-poet's heart. In the Sonnet Sequence of Spenser and the W.H. Sonnets of Shakespeare we do expect and we do find an addressee/addressees

demanding special attention and inspiring the poets to reveal their feelings (sincere or feigned) with unrestrained ardour, sometimes at the expense of dignity and self-respect. Spenser stoops before a woman he eventually marries but Shakespeare's warm feelings for a "lovely boy" and passionate appeals to him raise disturbing questions even if one keeps in mind the cult of 'male friendship' during the Renaissance. Issues get more complicated in the Dark Lady Sonnets. Here Shakespeare conventional love verses involving a man and his lady. He displays feelings which refuse to be patterned and are strikingly different from those of his many predecessors and contemporary sonneteers.

(ii) Time

Derek Traversi says, "Renaissance, feeling regarded Time as the enemy and solvent of personal experience, which it wears remorselessly into insensibility". Whatever is rooted in Time will be destroyed by Time. No other calculation/equation works. The tussle is between the belief that Time is both patterned and controlled by God and the realization that Time rolls on with an energy of its own and is thus totally and absolutely unpredictable and unstoppable. Both Spenser and Shakespeare show intense awareness of Time's intentions and dark threats.

Ageing, though a part of life, has always been difficult to accept. Medical literature supports Shakespeare's division of "masculine identity into youth and age." Thomas Elyot, for example, in *The Castell of Helth,* categorizes the 60-upward stage as "age decrepit," which lasts "until the last tyme of life". Old age has been further divided into three parts, "green", "middle" and "decrepit". The calculation does little to cheer the spirit for what is youth but just a few speeding years to be followed by "sable hair" and a second childhood, *"sans* everything". So in many of Spenser and Shakespeare's sonnets, one does hear 'Time's winged chariot hurrying near".-Ironically, Man's success in freeing himself from his dependence on the Sun by measuring Time and splitting it into units, has made him most painfully aware of the passage of Time and also of his own mortality.

However, what does not allow a pall of gloom to settle over these poems is the poets' resolve to accept Time's challenge and prepare their defence accordingly. After Ovid, they look upon their own verses as effective antidotes because their powerful lines can, they assert, eternalize their lovers. Love too is changeless they claim-; it fortifies lovers to withstand Time's blows.

2.9 ☐ Sonnet Structure

You are well aware of the fact that a Sonnet is a powerful 14-lined poem (See paper III Module 10 Unit 59.1) that was brought into England from Italy. English poets, including Spenser and Shakespeare, experimented with the theme and the structure of the sonnet and

one of the major changes, as you know, has been to replace the Petrarchan model with the English. Petrarch's *octave* (8-line grouping, rhyming *abba abba)* and *sestet* (grouping of the 6 final lines rhyming cde cde/cd cd cd etc.) have been substituted successfully a 4+4+4+2 division i.e. 3 quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet. The metre, iarr pentameter in this case, has been retained but not the volte or turn after line 8. Spens rhyme scheme, more often than not, is ABAB BCBC, CDCD, EE while Shakespe more comfortable with the ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG rhyme scheme of Surrey, not c used it regularly but also perfected it.

Before I begin the next Section on Edmund Spenser which is to be followec another on William Shakespeare, I wish to mention that for a better understandin individual poems as well as general topics, you may have to turn back to this Unit as when required. Please note that numbers within brackets indicate Sonnet numbers.

2.10 ❑ Text : *Amoretti*

Amoretti is Edmund Spenser's Sonnet Sequence consisting of 88 love poems (! we count Sonnet 35 which appears a second time as Sonnet 83), printed along wit! *Epithalamion* in 1595. It is preceded by an appeal to Sir Robart Needhamknight.

The Text

2.10.1 Sonnet IX

LONG-WHILE 1 sought to what I might compare
those powerful eyes, which lighten my dark spright,
yet find I nought on earth to which I dare
resemble th' image of their goodly light.
Not to the Sun: for they do shine by night;
nor to the Moone: for they are changed never;
nor to the Stars: for they have purer sight;
nor to the fire: for they consume not ever;
Nor to the lightning: for they still persever;
nor to the Diamond: for they are more tender;
nor unto Crystal: for nought may them sever;
nor unto glass: such baseness mought offend her;
Then to the Maker self they likest be,
whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

Explanation

The lover finds it difficult, if not impossible, to describe the beauty and the sparkle of

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his lady's bright ey^es which have the power not only to captivate his heart and elevate his spirit but also to light up the whole world. These "powerful eyes" have no peers and there is nothing on earth which is even remotely comparable to them and their "goodly light". They surpass the Sun because they do shine brightly even at night, they are superior to the Moon as well because they are steadfast. The stars twinkle but with the aid of borrowed light whereas the lady's eyes "have purer sight". Though bright and warm, the lady's eyes are not as murderous as Fire because they do not "consume" and destroy as fire does. They are not comparable to lightning, diamond, crystal and glass. The lightning flashes and is gone before one can cry 'Behold' but the light in the lady's eyes continues to shine. The eyes are gentle, tender and not as hard as sparkling diamonds or crystals. The mistress, he is certain, will take offence if her eyes are compared to base glass. Finally the poet looks beyond the Earth as he realizes that her e-yes have been created by the Creator with infinite care and are like His which "lighten" up all that human eyes can see.

Critical Analysis

Amoretti is a "fictionalized" version of Spenser's own courtship of his second wife Elizabeth Boyle and each Sonnet in the sequence corresponds to one of the days preceding Spenser's second marriage on the eleventh of June 1594. An interesting mixture of personal emotions and conventional and formulaic utterances, *Amoretti* reminds the reader of Dante's *Vita nuovaiwd* Petrarch's sonnets celebrating their love for Beatrice and Laura respectively. *Amoretti* has been described by Alan Sinfield as an "unprecedented puritan humanist adaptation of the sonnet sequence to a relationship which ends in marriage". And this is its basic difference with the other Sequences where to love is to lose and lament.

This is otherwise a conventional love poem in the courtly tradition with the man deifying his lady. Spenser uses a series of comparisons to convey to his readers not just the extraordinary quality of two beautiful eyes but also the intensity of his emotion as well as the depth of his feelings for a woman in whose eyes he sees the reflection of the Creator. To Neoplatonists, Petrarch's attraction for Laura is more man's yearning for the Good/ God. Spenser's love for his lady too demands a similar interpretation and the artistic intertwining of strands romantic and earthly as well as religious/spiritual does support the claim that Spenser's love sonnets have ties with Christian liturgy.

Some readers may want to question and gauge the sincerity of Spenser's feelings for his lady. Is he actually enamoured of his lady's bright eyes, we wonder, or is this a simple case of borrowing because in *Astrophel, and Stella* (1580-4), for instance, Sidney too finds in Stella's eyes "beames so bright" and Drayton's lady's "sacred eyes" (55) too disperse their rays "with..sovereign grace" (43)?

Did such high praise, showered at random and showered indiscriminately, so exhaust Shakespeare that he could not but give himself and his readers some respite from this

cloying sweetness by assuring them in his own poem, "My mistresses' eyes are nothing like the Sun" (130)? But, let us remember, Shakespeare in the Sonnets is not necessarily the only Shakespeare. Turn to *Romeo and Juliet* to hear Romeo say that Juliet's eyes are sharper than twenty swords. Spenser's mistress' eyes are gentle in Sonnet IX but in Sonnet X they flash fire causing "huge massacres". As you read on you will find more of such contradictory statements but they need not worry you unduly for you are to keep-in mind the fact that all these sonnets, termed personal poems and often looked upon as keys that unlock the poets' heart, are no more than end results of some vigorous intellectual exercise.

Form : Language and Style

The simplicity of style and language of Sonnet IX matches the professed sincerity of the lover and the depth of his feelings. Rhetoric, often associated with pretence and insincerity, has been sparingly used. Sonnet IX is based on a series of comparisons but each is so simple and direct that there is no chance of the meaning getting buried under a morass of words. Spenser has chosen some of the brightest objects ranging from the Sun to glass so that his readers are left in no doubt about the sparkle and warmth of two precious eyes. Verbosity has been avoided and the practice has paid rich dividends. Here the use of Anaphora is particularly effective. The repeated use of the "nor" at the beginning of 8 lines indicates the poet's firm conviction.

This is a Spenserian sonnet hence the octave and the sestet have been replaced by three quatrains through which thoughts and ideas roll and in the couplet they reach a definite conclusion. The rhyme scheme is abab, bcbc, cccc, dd. obviously different from the others.

Word Notes

1.	Long..compare	It is a difficult comparison to make and the poet requires time.
2.	Lighten...spright	The eyes have the power to purify and illuminate. In Sonnet XVI too Spenser writes about the 'fair eyes" of his "love's immortal light".
3.	Nought	nothing
4.	Not...Sun	Note the tonal difference between this expression and the first line of Shakespeare's Sonnet 130.
5.	fon.never	The reference is to the waxing and the waning of the moon.
7.	consume-ever	The lady's eyes do not destroy.
8.	Nor to..persever	Once again the poet lays emphasis on constancy as opposed to restlessness and changeability.
10.	more tender	gentler and softer.
11.	Crystal	transparent natural object like quartz.

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12.	Such..her	The lady's integrity is beyond question and the eyes cannot be compared to anything suggestive of slightest baseness like glass.
13.	Then..be	The lady assu'mes divine proportions and is one with her Maker or God.
14.	whose..see	God's Grace illuminates the world.

Conclusion

Spenser's tone in *Amoretti* IX is restrained as in the lady's eyes the lover sees gentleness and benevolence. Here she is not one about whom he could complain (as in Sonnet 20) that:

> ....her foot she in my neck doth place,
> and tread my life down in the lowly floor.

The poet is at peace is Sonnet IX reminding readers that unlike his peers he wooed and won.

2.10.2 Sonnet LXXV (75)

I have deliberately retained the archaic spellings in this Sonnet. It would do well to compare it with Sonnet IX where the spellings have been modernized.

The Text

> ONE day I wrote her name upon the strand,
> but came the waues and washed it away:
> agayne I wrote it with a second hand,
> but came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.
> Vayne man, sayd she, that doest in vaine assay,
> a mortal! thing so to immortalize,
> for I my selue shall lyke to this decay,
> and eek my name bee wyped out lykewize.
> Not so, (quod I) let baser things deuize,
> to dy in dust, but you shall Hue by fame:
> my verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
> and in the heuens wryte your glorious name.
> Where whenas death shall all the world subdew,
> our lou'e shall Hue, and later life renew.

Explanation

The poet and his beloved are by the sea and she watches him write her name painstakingly on the sand again and again as the waves keep rolling on and washing it away.

The lady rebukes him mildly for not facing facts and making vain attempts to immortalize what is transient and impermanent. She speaks words of wisdom and reminds him of the inevitable that is to come. Just as her name is being callously wiped off by the tide (standing for Time), so will she eventually be erased by Time's relentless hand. Suddenly with firm confidence and conviction the poet assures her that baser things may face destruction but she will remain alive in the memories of men. His verse will eternalize her. Death will claim others but will fail to efface the lovers as they will live on mainly on the strength of their love for each other as well as on that of his verse, his powerful lines.

Critical Analysis

Sonnet 75 begins as a conventional love poem with a somewhat disturbed lover as the main speaker. The note of dejection with which the Sonnet begins is a strong reminder of human helplessness before the all-powerful Time. Perhaps more sensitive than ordinary men, poets feel the pains of their mortality more sharply and react more strongly. However, in most Sonnets mistress' are lovinglyaddressed, grievances are voiced meekly and appeals are made passionately but with little or no response from the other side. But this is one instance where the lady of the Renaissance has been considerably vocal and intelligently so. The lady-love understands his disappointment and cautions him wisely. Her logic is perfect, her vision clear. Death is inevitable and it is but human vanity, amounting to sheer folly, to even dream of an escape. In this context what deserves special attention is the unexpected absence of bitterness and pessimism even when human limitation is spelt out in no uncertain terms. Time has neither been condemned as a tyrant nor has its authority been accepted timidly. The lady has not even been so cautioned :

> Make haste therefore sweet love, whilst is its prime,
> for none can call again the passed time.

> *(Amoretti* LXX)

Instead confidence and conviction arm the poet, as it were, to fight an apparently unequal battle and that too with dignity. Death is not for them, the lover assures, for he holds the key to immortality. "My verse your vertues rare shall eternize", declares the poet. Names written on sand have but a short life, but no tide can sweep away his verse. It may escape notice that Spenser marks only the lowly as Time's victim. By 'baser things' has he meant all who are of inferior status or all who have not been ennobled by love? This is followed by the assertion that their love is beyond Time's reach. Lines 13 and 14 affirm that Time can touch no more than the corporal frame while love and marriage are eternal and may be cherished even in Heaven.

Do remember to turn to this Sonnet when you read Shakespeare's Sonnet 55 and 116 (in your syllabus) for what has been claimed in *Amoretti* 75 has been separately proclaimed in these two-the permanence of verse in 55 and the stability of love in 16.

Form : Language and Style

In spite of the use of archaic words and spellings Sonnet LXXV makes easy reading. The sonnet opens in the smooth and easy manner of a simple narrative and our interest is arrested at once by the dramatic beginning, "ONE day I wrote her name upon the strand". Later the tone becomes conversational. There is no unnecessary ornamentation that can detract attention from the central issue of mortality/immortality. The word 'dust' with its Biblical implication indicates human nothingness. Only occasionally does Spenser play with words. Read line 4 and note the use of two 'vains'. Note the use of archaic words such as "eek" and "quod". Spenser's use of alliteration in this sonnet is also to be marked, so also his use of the V and T which adds softness to the verse as a whole to match the mellow mood.

The 'story' of Sonnet 75 unfolds itself through 3 quatrains and is concluded in the couplet. Spenser's perfect handling of vowels and the wavelike rhythm of his poem can only be appreciated when the sonnet is read aloud. Note the rhyme scheme abab bcbc cd ee, distinctly different from the Petrarchan.

Word Notes

1.	strand	portion of the sea-shore that lies between tide marks.
2.	waues	waves ..
3.	agayne ... hand.	wrote the name a second time or wrote it again.
4.	tyde	tide.
	made...pray	the tide like a beast of prey ruins his work.
5.	Vayne	conceited.
	Vaine..assay	The word has been used to mean fruitless. (Note the difference in spelling and meaning between 'vayne' and vaine)
7.	selue	self,
8.	eek	also.
	eek..lykewize	The Lady says that in the same way one day she too .will be erased.
9.	quod	said,
	deuize	talk
	let baser.deuize	the desire to die and be wiped off should be in the minds of the lowly

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10. dy in dust	to return to the dust from where we have sprung into existence,
liue by fame:	to be remembered having gained fame.
11. vertues..eternize	the rare qualities will be made immortal
12. heuens	heavens,
wryte	write.
13. whenas	when.
death..subdew	death will conquer all.
14. our.renew	Their love will be intouched by Death and will give them a fresh lease of life.

2.10.3 Conclusion

New historicists focus on the play of power in Spenser's sonnets. The lover is the humble vassal enslaved by the lady's beauty, charm and grace and the Lady, in turn, has been empowered to captivate infirm men. men with frail hearts and so torment them that they cannot but call her:

> ...more cruel and more salvage wild,
> then either Lion or the Lioness.:
> shames not to be with guiltless blood defiled... *Amoretti XX*

Alexander Dunlop finds it profitable to read Amoretti as "a dramatization of the process of learning to love". By stages the lover-poet progresses from a state of normal human ignorance to a state of relative wisdom concerning love. With experience the lover gains maturity. In the Amoretti Spenser has attempted a binding of elements of the neoplatonic tradition to a sixteenth century Protestant framework. Gary Waller contends that this Sonnet Sequence sets out "a pattern of desire that leads not to frustration and defeat but to marriage and mutual submission to God's will."

2.11 ❑ Text: Prothalamion

A Spousal Verse made by

Edm. Spenser.

IN HONOVR OF THE DOV-
ble mariage of the two Honorable & vertuous
Ladies, the Ladie Elizabeth and the Ladie {Catherine
Somerset. Daughters to the Right Honourable the
Earle of Worcester and espoused to the two worthie

Gentlemen M. *Henry Gilford,* and
M. *William Peter* Esquyers.

+

+++++

+

AT LONDON.

Printed for *William Ponsonby.*

1596.

Edmund Spenser's last complete published poem *Prothalamion* is preceded by this dedication indicating the occasion of the poem, the date and the purpose. *Prothalamion* literally stands for a song in honour of a wedding.

The Poem

One morning the poet chances to see beautiful nymphs gathering flowers for the fast-approaching Bridal day. Soon he sees two beautiful swans, white and radiant, coming down the Lee. The nymphs welcome the birds with flowers and one sings a lovely song wishing them endless peace and prosperity. The swans, unparalleled in their beauty, float gracefully till they reach "mery London" where they turn into "faire brides" promised to two noble lords.

The Text

2.11.1 Sonnet III

With that I saw two Swannes of goodly hewe,
Come softly swimming downe along the Lee;
Two fairer Birds I yet did neuer see:
The snow which doth the top of *Pindus* strew,
Did neuer whiter shew,
Nor Joue himselfe when he a Swan would be
For loue of *Leda,* whiter did appeare:
Yet *Leda* was they say as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing neare;
So purely white they were,
That euen the gentle streame, the which them bare,
Seem'd foule to them, and bad his billowes spare
To wet their silken feathers, least they might
Soyle their fair plumes with water not so fayre,
And mar their beauties bright.
That shone as heauens light,

Against their Brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my Song.

Explanation

On a beautiful and "calme" day the poet suddenly witnesses a heavenly scene. Even as he stares wonder-struck at a "Flocke of nymphs", he notices two beautiful swans "softly swimming" down the Lee. The poet stares spellbound as their white feathers, whiter than the snow on the top of mount Pindus, glitter in the sunlight, the birds' feathers seem whiter than the feathers of the Swan in whose shape Jove had approached the Spartan queen Leda, beautiful and as fair-skinned as Jove himself. Such is the pristine whiteness of the feathers that the gentle stream, so it seems to the poet, forbids the waves to touch and wet their "silken feathers" lest they mar their flawless fairness. The touch of the 'unclean' waters can defile the feathers that shine as bright as heaven's own light. The bridal day is not too far away and the poet entreats the sweet Thames to flow gently till he ends his song.

Critical Analysis

In the words of Harry Berger Jr. this spousal verse is "itself a celebration, a progress or water-fete in honour of the double betrothal". In Prothalamion, a descriptive poem, Spenser succeeds in nearly transporting his readers to the bank of the Thames to stand with him and watch a glorious sight. As you know, celebrating occasions such as a betrothal, a wedding, or perhaps a birth in verse was quite a common practice in Spenser's time and, unlike Shakespeare, poets identified the object of their felicitation. Thus Spenser's spousal verse, preceded by the names of the dedicatee, has indeed immortalized men and women who would have otherwise passed into oblivion.

The third stanza concerns itself entirely with the swans' beauty and stateliness, both beyond compare. As in Amoretti IX, here too Spenser relies heavily on a series of comparisons to make it a real experience for the readers. The fairness of the swans' plumes, it is obvious symbolizes purity and chastity. Hence the birds (which turn into brides) have been made whiter than Leda, violated and defiled. Was it Spenser's way of pleasing the ladies and the lords by presenting the brides as innocent and angelic virgins? Possibly.

Mark the reference to Jove and Leda. Allusions to the Ovidian myths of Leda and the swan and to the Virgilian myth of Venus and her swans show Spenser presenting himself as "an Orphic poet serving a national ideal of wedded love." Words such as "For loue of Leda" bring to mind the love tale of the two legendary figures and the romance and the impending marriage of two lovely ladies with two handsome young lords.

Scholars find it satisfying to compare Spenser's *Epithalamion and Prothalamion* much to the letter's disadvantage. In Epithalamion, celebrating Spenser's own marriage, Selincourt finds a "magic union of the lover's passion with deep religious feeling." Prothalamion lacks this depth but there is evidence of the typical Spenserian blending of romantic love and reverence.

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Some readers do hear a pronounced elegiac note in *Prothalamion*. They argue that if one "allows 'brydale day' a second meaning" and reads it as the "final bridal of soul in eternity," the elegiac note can be explained. The poet's plea that the river should flow slowly is also his request to Time to slow its pace. Even on such a festive occasion, the footsteps of Time do not go unheard.

If you take a close look at the ten stanzas of the poem you will find the line, "Sweete *Themmes* runne softly till I end my Song" being repeated at the end of every stanza. This is preceded by the line "Against their Brydale day, which was not long", though with a few variations. Together this may be termed a "refrain" which is generally used in ballads or in songs and appears at the end of each stanza. "The woods shall to me answer and my Eccho ring", for instance, is the refrain in *Epithalamion*. Let me mention that the refrain of *Prothalamion* was later used obliquely T.S. Eliot in *The Wasteland* where the gentle Thames is muddy and polluted.

Form : Language and Style

Like most of Spenser's poems, Prothalamion is easy to read. Note once more the use of the V and T sounds which has helped Spenser to make the fleecy softness of the swans and the gentleness of their movement on the Lee near-palpable. Assonance and alliteration have heightened the musical effect, for let us not forget that this is a wedding song and in the seventh stanza there is a song within a song. Scholars hold that when it comes to detailing and describing an object strand by strand, the plumes of the swans in this case, Spenser comes close to Botticelli.

The third Stanza like the rest of the poem has eighteen lines and line 9-18 are in rhyming couplets. Alternate lines rhyme in the first 8 lines.

Word Notes

1.	Swannes	archaic (old) spelling of 'Swans',
	goodly hewe	of beautiful colour.
2.	downe	down.
3.	fairer..seen	the poet has never seen birds to white and beautiful.
4.	Pindus	a mountain in Greece.
5.	shew	show.
6.	Jove	a poetical equivalent of Jupiter, the supreme God of the Romans.
7.	Leda	wife of Tyndareus, King of Sparta. A smitten Jove approached her as a swan and she bore him Castor, Pollux and Helen.

7-8	The feathers have been compared to snow suggesting whiteness as well as softness.
9. neare	near, closer.
11. euen	even.
12. foule	foul
billows	waves.
14. soyle NPv	soil, to dirty, make unclean.
fayre	fair.
16. hauens	heavens.
17. AgainsL.day	in preparation of the bridal day.
18. sweete..softly	The poet entreats the sweet Thames to run or flow gently. Time cannot be stopped, the poet can only request it to slacken its pace.

2.11.2 Conclusion

Prothalamion, notwithstanding its pictorial beauty, is definitely not one of Spenser's greatest creations. Modern readers are critical of Spenser's omission of the human predicament in his spousal verse. In *The Man in my Head with a Gun*, the South African poet Wendy Woodward makes a pointed comment :

Spenser's Prothalamion
takes little account of how
she was feeling...

Spenser's *Prothalamion* bypasses issues of serious import. Moreover, having found their voice, after de-colonization non-European readers, have taken a strong exception to Spenser's excessive emphasis on whiteness. Why should beauty, chastity, purity be suggested only by white, the European colour? This question disturbs a section of the readers of *Prothalamion*. Spenser would want us to remember that he belonged to an age where whiteness/fairness was a sign of true femininity and the Queen too whitened herself further for more reasons than one. Still the feeling lingers.

2.12 ☐ The Faerie Queene

If Spenser is to many a "prince of poets", as great in English as Virgil in Latin, the credit goes largely to his magnum opus The Faerie Queene. In November 1589 the printer received the first three books and they were entered in the Stationers' Register in December. According to Amoretti SQ, the poet completed the second instalment (Books IV-VI)

shortly before his marriage but they were printed only in 1596. The book has been very judiciously dedicated to the "most mighty and magnificent Empresse Elizabeth by her "most humble servant: Ed Spenser."

2.12.1 Plan of *The Faerie Queene*

The plan for this work of epical proportions was expounded in an introductory letter written by the author to Sir Walter Ralegh. He had most ambitiously planned twenty-four books (only six were written), each of the first twelve concentrating on the adventures of one of the Queen's knights on the twelve successive days of her annual festival. Holding the strands together are Gloriana and King Arthur. As each book deals with a separate adventure, almost complete in itself, *The Faerie Queene* remains more episodic than a single narrative. Yet the stories do diverge from "a common centre". It is Gloriana's court from where the action begins and to it all return. Read *The Faerie Queene* and note the existing similarities between a few of these adventures and some in the *Odyssey, Beowulf, the Adventures of Sindbad the Sailor* and *Hatim Tai*.

In which slot do we place this poem, so encyclopaedic in design? As told to Ralegh, the poem has been written to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline" and Spenser did declare, "Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song". Read carefully and you will agree that *The Faerie Queene* is epical, it is a tale of chivalry, a religious and educational treatise, an allegory etc. and all of these. However, Gary Waller would like to describe the poem as "primarily, a patriotic, Protestant epic".

2.12.2 Allegory

An allegory as you know is "a figurative narrative or description conveying a veiled moral meaning". Some of the most well-known allegories in English Literature you are aware are *Pearl, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, The Faerie Queene* and John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In Spenser's most ambitious work, we may say with Milton, "More is meant than meets the ear". *The Faerie Queene* may tell of knights and damsels, of wars and loves, of heroism and deceit but the heroes are "concepts and univer- sals" and their encounters may be seen as the eternal clash between Good and Evil, be- tween Virtue and Vice, between the holy and the unholy. *The Faerie Queene* is a moral allegory "charged with the subtlest moral significance". In Book I you are made aware of constant clashes between the English Reformed Church -which claims to be the true one, and the "false" Church of Rome. Una's parents, some hold, stand for the primitive church of Jerusalem. The Red Cross Knight represents the Anglican Church and holiness, Duessa is falsehood and Archimago hypocrisy. Sir Guyon is Temperance, Artegall symbolizes Justice, Lucifera and Orgoglio, despite controversies, stand for Pride. The fall of the Red Cross Knight and his ultimate victory symbolizes Christ's death on the Cross, the Resur- rection, and the ultimate triumph of Good over Evil. Their rescuer is Arthur representing

Magnificence. Hence despite romantic adventures, weddings and jubilations, the reader is expected to remain aware of these personifications and symbols which in turn take this Renaissance poem closer to "a medieval allegory". Even the names have been "composed according to a certain allegorical rationale". For instance, Belphoebe is the "beautiful, pure one", Gloriana is Glory.

Let us also remember that Edmund Spenser was an Elizabethan aware of Court intrigues, sensitive political/religious issues, clashes and encounters. So we may look for political allusions and also find them easily. In Gloriana, Belphoeba, Britomart, for instance, there is Queen Elizabeth I. The wicked Duessa understandably stands for the Roman Catholic Church in Book I and then for Mary Queen of Scots in the fifth book. Arthur is sometimes Sidney, sometimes Leicester. Upton and Craik have identified Sir Guyon with Essex and Archimago with the Pope. Allegorical references have been made to many more historical events such as the defeat of the Spaniards in the Netherlands, the Spanish Armada, the English occupation of Ireland and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots. Canto X of Book II contains a chronicle of British monarchs ranging from Brut to Elizabeth I. Not for nothing has *The Faerie Queene* been termed *a public* poem like *A Mirror for Magistrates.*

The facts stated-should give you some idea of the topicality as well as universality of this poem on which much of Edmund Spenser's fame rests. We readers may legitimately claim that in *The Faerie Queene* one does find a te#t beyond the text. But as Hazlitt has assured, you may read Spenser's poem and enjoy it without nieddling with the allegory.

2.12.3 Excerpt I

The first excerpt is from *The Faerie Queene* Book I. George, the Red Cross Knight, bound to serve the Queen of the Fairies for six years, succeeds in his mission of slaying a dragon who had Una's father's kingdom in its clutches. Quite naturally the king offers Una's hand in marriage. The union of the Knight and Una is a bonding of Holiness and Truth for the spiritual deliverance and salvation of the human race. But even after marriage Saint George must continue to serve the Fairy Queen for duty has to be discharged and loyalty to the Queen has to be exhibited. The excerpt below is from Canto IX and we see Arthur in conversation with the Red Cross Knight and Una.

The Text

CANTO IX (13-17)

For-wearied with my sports, I did alight
From loftie steed, and downe to sleepe me layd;
The verdant gras my couch did goodly dight,
And pillow was my helmet faire displayd:

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Whiles every sence the humour sweet embayd.
And slombring soft my hart did steale away,
Me seemed, by my side a royall Mayd
Her daintie limbes full softly down did lay:
So faire a creature yet saw never sunny day.

Most goodly glee and lovely blandishment
She to me made, and bad me love her deare,
For dearely sure her love was to me bent,
As when just time expired should appeare.
But whether dreames delude, or true it were,
Was never hart so ravisht with delight,
Ne living man like words did ever heare,
As she to me delivered all thatnight;
And at her parting said, She Queene of Faeries hight.

When I awoke, and found her place devoyd,
And nought but pressed gras, where she had lyen,
I sorrowed all so much, as earst I joyd,
And washed all her place with watry eyen.
From that day forth I lov'd that face divine;
From that day forth I cast in carefull mind,
To seeke her out with labour, and long tyne?
And never vow to rest, till her \ fmcj)
Nine monethes I see^e in vaine yet ni'll that vow unbind.

Thus as he spake, his visage wexed pale,
And chaunge of hew great passion did bewray;
Yet still he strove to clbke his inward bale,
And hide the Smoke, that did his fire display,
Till gentle Una thus to him gan say;
O happy Queene of Faeries, that hast found
Mongst many, one that with his prowesse may
Defend thine honour, and thy foes confound:
True Loves are often sown, but seldom grow on ground,

Thine, O then, said the gentle Redcrosse knight,
Next to that Ladies love, shall be the place,
O fairest virgin, full of heavenly light,
Whose wondrous faith, exceeding earthly race,
Was firmest fixt in mine extremest case.
And you, my Lord, the Patrone of my life,
Of that great Queene may well gaine worthy grace:

For onely worthy you through prowes priefe
Yf living man mote worthy be, to be her liefe.

Explanation

13. An exhausted King Arthur dismounts to lie down on the soft grass, his helmet serving as a pillow. Sleep steals away his senses and robs him of the iron control that he always has over his heart and feelings. In a strange dream-vision he sees at his side a royal maid, exquisitely beautiful.

14. She gladdens his heart by her vows of love and entreats him to love her just as intensely as she loves him. Arthur is not too certain whether it is reality or just a misleading dream which deceives and deludes. What he knows for certain is that no human heart has ever been filled with such pleasure and joy as his nor has any human ear ever heard such wonderful words as he has. All night the lady whispers words of love but only while bidding farewell she discloses that she is the 'Faerie Queene'.

15. When Arthur wakes up the next morning he realizes that the lady has disappeared. Only the flattened grass bearing the imprint of her body tells of her presence the night before. Arthur now grieves just as much as he had rejoiced. The tears from his eyes wash "all her place". He is so enamoured of the Faerie Queene that he resolves to seek his beloved. He vows not to rest till his mission is successfully completed and for the past nine months he has been searching, but in vain.

16. Even as Arthur speaks, his countenance turns pale. Yet the King makes all possible efforts to veil his feelings and the fire smouldering within. It is then that the gentle Una hails the Fairy Queen as one of the happiest on earth as she has found such a true knight, so powerful and gallant in deeds and so firm and constant in love and allegiance. She laments that the earth has not too many genuine lovers to show even though many may wish to lay claim to the epithet.

17. Ashamed of his past infirmity and failure, the Red Cross Knight speaks aloud to set Una's mind at rest. He promises to give her the second place in his heart, next only to the fairy queen, since loyalty and allegiance bind him to the sovereign. He vows to discharge his bounden duty to Gloriana as well as to Una whose parents he must rescue. The Knight then addresses Arthur, "the patron of his life", and prays for his success in his quest for the Queen because Arthur alone is the worthiest knight, the only one who can hope to be the Fairy Queen's chosen one.

Critical Analysis.

This excerpt introduces you to Arthur and makes you aware of his relationship with the Fairy Queen who has given her name to the poem. Arthur has met the Fairy Queen in a dream or a vision which is not to be taken lightly for a poet like Spenser had to be

aware of the significance of such dream-visions in literature of the Middle Ages. Remember some of the important dreaming males—Chaucer's Troilus and Chaunticleer? Their dreams are disturbing, unpleasant, hostile. But Arthur's is pleasant and beneficial to Mankind because with it begins a mission that ultimately ensures the destruction of Evil.

These stanzas unfortunately say nothing about Arthur's impressive personality and exemplary valour save what is implied in the lines describing the exhausted hero who jumps down from his "loftie steede". Here Arthur is a romantic figure, a lover smitten by a lady who has visited him in his dream. He thus does not talk of his conquests in these stanzas instead, like any distressed lover, gives full expression to his feelings for a lady who once did whisper words of love in his ears. The mighty Arthur too pales into an ordinary lover sighing for his lady-love.

Arthur's love for the Fairy Queen is one of the central motifs of the poem and it is said that the whole poem may be described "as an allegorical expansion of Arthur's quest". In abstract terms this is "the quest of Eros for the heavenly beauty, and as such it can find no fulfilment in any good short of the highest of all, good itself."

Due to the attention Arthur demands, readers may overlook Una. She is seen consoling Arthur in his grief, but mark her words. She is mildly upbraiding the Red Cross Knight for his infirmity. Spenser's women like Shakespeare's do have a voice that demands attention. Thus here the lady's rebuke yields results and the Red Cross Knight gains control over himself. His words too are significant for they raise the issue of allegiance and duty and confirm that nothing, no emotion, can be more important than loyalty to the Sovereign. This should have gladdened the heart of Spenser's own Queen.

This excerpt, as you see, involves three virtuous characters of the First Book and Gloriana makes her presence felt. So. you ought to know a little about them.

2.12.4 Notes

Gloriana

Gloriana is the fairy queen and all actions begin from her court and end with her knights completing their mission successfully. She appears to Arthur in a dream and he sets out to seek her. Since Gloriana is Queen Elizabeth I, Arthur should remind one of Leicester.

Arthur

I am sure you are familiar with the name of Arthur, the King of Britain. It is believed that there was some chieftain of the 5lh or 6"1 century who later on became famous in literature as Arthur, the head of a galaxy of knights, unparalleled in prowess and virtue. To Geoffrey of Monmouth goes the credit of making Arthur such a popular figure and in his; *Historia Regum Britanniae* Arthur appears as a dashing romantic hero. To the Elizabethans Arthur was perhaps the ruler of England and his world, the "unified Britain". In Spenser's

poem too Arthur is Magnificence. It is believed that his diamond shield suggests that he is God's representative on earth. As we are now concerned with Books I and II, it would do well to remember that in the former Arthur is "the instrument of divine grace" while in the latter he is "the symbol of magnanimity".

The Red Cross Knight

The Red Cross Knight has been identified as Saint George and the Anglican Church. Spenser describes him in Canto I as a "Gentle Knight" clad in "mightie armes and silver shielde" and on his breast he bore a "bloudie Crosse". He is also the champion of Holiness. This Knight, undoubtedly gallant and virtuous, has human lapses and fails on a number of occasions. He falls prey to Archimago's deceit but his ultimate triumph with the help of Arthur, "symbol of the ardor and art of God's Grace", and Una or Truth and Holiness, signifies moral victory attained through external aid and inner strength and resolve. The Red Cross Knight-Arthur relationship signifies concord and harmony.

Una

Spenser describes Una in Canto I as a "lovely Ladie", "pure and innocent" as the lamb that walks by her side. She faces innumerable problems that endanger her person as well as her honour. No weakling, Una braces herself up to face challenges of the fiercest nature. She guides the Knight and leads him into the House of Holiness. This beautiful damsel is no weakling. She can lead Arthur and show him Orgoglio's castle. The beautiful and virtuous Una stands for true religion and Truth.

Form : Language and Style

Spenser's diction is "decorative" but the style is both "familiar and easy", rather too easy according to modern readers. C. S. Lewis defends the poet stating that he belongs to "an older narrative school" and has in view men "who have settled down to hear a long story." Spenser's language occupies a position between Chaucer's and Shakespeare's. As P.J. Alpers put it, Spenser's pictorial description "renders real visual experience". The weary Arthur and the beautiful Fairy Queen seem to come alive through his description. The use of archaic words aids in re-creating the colourful past. Note the abundance of the V and T sounds in the first stanza in particular and they do create a soporific effect.

Spenserian Stanza

Edmund Spenser has given his name to the stanza in which he has written this poem. Look at the stanzas carefully and you will be struck by the uniformity. It is said to be an improvement on Ariosto's *ottava rima* or the eight-line stanza and bears resemblance to Chaucer's verse form used in the *"Monk's Tale"*. Each stanza comprises eight five-foot iambic lines but the ninth has six feet and is an alexandrine. As you must have guessed alexandrine' does have a connection with Alexander the Great. Some French verses of

the 12th and 13th century on this Greek King were written in this metre and the name has stuck to it. The rhyme scheme of the Spenserian stanza is ababbcbcc. You will find Thomson, Keats, Shelley and others using the Spenserian Stanza in their poems.

Word Notes

Stanza 13

1. Forwearied — exhausted.
2. loftie steed — magnificent horse.
   sleep, .layd — overcome by sleep.
3. verdant gras — lush green grass.
   dight — deck, adorn.
4. fayre — fairy
   sence — sense.
   humour..embayd — soft and sweet sleep embalmed or bathed.
5. slombring. — slumb ing.
7. royall Mayd — royal maid i.e. Gloriana.

Stanza 14

1. blandishment — coaxing, soft and gentle manner of speaking to get the work done.
4. when-expired — in due course.
5. dreames...delude — dreams do mislead and deceive.
6. never..delight — never was a heart so full of joy.
7. like wordes — such words, similar words.
9. hight — was called.

Stanza 15

1. devoyd — devoid.
2. lyen — lain.
3. earst — a short time ago, lately.
4. watry eyen — watery eyes, tears or eyes filled with tears.
5. divyne — divine.
7. with labour tyne — with effort but in vain.

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8. never., fynd	vowed never to give up or rest before finding her.
9. nyne monethes	nine months.
ni'll	'ne will' meaning 'will (I) not.
yet ni'll.unbynd	yet will I not break the vow.

Stanza 16

1. visage..pale	inner turmoil leaves its mark on the face which has turned pale.
2. And., bewray	the change of facial colour betrays his intense feelings.
3. strove..bale	tries to conceal his intense feelings, the fire within him.
6. fownd	found.
7. prowesse	bravery, exceptional ability.
8. confownd	confound.
9. True loves..grownd	True lovers, steadfast and loyal are rarely to be seen in this world. It is said that this is Una's veiled rebuke to make her knight conscious of his failings.

Stanza 17

2-3. Next-virgin	In the Knight's heart Una's place will be second only to Gloriana, indicating the importance of Duty.
5. in my...case	when my fortune was at its worst.
6. And..life	This refers to King Arthur as well as to the Earl of Leicester.
7. Queene	Gloriana and Elizabeth I.
8. priefe	proved.
9. liefe	dear, beloved.
8-9.Foronely..liefe	You are the only one worthy of her. Scholars believe that this is as much about Arthur and Gloriana as about Queen Elizabeth I and her intended marriage to the Earl of Leicester

2.12.5 Excerpt II

BOOK II

The Second book of *The Faerie Queene* focuses on the adventures of Sir Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, commissioned by the Fairy Queen. This book with its twelve cantos tells of Guyon's many encounters including one with the two wicked brothers Pyrochles

and Cymochles. A victim of Archimago and Duessa's deceit he is also on the verge of attacking the Red Cross Knight. One of his greatest feats is the destruction of the Bower of Acrasia who turns men into beasts after using them to "feed" her "luste". As he has the great Arthur by his side, Guyon finally triumphs.

The Text

The Bower of Bliss

CANTO XII (70-75)

EftSoones they heard a most melodious sound,
Of all that mote delight a daintie eare,
Such as altonce might not on living ground,
Save in this Paradise, be heard elsewhere:
Right hard it was, for wight, which did it heare,
To read, what manner musicke that mote bee:
For all that pleasing is to living care,
Was there consorted in one harmonee,
Birdes, voyces, instruments, windes, waters, all agree.

The joyous birdes shrouded in chearefull shade,
Their notes unto the voyce attempred sweet;
Th'Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
To th'instruments divine respondence meet:
The silver sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmure of the waters fall:
The waters fall with difference discreet.
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call:
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

There, whence that music seemed heard to be,
Was the fair witch herself now soliciting,
With a new lover, whome through sorcery
And witchcraft, she from far did thither bring;
There she had him now laid slumbering,
In secret shade, after long wanton joys.
Whilst round about them pleasantly did sing
Many fair ladies and lascivious boys,
That ever mixt their song with light licetious toys.

And all that while, right over him she hung
With her false eyes fast fixed in his sight,

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As seeking medicine, whence she was stung,
Or greedy depasturing delight;
And oft inclining down with kisses light,
For fear of waking him, his lips bedewd,
And through his humid eyes did suck his spright,
Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;
Wherewith she sighed soft, as if his case she rued.

The whiles some one did chant this lovely lay:
Ah see, who so fair thing doest fain to see,
In springing flower the image of thy day;
Ah see the virgin rose, how sweetly she
Doth first peep forth with bashful modesty,
That fairer seems, the less ye see her may;
Lo see soon after, how more bold and free
Her bared bosom she doth broad display;
Lo see soon after, how she fades, and falls away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortal life the leaf, the bud, the flower,
Ne more doth flourish after first decay,
That erst was sought to deck both bed and bower,
Of many a ladie, and many a paramour:
Gather therefore the rose, whilst yet is prime
For soon comes age that will her pride deflower:
Gather the rose of love, whilst yet is time.
Whilst loving thou mayst loved be with equal crime

Explanation

70. Soon Sir Guyon and his companion hear a melodious sound, most pleasing to the ear and befitting the location, a Paradise on earth. Such is the sweetness of the song that it seems as though birds'song, human voice, instruments, the warbling of streams, the blowing of the breeze, in fact all that is melodious and pleasing in nature as well as in art, have harmonized to create an extraordinary effect.

71. The happy birds hidden in the shade sing sweetly and the music mingles softly with the soft voices of men and women and the notes of the musical instruments within the r^ower. The sharp and sweet note of the instruments are in complete harmony with the deep sound of the waterfalls, suggesting a mixture of the bass and the tremolo. The notes that rise and fall seem to match the gentle music of the wind.

72. In the Bower from where the music flows, lies the "fair witch" comforting her new lover whom she has entrapped and brought to her garden. There she has placed him, sound

asleep after "long wanton joys" or sensual pleasures. As the witch lies in gay abandon, round them sing many beautiful ladies and lustful boys who indulge in licentious activities and sensual enjoyment as well.

73. As the young man sleeps on defenceless and vulnerable, the witch peers into his face and her false eyes are fixed on him as if seeking comfort and solace for the wounded heart. It appears as though she has received love wounds and is appealing to the lover for a balm. Every now and then she bends down to moisten his lips with soft kisses and in the process sucks, as it were, his spirit and soul through his moistened eyes, "depasturing" or devouring delight. Quite drunk with sensual pleasures, the lascivious witch sighs softly as if to pretend that she cares and pities the young man.

74. Just then some one begins to sing a sweet song calling all who wish to enjoy so lovely a sight. She draws attention towards the blossoming rose as untouched as a virgin and wants the listeners to see how like a coy maiden she shyly begins to open her petals. Her undisclosed beauty is breath-taking. Soon with the passage of time the petals open in full glory and the full-blown rose holds herself up to view boldly like a maiden in full bloom. Unfortunately, soon it is past its prime and as Nature wills, it wilts and fades away.

75. The singer cautions. It is not within our power to stop the movement of Time and hour by hour we move towards our end. The rose that is in full glory adorning the bed and the bower of ladies and their lovers withers away and so does youth. Therefore one must make the most of one's young age, gather flowers i.e. enjoy life to the fullest while youth still lingers on because soon old age will creep in to begin the process of decay and destruction. The advice to lovers is to make most of the time and enjoy life to the fullest and to give and receive love with equal passion.

Critical Analysis

Sir Guyon and the Palmer enter the enchantress Acrasia's Bower of Bliss. The two men have the feeling of having set foot in "the most dainite Paradise on ground" (Stanza 58) after having seen the whirlpool of Decay as well as a "host" of "huge sea monsters". The Bower of Bliss is a delight to the senses. Here vines intertwine wantonly to form an arch, inviting people to taste "their luscious wine". It would do well to remember that the more sensual the description the stronger is the suggestion that this is not a bower of "bliss" offering pure and heavenly happiness. It is a false paradise, a golden snare that makes escape impossible. It is Acrasia's bower, a prison. This is "a parody of Eden", harbouring deceit, treachery and falsehood and here destruction instead of regeneration is the way of life. Like the House of Pride, the Bower is "insubstantial". Any reading of the Bower of Bliss should make us aware of Spenser's debt to Ariosto and Tasso and the gardens of Alcina and Armida in *Orlando Furioso* and *Gerusaiemme Liberata* respectively. Little wonder that Spenser's poem has been labelled a "learned poem".

With her wiles and smiles Acrasia is a dangerous predator. She robs men of their good sense, corrupts their minds and casts a spell leaving them as degraded and base as the men who Circe transformed into swines. In Acrasis's bower there is no metamorphosis (physical change) only a conquest of the mind, Marsilio Ficino speaks of "Venus," who "drains her victim, little by little..." "To lure her victims into the bower, Acrasia "a comely dame" dresses in clothes "fowle disordered" and "vnmeet for woman hed". (54) The New Lover, her latest victim, is Verdant and Acrasia's enslaving of this young man suggests the sapping of youth and vitality. The tearing down of the Bower may also be explained as the "soul ridding itself of its subservience to sexual excitement" and thereafter channelizing impulses judiciously.

In striking contrast to the fiaschood and lechery is the lovely lay which in a distorted way spells out a truth, the truth about impermanence and mutability. Do read Spenser's fragment on Mutability. The *philosophical* content of this song matches the life led within the bower and the Epicurean delights offered therein. The Carpe diem theory (see note), it must be said, has been propagated with greater zeal than in Horace. Note that the entire emphasis here is on physical enjoyment. Do not miss the veiled threat as the singer warns and cautions the listeners about the pace at which relentless Time flies.

The *Bower of Bliss,* a critic's delight, has over the years been read, re-read re-valued and re-interpreted. Questions raised are many in number. Is Guyon a Christian destroying a pagan bower with uncontrolled religious fervour or is he pleasing a monarch by destroying an alien culture and retaining his own cultural superiority? Has the destruction of the Bower been prompted by the feelings with which Troy was set on fire or Lanka reduced to ashes in the *Ramayana,* a feeling dangerously close to either envy at the Others' opulence or pure sadism? Is it that the male feels uncertain and uncomfortable in the presence of a woman exuding great confidence and power?Acrasia embodies sexual power and her enslavement of young men in her victory in a gender war. Or is it thaffemale authority is to be despised in general and tolerated only when, like Britomart, women slip into male costume? If so, then why did the knights in the poem and Edmund Spenser in England accept Gloriana/Elizabeth I's supremacy to meekly, prompting many like Marx to decry the blatant display of servility? The question are too many.

Elizabeth was England's queen and "Elizabeth Tudor", Leonard Tennenhouse rightly claims, "knew how to display her power as a queen". The portrait of the female monarch on her throne with the Pope at her feet as well as the Ditchley portrait showing her standing on the map of England confirm, as it were, her determination to prove her supremacy despite her gender. Her authority had to be accepted but this allegiance could in no way force a Spenserian Knight, Gloriana's "servant", to be the vassal of any representative of a different culture. The 'Other', distanced from the self, has to be hounded by the *superiors* and destroyed ruthlessly, rendering reconstruction impossible. Thus the Bower, an alien land with an alien culture, is destroyed with a ruthlessness not becoming Temperance.

Stephen Greenblatt reads into this book the "European response to the native cultures of the New World, the English colonial struggle in Ireland and the Reformation attack on images". It is the beauty and opulence of Acrasia's domain that *bedazzles* the knight just as Indian treasures affected the English. See how racism rears its ugly head. Acrasia's 'depasturing' suggests cannibalism, and the pleasures of the Bower, the drugged sleep of Verdant, are all suggestive of the West's own reading of Eastern/Indian pleasures which they are happy to label as Epicureanism. Eroticism in the *Epithalamion* is acceptable but not in Acrasia's Bower. This is a misreading, if not a deliberate misunderstanding, of cultures other than European. But it must have been highly satisfying for Spenser's English readers to 'witness' their Knight's through destruction of another civilization, which, as if by common consent, has been presented as alien, unholy and repulsive.

Notes

Sir Guyon

Sri Guyon is yet another gallant knight commissioned by Gloriana and he destroys Acrasia's Bower of Bliss. He is Temperance or the golden mean. As he is a Saviour figure and does release men from the witch's spell he has been called a new Adam redeeming man and releasing him from Satan's clutches. However, Sir Guyon is not invincible. His temporary slip indicates that Sir Guyon has his natural limitations like all mortals. Like the Red Cross Knight he too requires Arthur's help to tide over difficulties.

Acrasia

Against Una's spiritual beauty we may place Acrasia's sensuous looks, satisfying the eye and raising carnal desires in men. In this Book Acrasia is *thefemme fatale,* a 'fatal' woman, who makes it her mission to destroy men by luring them into her clutches. Kin to Circe (Homer), Alcina (Ariosto) and Armida (Tasso), Spenser's Acrasia is dangerous. The enchantress is responsible for the death of the noble Sir Mordant (who represents the weakness of our physical or "fleshly" nature). She is intemperance and her name in Greek suggests want of self-control or moderation. This beautiful enchantress, Cymochles' wife, who lives in the Bower of Bliss, a jewel on a floating island in a lake or a gulf, knows how to play love games to perfection. Unlike Alcina and Armida, Acrasia is more vibrant in a negative sense. She sweats, sighs, kisses and depastures. Her Indian siblings are the lovely sorceresses who fall before Sindbad and Hatim Tai. Acrasia should remind you also of the beautiful lady who leaves knights haggard and woebegone in Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci.* Acrasia's imprisonment has also been read as a parallel to the incarceration of Mary by Queen Elizabeth.

Carpe Diem

> Don't trust tomorrow's bough
> For fruit, Pluck this, her, now.

This is a translation of the concluding lines of Ode I. xi of the Roman poet Quintus Horatius Raccus better known as Horace. The last line of the original reads, "carpe diem quam minimum credula postero" of which the words *carpe diem* concern us directly. It means "seize the day" and lays stress on life's impermanence and the pressing need to make the best of the present and enjoy the pleasures of life while still there is time. So in *Amoretti* the poet urges his love to take Time "by the forelock". "Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may", urges Robert Herrick as if in acknowledgement of this urge. You may also read Andrew Marvell's *To his Coy Mistress* and Edward Fitzgerald's translation of the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam. Since this philosophy is to a large extent Epicurean, many hold it as an obstacle to salvation.

Form : Language and Style

Spenser has often been likened to a Rubens and a Botticelli. The Bower exists. Every bud, every leaf and flower seems palpable and Acrasia comes alive with her sensual beauty. Spenser's description of the golden ivy seems to anticipate Baroque sculpture and architecture. Very rightly has it been said that reading these stanzas is like watching a colour film to the sound of soft and soothing music. Once again you will see the artistic use of the 's' and 'I' sounds in Stanzas 70-71 where the poet concentrates on music, natural and man-made. Read Lord Tennyson's *The Lotos Eaters* and as you take a trip into that land of sleep and inaction, you will be strongly reminded of Edmund Spenser. As always, Spenser has relied heavily on assonance and alliteration for that lilting music of his verse. Note the use of archaic words like "eftsoones", "wight" and the power behind that one verb "depasturing". Mark the words "bared bosom", the decking of bed and bower all suggesting sensuality.

You have already been told about the Spenserian Stanza which has been used in this excerpt as well.

Conclusion

The Faerie Queene is "Art become a work or' State". It is more than a poem, it is a part of Elizabethan Culture. Spenser's masterpiece is dedicated "to the praise of the Queen, her Court and the cultural practices by which the Elizabethan regime established and maintained its power". In the excerpts selected for your study you have before you much that was venerated in the age—loyalty, valour, holiness as well as all that was decried and received public censure. A moral and a political allegory. *The Faerie Queene* stretches across the Age and beyond, beyond boundaries of space and time to be read and admired as a fascinating as well as a great poem.

5

Word Notes

Stanza 70

1.	Eftsoones	soon, soon after, forthwith.
	they	Sir Guyon and his squire, the Palmer.
2.	mote	may, might, must.
5.	wight	human being, person.
8.	consorted	united, combined.

Stanza 71

2.	attempred	brought into harmony.
4.	respondence	response.
6.	base	evil, bass or deep-toned.
7.	waters...discreet	water cascades with moderate variations.
9.	warbling	singing.

Stanza 72

1.	whence	from where
2.	fair Witch	Acrasia
	solacing	comforting.
3.	new Lover	Verdant. The word 'new' shows that Acrasia is used to changing her lovers.
	sorcery	witchcraft,
4.	thither	there,
5.	a-slumbering	sleeping,
6.	wanton joys	sensual pleasures.
8.	many fair, .boys	there were many beautiful women and lustful boys. Cf. Marlowe's *Edward II* Act 1.
9.	licentious toys	playthings, equally wanton and sensual.

Stanza 73

3.	seeking...stung	as though looking for a cure, to heal where she had been stung.
4.	greedily..delight	eagerly and hungrily consuming as cattle graze and devour.

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6.	bedewed	moistened, wetted .as if with dewdrops .
7.	spright	spirit.
8.	pleasure lewd	sensual and vulgar enjoyment
9.	rued	pitied, regretted.

Stanza 74

1.	chant..lay	sang this lovely song.
3.	springing flower	flowers born in spring.
4.	Virgin Rose	The rose is untouched and innocent.
5.	bashful	shy and modest.
9.	Lo see..falls away	See how quickly her beauty fades and the flower withers.

Stanza 75

1.	So passeth	Time flows on in this manner.
2.	Of mortal...flower	step by step from our infancy (bud) we pass into youth and reach our prime.
3.	No more..decay	there is no more hope of development once decay (old age) sets in.
4.	erst	also spelt as earst meaning just a while ago, a short time back.
	deck	decorate.
5.	Paramour	Lover.
6.	Gather..Rose	enjoy life to the fullest. Rose stands for pleasures of life.
	whilest...prime	while there is time and one is young and capable of experiencing life's pleasures.
7.	age..deflower	Like a vandal old age will destroy our beauty, our pride and leave us as mere shadows of our former self.
8.	Gather.love	Love and experience love's joys while there is time i.e. while you are still young.
9.	Whilest...crime	so that the lover may be loved just as much as he loves and with equal passion.

2.12.6 Books I and II

It may be of interest to note a few similarities and differences when we read the two

books together. Both the books are "based on adventures that require prowess and moral courage and the two heroes, the Red Cross Knight and Sir Guyon, triumph though with a little support from the great Arthur. Women demand and deserve attention in both the books and Spenser introduces us to the good, the bad as well as the ugly. Against the lovely and virtuous Una is Duessa whose ugliness is exposed (Did Coleridge remember Spenser's lines while writing *Christabel* wherein Geraldine bares her bosom and it is a sight to dream of and not to tell?) and in Block II there is the enchanting Acrasia whose beauty masks inner ugliness.

Of Book 1 it has been said that it is God-centred and the other Man-centred. While the former concerns itself more with morality and integrity, the latter focuses on the natural man, weak and fallible, slave to calls of the flesh. However, the Red Cross Knight too has yielded to earthly pleasures in Book 1 and scholars like A. C. Hamilton are of the opinion that by "destroying the Bower of Bliss, Guyon overthrows all those forces by which the Red Cross Knight falls into sin."

Edmund Spenser : Views

In the twentieth century this 'prince of poets' ran the risk of being dismissed as "'the author of dead monuments with no relevance to a literary living tradition." Fortunately for the poet, both C. S. Lewis and I. A. Richards have argued that reading Spenser is "like living" and growing "in mental health". If Stephen Greenblatt treats Spenser's texts as "distant historical" objects that maintain its distance from modern readers. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield read them as part of "an ongoing struggle". Post-colonial criticism, as mentioned, is at times rather harsh on Spenser. Scholars still debate and dispute, opinions still remain divided, but the arguments/counter-arguments testify that far from showing signs of sinking into oblivion, Spenser continues to attract critical attention and in the process countines to be read.

2.13 ☐ Questions

1. Comment on Spenser's handling of the theme of Love and Time in the poems selected for study.

2. What idea do you form of Spenser's Lady and the poet's attitude towards her from your reading of the *Amoretti* Sonnets?

3. Assess Spenser as a pictorial artist with, special reference to the excerpts from *Prothalamion* and *The Faerie Queene*.

4. Comment on Spenser's portrayal of women in his poems.

5. Attempt a comparative study of the two excerpts from *The Faerie Queene*.

6. Comment on Spenser's art of characterization.

7. *"The Faerie Queene* is enjoyable both as a poem of adventure and as an allegory". Discuss.

8. · Attempt a critical analysis of any one of Spenser's poems.

9. "Spenser's poems are often in praise of Beauty and Virtue". Discuss with special reference to the five Spenserian poems included in your syllabus.

10. Attempt a comparative study of the Spenserian and Shakespearean sonnets.

2.14 ❏ Reference

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6. *Literature in Protestant England, 1550-1660.* Alan Sinfield. Croom Helm. 1983.

7. *English Poetry of the Sixteenth Century.* Ed. Gary Waller. Longman, 1986.

8. *The Faerie Queene.* Gareth Roberts. Open University Press. 1992

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Unit -3 ☐ Shakespeare : W.H. and Dark Lady

Structure

3.1 ☐ Objectives :

I welcome you to this Unit but not without some hesitation. Some of you, 1 am afraid, may want to question the relevance as well as the utility of an introduction to William Shakespeare for, generally speaking, neither in your school nor in your college have you been too far away from the Bard of Avon. You could not have been. A student of English Literature cannot perhaps hope to graduate without reading Shakespeare because it will mean studying the human body and not learning about the heart and the circulatory system. Yet I feel that I should introduce or rather re-introduce Shakespeare to make you aware of certain facts/issues/controversies.

3.2 ☐ Shakespeare : Life and Works

From your study of Shakespeare at the undergraduate level, you know that a great deal

of mystery shrouds the poet-dramatist and his identity itself has been in question for many hundred years now. It has almost turned into a literary detective story, with enthusiasts trying to unveil the truth about a man known to have been born in Stratford-upon-Avon on 23 April 1564 and baptized on the 26th. He had the ambitious John Shakespeare for a father and a mother whose family name you hear of every time the Forest of ARDEN is mentioned in *As You Like It*.

Unfortunately, we know little about the formal education of this poet-dramatist. According to an interesting but controversial anecdote,, he is said to have fled his hometown having written a lampoon on Sir Thomas Lucy who had earlier subjected him to corporal punishment for deer stealing. London was his El Dorado and it was there that he flowered into a poet and a dramatist non-pareil. Will of Stratford-upon-Avon became William Shakespeare only after he settled down in the city of London.

To Shakespeare goes the credit of writing 37 plays, 154 sonnets and 2 long poems *Venus and Adonis* and The Rape of Lucrece in about twenty-five years time i.e. from 1587-1611. In 1611 he retired voluntarily. In 1616 Shakespeare died, most probably on his birthday. Some of his best-known plays (not in chronological order) are *Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, As you Like It. Twelfth Night, Measue for Measure Richard II* etc. It is believed that Shakespeare has written six other sonnets that do not fit in this cluster. They are part of a collection known as *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music*. Do you know that some years back it was claimed that Sonnet No. 155 has been found. Just a claim.and the literary world has perhaps chosen to forget it.

Identity

Who is William Shakespeare? Is he the man whose picture we are so familiar with? Or is there another face behind that *familiar* face? Many of us are aware of the old Baconian theory claiming Sir Francis Bacon to be Shakespeare. Thomas Kyd too has been named but the dates of his birth and death have been enough to omit him from the list. In his Ph.D thesis, later published. A.D. Wraight has given the credit to Christopher Marlowe whose pseudonym, according to him, was Shakespeare. In 1975, the Encyclopedia Britannica (15th edition) commented that Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford (1550-1604), "became in the 20th century the strongest candidate proposed for the authorship of Shakespeare's plays." To refute this claim John Ruskin, obviously a Stratfordian. wonders how a man who had died in 1604 could refer to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 in his plays or write *The Tempest* in 1611. Or, how does one explain the repeated use of the word Will in Sonnets 134, 135, 136, 143 when de Vere was Edward and not William? This is still a live topic. However, for you the safest line to take is to concentrate on what *Shakespeare* has written rather than on who he is.

3.3 ❑ Shakespeare's Sonnets

The addressee in the first 126 sonnets is a "lovely boy" and in the remaining 28 it is a Dark Lady. This Sonnet Sequence has in it a strong dramatic quality, interesting characters, human relationships, conflicts, confrontation, emotional outbursts, all indicative of the "cross-fertilization" of the lyric and drama inevitable in Shakespeare's time. Thus while reading Shakespearean Sonnets, you can be prepared for a double treat. You will find yourself enjoying all of poetry and a little of drama almost simultaneously. Do remember that quite a few of Shakespeare's plays like *Love's Labours Lost, Richard II* etc. do "reverberate with the sonnet poetry".

Date

Assigning dates-to Shakespeare's works has not always been easy. However, it is believed that the bulk of Shakespeare'* Sonnets were written between 1593 and 1597 and the rest by 1600. In fact for the first reference to Shakespeare's Sonnets we may turn to Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598). But Sonnets 138 and 144 were later additions, included in a collection entitled *The Passionate Pilgrime* [Pilgrim] published by Jaggard in 1599 without Shakespeare's permission. The others were printed in 1609 by a Thomas Thorpe and perhaps "authorized" by the poet himself. This was followed by the John Benson edition of 1640.

Dedication

New Criticism of the 1930's may have discouraged a hunt for autobiographical elements in the Shakespearean Sonnets but it has become a literary custom to look for traces of real-life relationships.

3.4 ❑ The Text : W.H.

A part of Shakespeare's dedication reads, "To the Onlie (note the Spelling) Begetter Mr. W.H.". Rarely have two initials created more confusion. To the Baconians W.H. is William Himself. To Oscar Wilde he is the handsome actor Willie Hughes and the claim is that the word "hue/hues" in Sonnets 20, 67, 82, 98, 104 points to him. To a few, W.H. is either the poet's infant nephew William Hart or his "presumed brother-in-law" William Hathaway. One opinion is that W.H. is a commoner for it was an offence to use a plain Mr. before a nobleman's name. But the Mr. could also mean Master and may have been used to conceal W.H.'s identity.

One of the strongest claimants you know is Henry Wriothesley, the Third Earl of Southampton (1573-1624). He was a man of such exceptional good looks that around the time Shakespeare was writing his sonnets, John Clapham, the Clerk of Chancery, dedicated a

Latin poem on the story *of Narcissus* to Southampton, flattering the Earl for his beauty and encouraging him to marry and have children. Southampton's 17th birthday was in October 1590 and the gift of 17 sonnets could have been an appropriate gift because in Elizabethan times boys were expected to get married at 17/18. Moreover, Sohthampton's refusal to many Elizabeth de Vere is also on record. 'Hews' is considered an acronym of HE nry Wriothesley. All these arguments put together give Southampton an edge over most others. But Southampton is after all H.W. and not W.H. and his wife, an angel of virtue, could not have been the Dark Lady. The Earl's claim weakens even further because a man born in 1573 is too old to be called "a lovely boy" at the end of 1590s.

So we are left with William Herbert (W.H.) the Third Earl of Pembroke, son of Mary Pembroke, Philip Sidney's sister. Herbert's reluctance to marry and his rejection of several proposed brides is much like W.H.'s refusal to tie the knot and settle down. It is said (unsupported by documentary evidence) that the Countess had asked Shakespeare to write a few pro-marriage sonnets on the occasion of Herbert's 17th birthday. If true, then the first 17 sonnets at least is poetry made to order like Spenser's *Prvthalamion.* Moreover, Herbert had an illicit relationship with Mary Fitton, and he could easily have been W.H. and the Dark Lady. The fact that both Southampton and Pembroke were Shakespeare's patrons complicate the issue even further.

The Rival Poet

Like W.H. the rival poet also remains a mystery man. It is argued that he is either Samuel Daniel or George Chapman or Ben Jonson or perhaps the lesser known Francis Davison. But who is the Dark Lady? Read on to learn more about her.

3.4.1 Sonnet I

From fairest creatures we desire increase,

That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thy self thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel:
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content,
And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding:
Pity the world, or else this glutton be.
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

Explanation

All beautiful people and things must reproduce so that their beauty and good qualities can be passed on to their offspring (children, plants, etc.). The aged will move steadily towards their final destination and ultimately die but their memory will not fade if children/offspring are produced. Unfortunately, the narcissistic "fair youth' cannot look beyond his Self. He has turned his own enemy and like a candle "sustains" his beauty using his own body as fuel and in the process destroys himself. As W.H. is young and inexperienced he does not realize how unwise it is to remain unmarried and childless. He is miserly and prefers wasting his. good looks and qualities than distributing them generously. The young man will gradually lose the ability to procreate and will ultimately be his own destroyer. Finally, his sterile body, laid to rest in the grave, will be consumed by worms. He should thus heed the warning, "pity the world", get married and sire children.

Critical Analysis

"This sonnet sets out an eugenic proposition". Since W.H.'s beauty is exceptional and needs to be copied before it is lost, Shakespeare issues sufficient warnings. Note the balancing of beauty as fresh as the damask rose and the grave where worms will feed on this beauty. Against the freshness of youth is ageing and decay. In his *Beauty, sweet love, is like the morning dew* Daniel warns that Beauty like the morning dew vanishes and "straight tis gone as it had never been". The Young, it is apparent, require such cautioning for their lack of experience, wisdom and foresight. Shakespeare, older and more experienced, rebukes the youth openly for being miserly and wasting his beauty by not transferring it to his children genetically. The indignant tone of the speaker suggests a kind of desperation at his own inability to make the youth aware of the inevitable and prepare him for what is to come. The use of the word "glutton" is interesting as the youth is accused of consuming his own beauty jus.t as Time engulfs ravenously and hungers for more. Look closely and you will find in these 14 lines the theme of love, time and friendship, all intricately woven.

Readers may disapprove of the poet's insistence in Sonnet 1,9, 13 etc. because there is no reason to believe that reproduction is an antidote to Time's deadly blows. Scholars hold that this conventional idea may be traced back to Plautus' *The Braggart Warrior (c.* 206 B.C.). Another instance of advice conveyed through writing is Calver's *Passion and Discretion in Youth and Age* wherein Discretion advises the Youth to think of the future and not be seduced by his own beauty. You may be aware that through *Gorboduc,* Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, two of the Queen's men, urged her to marry and produce an heir to the throne of England. Attention may also be drawn to the Biblical command. "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1).

Form : Language and Style

Read carefully and you will not miss the admonitory tone in the opening Sonnet

Shakespeare makes it clear that it is not a question of *desiring* 'increase' but *demanding* it. This is a farming or agricultural metaphor that Shakespeare has often used. Read how wisely Polixenes instructs Perdita on the science of breeding flowers in *Winter's Tale* IV. 4.79-103. As the focus is on procreation the internal rhyme "hein.bear" does seem to reinforce "the notion of replication". "The world's fresh ornament" is surely a reminder of "the world's fake ornament" used by Spenser in *Prothalamion*. The youth is nearly likened to a monster feeding on itself and the words "or else glutton be" sound menacing.

In this Shakespearean Sonnet the first quatrain spells out the poet's command as it were. The second is an open rebuke, as also the third. The couplet contains the warning in no uncertain terms. The rhyme scheme is abab cdcd efef gg.

Conclusion

As this is a procreation Sonnet, the complete absence of romance and softness may come as a surprise. Marriage has been presented as a business deal important and essential for what it ensures—a child, not for adding to a family but for preserving the father's beauty. The final line of Sonnet 11 is even more business-like. 'Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die." The metaphor is a reminder that after 1476 William Caxton had printed more than a 100 books. Shakespeare's urging may be interpreted as a proof either of genuine earnestness or of obedience to a superior who has commissioned him to urge and advice.

Word Notes

1.	increase	procreation, offspring.
2.	beauty's rose	rose symbolises beauty, also refers to a part of the female body. The Tudor emblem too was a rose.
3.	ripe	old, ready for harvesting. Reminds us of the proverb, "Soon ripe, soon rotten".
	by time decease	die in the course of time,
4.	tender	young, delicate, soft.
	tender...memory	as an imprint may be taken from a seal so also will the child take on his father's looks or the wife will bear a child which will replicate him.
5.	contracted	under obligation to (in a legal sense), also compressed, curtailed, restricted. Cf. *Ham.* I.ii.3-4. Pledged to himself, "diminished" to the "self-reflexive scope" of his own bright eyes, narcissistic.
6.	Feed'st...flame	provides sustenance and fuel for the flame that gives light.
	self-substantial fuel	fuel from its own body.

7.	abundance	youth's rich qualities. The scracity-abundance contrast recurs in Shakespeare.
8.	thy self..cruel	inflicting cruelty on himself, polarization of self into both a foe and a victim.
9.	world's fresh	the youth's beauty adorns the world and beautifies it. 'Gaudy' ornament does not mean vulgar.
11.	bud	young man with potential.
	content(s)	substance, happiness, pleasure. It also means contents i.e. something contained.
12.	churl	boor, rustic; not meant as an insult. The word "tender" makes it a term of endearment. Also suggests miserliness.
	niggarding	being miserly..
13.	glutton	one who consumes everything greedily.
14.	by the grave and thee.	consumed by both the young man as well as the grave.

3.4.2 Sonnet LV (55)

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
Gainst death and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes

Explanation

The poet claims that no man-made monument can "outlive" his "rhyme". Encased in these verses, the youth will outshine all others. Monuments and tombs may fall due to natural calamities or man-made atrocities like war; they may be pulled down or razed to

the ground but neither fire nor war can wipe out the young man from human memory. Rather, by the strength of these lines, the youth can "pace forth" and all following generations will admire and "praise" him till the day on which the world will come to an end and W.H. too will stand before the Seat of God for the Last Judgement. Till that day he will live on and "live in" the "rhyme".

Critical Analysis

There may be a visual pun at play here via the digits 55 resembling the book's initials *Shakespeare's Sonnets*. All discussions on the Time theme in Shakespeare's Sonnets generally include this poem which concerns itself entirely with this issue. Time is a formidable enemy, to be feared, because nothing can stop the "minutes from hastening to their end" (60). But as in Sonnet 18, 19, 54 (the preceding one) etc., here too the poet reiterates that Time too may be challenged, if not defeated. This Sonnet and the next hold up to view two of Time's greatest foes who, even if they cannot save the human body from its ravages, can make it live on in our 'memory' till the Judgement Day. Rather than occupying a grave, W.H. will find lodgings in the eyes of future readers.

This is one of the most challenging sonnets in the Sequence, exhibiting the poet's unshakeable confidence in his own compositions and perhaps in poetry in general. Art is timeless, beyond Time's reach (cf. Keats' *Ode on a Grecian Urn*) and can disarm Time. A monument fixed in time inevitably degenerates from the moment it is built but "poetry is a self-renewing medium." It becomes "a living record", its subject "encoded into the minds of successive generations of readers - as though part of their substance". Thus the poet can assure, "So long lives this and this gives life to thee" (18).

Read this portion carefully. In Spenser's *Amoretti* Sonnet 75 the poet you know has assured, "my verse your vertues rare shall eternize". In *"When winter snows upon thy sable hairs"* Daniel asserts that Delia's picture will neither fade nor age. "They will remain, and so thou canst not die". The lady in Drayton's *Idea* (6) will "survive" in his "immortal song". Do you still think Shakespeare's claim is original? Definitely not. Shakespeare, like his contemporaries, was just following a convention inherited from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and incorporated into the neoplatonic tradition. Moreover, in the past Roman poets did claim that their powerful lines would make them immortal. Horace's concluding Ode 3.30 celebrates what he has written by stating "I have built a momument more lasting than bronze". Shakespeare and his peers use their lines to make their loved ones immortal. But while Spenser and the others eternalize their ladylove, Shakespeare throws himself open to criticism for the attempt to immortalize another *man* and also for what critics call, his "inflated egoism". H.T.S. Forrest, one of the harshest critics of Sonnet 55, finds it unreadable for its absurd expressions, self-contradictory lines and ungrammatical sentences.

Form : Language and Style

The sonnet begins with a negative asserting the poet's confidence in the power of his lines when placed against Time. 'Marble' suggests hardness and durability and the strength of the lines is indicated by their ability to outlive marble. Lines 4, 5, 9 and 10 exude confidence. Mark how slightingly Time has been referred to as "sluttish". Feminists will take objection to Time's tyranny being compared to a woman's slovenliness and wantonness. Classical and Biblical allusions have been evenly balanced in this Sonnet. As always, the rhyming couplet drives the point home. Note the use of the word 'live', in many forms, as though to reiterate that the sonnet hinges on the issue of mortality and immortality. Do read Sonnet 65 along with this poem.

Conclusion

In Sonnet 55 we hear the tone of assurance in place of rebuke or request. This is one of those sonnets where the poet leaves his readers in no doubt about his own superiority in age, experience and talent. In Sonnet I the poet is critical of the youth because of his stubbornness while in Sonnet 55 he himself runs the risk of being criticized for his over-confidence.

Word Notes

1.	gilded monuments	Memorials in churches would often be decorated with gold leaf. Marble was used for monuments of the rich and the important.
2.	powerful	able to withstand time's onslaughts.
3.	in these contents	in these verses which have been likened to containers.
4.	unswept stone	G N neglected stone monument
4.	sluttish	slovenly. Time is also likened to a negligent housewife.
5.	wasteful war	war that lays waste and destroys life and property.
6.	and broils..	tumult, disturbances, esp. in war. See 1 Henry 6.11.53.
	masonry	The victors razed conquered cities to the ground. In the Holy Bible Christ has prophesied total destruction of the city of Jerusalem (Luke. 19.43-4).
7.	sword of Mars	Mars (Roman) or Area (Greek) is the God of war.
8.	living record	perhaps a record more permanent than flimsy paper. Was the poet trying to get his verses published to make them 'permanent'?

9. 'Gainst   against

all oblivious enmity   enmity which wants the youth to be erased from memory or fails to assess the youth's worth or enmity that is oblivious to all.

10. pace forth   advance or stride confidently, may also mean measures of a verse,

find room   be given time and space, and not be ousted.

11. posterity   future/coming generation.

11-12. all...out   all those coming generations which push the world to the edge. Remember Macbeth's cry, "What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom!" Mac. IV. 1.117. Also. see Donne's *An Anatomy of the World*, 143-4.

12. the ending doom   Last Judgement. On this day those who are to be saved will be placed on the right side of God's throne.

14. in this   in this verse (either in this sonnet or in the sequence).

dwell..eyes.   young man will be remembered by lovers and others who will love him on reading the poet's verse. See Amoretti LXXV.

3.4.3 Sonnet CXVI (116)

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
ut bears it out even to the edge of doom

s be error and upon me proved,
writ, nor no man ever loved

un?
alo   ermined not to place obstacles in the path of true love and hir
Love is not true love if it fails to stand the test of time and
rnal changes and alters with alterations in circumstances

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movements of the beloved like his/her absence/removal/departure. True Love is stable and, like the beacon-showing the way to lost ships, it is a fixed mark. Its true worth is difficult to assess. Love is not at the mercy of Time even though the tyrant can and does deface rosy lips and cheeks. Time's sickle spares none. But Love does not alter with time; it remains stable and endures until the last day of life. If the poet proved wrong and his claim is refuted he will retract all that he has written and will vow that no man has ever loved truly nor has he ever written truly.

Critical Analysis

Time, however, is too formidable an enemy to be defeated only by the power of a writer's pen. There must be another antidote and for that we turn to Sonnet 116, erroneously numbered 119 in one quarto edition. This Sonnet, Fowler claims, is in a way "the climax of the whole splendid series of Shakespeare's sonnets". But Sonnet 116 has caused a ripple in the literary world since it has stirred up controversies over the relationship shared by two men because of the word 'impediment' (singular) which reminds readers of the marriage service in the Book of Common Prayer. The emotional exchange between two men does raise question about the normalcy of their relationship.

One may come to Shakespeare's rescue by reminding his critics that the poet was also a highly successful dramatist writing romantic dialogues for stage lovers, both actually male, a male actor and a boy actor, Passionate words thus did come easily from his pen even if the addressee was a male. It is also for us to remember that Shakespeare did have an ally in Richard Barnfield whose 20 sonnets to 'Ganymede' too address a man and the dedicatee is his friend R. L. Here are some of his lines from *"Sighing, and sadly sitting by my love":*

> He opened it, and taking off the cover,
> He straight perceived himself to be my lover.

Sonnet 116 venerates Love and holds it up as the Victor in the Time/Love tussle. Time admittedly destroys loveliness and lines the face with wrinkles (3) and as Drayton writes in Sonnet 8, takes "pearly teeth" out of a "head so clean" and makes rosy cheeks "sunk and lean". Yet this Vandal cannot destroy Love. Time may be measured in petty hours and weeks but love (and friendship) is indestructible. However, in the couplet Traversi can hear a note of uncertainty. Has Shakespeare been deliberately over-optimistic in his attempt to quell secret fears?

Sonnet 116 presents Time, most conventionally, as a farmer/mower armed with a sickle striking and cutting hours relentlessly. One may argue that the farmer, cruel though his action may seem, is actually using his sickle to. preserve. If crops are not harvested in time, standing crops will rot and perish. The mower strikes but not to destroy. But unrelenting Time cuts ruthlessly to usher in decay while the farmer/mower strikes to prevent ugliness and decay.

Form : Language and Style

Mark the commanding tone in the first line. Shakespeare has juggled with words especially in lines 3 and 4. Note carefully the many references to the sea, mariners and voyages which remind us of the maritime activities of the Elizabethan Age. The chief pause in sense is after the twelfth line. Majority of the words used are monosyllables (only three contain more than two syllables) making the poet sound curt and harsh. Inversion, alliteration, metaphor, Biblical allusions have been sparingly used so as not to interfere with the simplicity of style and diction. The use of synecdoche is particularly effective. Rosy lips and cheeks stand for a woman's beauty, her lovely face in particular. There is a possible pun on alter/ altar thereby extending the marriage metaphor. In this sonnet the quatrains carry the central argument that Love is everlasting but the couplet for once suggests uncertainty, imperfectly guised. The rhyme scheme is abab, cdcd, efef, gg.

Conclusion

Sonnet 116 is yet another definite step in Shakespeare's war against Time. He is determined to emerge victorious even if it means putting forth a somewhat illogical claim in the final couplet. Owing to its position in the Sonnet Sequence Shakespeare's Sonnet 116 does stand as an ever-fixed mark.

Word Notes

1.	Let me not	I will not concede that etc.; I will not be compelled. Note the defiance in his tone.
	marriage..minds	suggests a union that is Platonic,
2.	admit	allow.
	impediments	hindrance, obstruction. In *Much Ado About Nothing* the word is used three times in connection with the stopping of a marriage.
3.	Alteration	change.
4.	bends	is swayed, is not constant.
	remover to remove	changes with the change or removal of the object of love indicating lack of constancy. See Sonnet 25. Wyatt writes "Though other change, yet will I not remove."
5.	ever-fixed mark	permanent and steady as a beacon that acts as a signal for ships
6.	looks on tempests	towers over sea-storms.
7.	It	beacon, love.
	star	the pole star, the northern star signifying steadiness. See *Julius Caesar* III. 1.60-2.
	wandering bark	a lost ship.

8. worth's unknown	its importance has not been understood or estimated.
height be taken	altitude can be measured. The height of the Pole star was important for assessing the position of a ship. It may also mean assessing the importance, quality, type etc. of someone or something.
9. love's...fool	Love is not Time's slave.
rosy....cheeks	stand for physical and external beauty.
10. within...come	to come within the range or reach of the crooked blade of a sickle.
compass come	be within range or reach of the arc of the sickle, a nautical metaphor.
11. his	time's. Time can be measured by units but Love is eternal, timeless,
12. bears...doom	lives on till the Day of Judgement. See word note of Sonnet 55
13. this...error	if it is proven that love is not as constant as claimed and that he has been mistaken.
upon me proved	proved against me. A legal term it may also mean proving the charge of heresy. During the inquisition the accused were tortured till they confessed under duress.
14. L.loved	If he is proved wrong then let it be taken that neither has he written anything nor has any man ever fallen in love i.e. his claim is irrefutable.

The Text

3.4.4 Sonnet 126

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast by waning grown, and therein showest
Thy lovers withering, as thy sweet self growest.
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure:
Her audit (though delayed) answered must be.
And her quietus is to render thee.

(　　　　　　　　)
(　　　　　　　　)

Explanation

The poet addresses the youth as "a lovely boy" who gains in beauty as he grows older. He has within him the power to stop Time's approaching steps for a while with the aid of Nature. The passing of years brings the youth to perfection but according to Time's dictates, the poet grows older steadily. Nature, the supreme mistress, who has chosen him as her own, will hold him back and keep him out of Time's reach. But Nature can stall Time and the moving minutes only for a while. It is but a temporary respite. So the young man should be aware of the hard fact that Nature will at some point hand him over to Time and clear all accounts. She cannot and will not come to his rescue always and forever. The poet is thus concerned about the youth's fate.

Critical Analysis

We began the W.H. Section with Sonnet I and we end with 126, the "Farewell Sonnet" According to Rossetti, this should have been labelled as Epilogue to Part I, Sonnet 125 being the last of the first Part. Some commentators have suggested that the "lovely boy" is Cupid. This may be their attempt to free Shakespeare from charges of holding up a male as the object of his love. But let us not forget that Richard Barnfield had already written in *The Affectionate Shepherd:*

> If it be sinne to love a lovely Lad,
> Oh then sinne I, for whom my soule is sad.

The other point that requires close attention is the brief reference to the poet gaining in age and the boy gaining in youth and beauty. In Sonnet 22 Shakespeare does suggest that youth is an antidote to his own age. While placing age and youth side by side in this context did Shakespeare remember Marsilio Ficino and his methods of prolonging life? However, in Sonnet 126 there is an open acceptance of old age and the fact that as the youth moves towards perfection he unfortunately limps towards the grave.

Nature is Time's adversary for a while and like Thetis who had made vain efforts to endow immortality on her son Achilles, she too tries to hold the youth back. But the poet knows fully well that Nature cannot confer eternal youth and beauty on W.H. for it will be unnatural. The poet understands and so accepts mutability and death. Consequently there is neither bitterness nor pessimism to darken the poem. This poem is bereft of any conventional religious overtones. There are no angels, no heaven, no yearning for salvation, no resurrection, only a void.

If you read this sonnet with Sonnet 63 you will marvel at Shakespeare's mathematical precision and calculation. Note his use of the number 6 "associated with perfection" in this

world. This poem comprises only 6 couplets. If in Sonnet 63 the speaker sees his own end drawing near, Sonnet 126 (63+63) states the inevitable. The open space is the yawning grave which will gladly receive the bodies of the two, our poet and the fair youth.

Form : Language and Style

Note the words "audit" and 'quietus'. They remind of Elizabethan England's-economic prosperity and the sharp rise in trade and commerce. "Quietus", though a single word, combines commerce and theology as it suggests both settling of accounts as well as peace after death. The expression "wretched minute kill" sounds ungrammatical and unpoetic.

Sonnet 126, you can see, is not a sonnet but a 12-lined poem with some empty space which may suggest:

(a) an abrupt end followed by complete silence. See *Hamlet* V.ii.363.

(b) marks in an account book suggesting a pay off.

(c) little moons, suggest waxing and waning or mutability.

(d) empty hour-glass, sandless, indicating the end of life.

(e) empty graves, containers to contain bodies of the youth-and the poet.

(f) single life of the youth as he has failed to marry.

Mark the total change at line 8 and the warning, "yet fear her.." gives a sense of break. Since two whole lines are missing the Sonnet has been written in a series of rhyming couplets and the rhyme scheme is aa bb cc dd ee ff. Such experiments are not uncommon in Shakespeare. His Sonnet 99 has 15 lines. Shekespeare perhaps enjoyed such experimentation.

Conclusion

In this *sonnet* Shakespeare has deliberately made a special mention of closing accounts. Yet the poet has left the poem incomplete. Can it also mean that his love too has no end like his verse? There is no indication here that the poet is about to move into yet another area where the youth will no longer be the focal point of attention.

Word Notes

1. my lovely boy	most probably a term of endearment. May be Cupid.
2. Time's...glass	Time's treacherous mirror which does not show changes wrought by Time. In Durer's engraving Death holds an hour-glass with 'Tickle' shifting sand.
sickle hour	Time holds a sickle in his hand to strike and claim mortals. Some suggest "fickle hour".

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hold	restrain time. Nature is holding him back.
3. waning grown	moves towards maturity, growth is a step towards decay. Remember the waning hour-glass and the moon waning into a sickle.
3-4 therein..grow'st	as the youth's beauty increases his lovers' (friends '?) vitality decreases.
5. sovereign..wrack	All-powerful Nature rules over wrack (ruin), deciding the time when decay can set in.
6. pluck..back	Nature holds him back and keeps him away from Time's clutches.
7. keeps	preserves, sustains.
Skill	ability to retain the young man's beauty and youth.
8. time disgrace	Time will be put to shame for failing to deface the youth. Time will be ashamed of its own ugliness when placed against the youth.
wretched...kill	Nature will destroy minutes that tick relentlessly taking us to the brink of destruction. See Sonnet 60. Minute may be a pun with French *minuit* meaning midnight or the hour of death.
9. fear her	be afraid. The youth cannot consider himself indestructible.
minion	darling, favourite; has been used in a derogatory sense in Marlowe's *Edward II*
10. detain	hold back, preserve
11. audit	account, statement of loss and gain.
her...must be	Nature will have to account for the favours shown to the youth and the profit gained and losses incurred. This accounting may be on the Day of Judgement. The youth should lead a proper life.
12. quietus	clearing of accounts, death. The words *quietus est* written on a contract indicates settling of account, suggests peace and serenity. See *Hamlet* III. 170, 74-5.
And...thee	Nature too will pay off her debt to Time by the handling over of the youth. He cannot escape death which will be followed by 'quietus', eternal peace. See Sonnet 125.
13-14	Rarely have blank spaces created so much controversy. See Discussion.

3.5 □ The Text : Dark Lady

Shakespeare's Dark Lady is no less enigmatic than W.H. and the poet's attitude towards her has stirred up a hornet's nest, as it were. Who is the Dark Lady and wherein lies her 'darkness'? There are scholars who believe that the Dark Lady is any one of these three historical women: Mary Fitton, a lady in waiting to Queen Elizabeth; Lucy Morgan, a brothel owner and former maid to Queen Elizabeth; and Emilia Lanier, the mistress of Lord Hunsdon, patron of the arts. Some also consider William Davenant's mother to be the Dark Lady, but only because Davenant claimed to be Shakespeare's illegitimate son. Another candidate is Shakespeare's wife, Anne Hathaway. In his novel Ian Wilson has opted for Lady Penelope Rich, Sidney's Stella as Shakespeare's Dark Lady.

The Dark Lady proves Boccaccio right. She is a young woman "fickle and desirous of many lovers" (*Il Filostrato*). In Sonnet 144 she is a "a woman colour'd ill, a "female evil". Yet Shakespeare cannot sever connection with her and the sonnets portray a painful and erotic relationship within which the poet remains attached to his mistress through a combination of love and, at times, lust, proving, as A.L. Rowse said that he was "a red-blooded hetero-sexual" after all.

Is the Dark Lady dark-skinned? Sonnet 131 announces, "In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds". Is she white? Perhaps not. Conclusive evidence of the Dark Lady being a black woman may be found in *Love's Labours Lost*, Act IV, Scene iii, in a remarkable dialogue between the King and Biron. Yet Shakespeare addresses her in his Sonnets thereby exploding the myth that the 'lady' of the Sonnet has to be fair in looks and nature.

Read these lines :

> The way she walked was not the way of mortals
> but of angelic forms, and when she spoke
> more than an earthly voice it was that sang:

This is Petrarch's Laura. For a description of Shakespeare's 'dark' mistress read on :

The Text

3.5.1 Sonnet CXXX (130)

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red, than her lips red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight

Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,
As any she belied with false compare.

Explanation

The Lady's eyes are not as bright as the sun nor are her lips coral-red. If snow is white, her skin is the colour of dung i.e. brown. Her hair is stiff like wires, unattractive and rough. The poet has seen peaches and cream-complexioned women but his mistress' cheeks cannot lay claim to such colouring. Perfumes please the nostrils but not the lady's foul breath. The poet finds her voice tolerable though he knows that it is not melodious. The poet has never seen a goddess walk but his mistress he knows moves heavily and clumsily. Yet the poet cannot but accept her and consider his love to be as "rare" and special as any woman who has had a poet lying about her.

Critical Analysis

Apparently an anti-Petrarchan sonnet, this poem highlights the mistress' ugliness that seems but an outward expression of inner wickedness. Twelve lines out of the fourteen mock this coarse woman who is so different from the golden-haired beauties like Stella whose faces are "Queen Virtues Court" (96). It is futile to look for erotic suggestions of the kind so blatantly apparent in Sonnet 128. Shakespeare barely conceals his sarcasm/ laughter compelling us to read the final couplet of 126 and the Sonnets 127 and 132 as "conceited" exercises "in mock-encomium". Or is this Shakespeare's way of stating the harsh fact that looks do not actually matter, it is a woman's willingness and availability that counts? Remember Touchstone's Audrey in *As You Like It?*

The zeal with which Shakespeare counters all conventional descriptions of the Lady of the Sonnet is worth noting. Lively "sparks" issue from the eyes of Wyatt's" lady (20), Spenser's mistress' eyes are incomparable (9) and when Campion's beloved "her eyes encloseth, blindness doth appeare". But the Dark Lady's eyes are no more than ordinary but necessary sense organs. John Wootton's lady's lips are "like scarlet of the finest dye," and Shakespeare's own Lucrece has "coral lips". But not the Dark Lady. Stella's "clear voice" fills the air, when Dray ton's lady "speaketh" most "delightful balm/from her lips breaketh". Not so with Shakespeare's evil angel. Shakespeare is determined to be different; this is how one may account for this studied subversive tone.

Do not fail to notice how in the closing couplet, the poet cannot but laugh at other poets' attempts at beautifying their mistresses and in the process indulging in hypocrisy and

flattery as well. His mistress is presented as one quite unattractive and clumsy and with foul breath, but the complete absence of either indignation, or grievance or sorrow makes one wonder whether or not Shakespeare has been enjoying his readers' discomfort. He knows for certain that he has succeeded in shocking regular readers of Elizabethan Sonnets by opting for a mistress whose 'dark' colour extends from her face to her soul.

Form : Language and Style

Like Spenser's Sonnet LXXXI in particular, this sonnet is based on comparisons. Note the emphatic tone of the first line which sets the mood and prepares us for a list of negative qualities. Look at the abundance of colour but not one is used to compliment the lady. In this sonnet Shakespeare deliberately undermines typical love-poetry metaphors. Each quatrain refers to the mistress but it is the mistress' gentle mockery that runs through the three quatrains with the abab, cdc, efef, rhyme scheme but in a manner suggesting light-heartedness. The 'my love' makes a sudden entry in the couplet (gg) as through after an equally sudden decision.

Conclusion

This is the Sonnet most scholars refer to in their discussions on Shakespeare's Sonnets in general because this, along with 138 and 144, register Shakespeare's determination to break away from the accepted convention of equating sonnets with eulogy, female glorification and idealization. However, in his attempt to establish his stand Shakespeare has been unduly harsh. Moreover, if the Dark Lady is Mary Fitton this is a deliberate misrepresentation for she was indeed attractive, to men at least.

Word Notes

1.	My mistress...sun	The mistress' eyes are not bright and beautiful
2.	coral...red	lips are not ruby - red.
3.	dun	dull greyish brown.
4.	hairs be wires	suggesting Negroid blood. Also suggests hair covered with ornamental wires much in fashion in those days.
5.	damasked, red and white	White, red and damasked are three varieties of roses. The demask rose is pinkish.
7-8	in some...reeks	sweet-smelling breath perfume the air See *Cymbeline* II.2.13-23 But the lady has bad breath.
10.	music...sound	music is sweeter than the lady's voice. Some commentators read that the lady's voice is musical.

11. goddess go	deities walk. Goddesses like Thetis, Athene could be recognized by their gait as Venus in *Aeneid I. 405*
12. treads the ground	walks on the earth, perhaps heavily
13. rare	special, uncommon.
14. belied	falsely portrayed
As...compare	As any woman who has had poetic untruths told about her.

The Text

3.5.2 Sonnet CXXXVIII (138)

When my love swears that she is made of truth.
I do believe her though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutored youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best.
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed:
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O! love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love, loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me.
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

Explanation

The poet states that when his mistress swears that she is honest and her fidelity is beyond doubt, he accepts her statements knowing fully well that she lies. His acceptance may mislead her into thinking that he is native and inexperienced, unaware of the crooked ways of the world and of falsehood and treachery rampant therein. This will at least make her think that he is still untutored and young even though she knows that he is past his prime. The poet does not hold her guilty of lying, rather he gives her credit because the two of them are playing a game at suppressing truths. He wonders why is it not possible for them to be open with each other and honestly admit that one is false and the other old. Perhaps pretence is required in love and lovers do not wish their age to be pronounced. Hence each lies to the other and the relationship limps forward on the crutches of flattery and falsehood, keeping the two satisfied in a strange manner.

Critical Analysis

Another version of this sonnet appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599 with little change in theme and tone. I have already explained that in Petrarchan sonnets the speaker is usually a male lover who, in spite of his lady's cruelty, cannot but love, sigh and suffer. Sonnet 138 has no space or tolerance for such feelings. Rather in this apparently anti-Petrarchan and anti-Sidneian sonnet the poet seems to take pleasure in stating shocking truths both about himself and the lady, about their age and integrity and about pretence forming the backbone of their relationship. Do remember Shakespeare's Sonnet 138 when you hear Bernard Shaw's Bluntschli tell Raina in Act III of *Arms and the Man* that though she speaks in a "thrilling voice" he does not believe a single word she says.

Age in the W.H. Sonnets is welcome as and when it gives the poet the authority to admonish/advise, shower tenderness and affection. But Age is a burden in most Dark Lady sonnets as it loosens his grip on this lady of questionable character who eyes younger men like W.H with growing interest (144j. In *Amoretti* LXXVI Spenser may claim that his love's "fair bosom" is "fraught with virtue's richest treasure" and Drayton may confirm that it is only "virtue that proceeds from thee", Shakespeare's Dark Lady can only turn an angel into a devil. Theirs is a relationship based on hypocrisy, mutual mistrust and carnal desires and "therefore" writes the poet, "..I lie with her, and she with me". They lie to each other and yet co-habit. Nothing Platonic here nor in Sonnet 132 where in return for her physical surrender, Shakespeare vows to proclaim that "beauty herself is black".

This is one of the very few Elizabethan Sonnets where the words "my love" seem more a mockery or perhaps an insult. Slighting comments, open admission of their relationship resting on mistrust and falsehood, do, as intended, shock readers into attention. Love too has received rather harsh treatment. Moreover, though the poet has acknowledged that trust is a binding force, you can feel for yourself that the poet, in this sonnet, is not unhappy with this relationship which is far from stable. Once again, as in Sonnet 130, the purpose it is apparent, is to stand out as a sonneteer with a difference. Shakespeare's contemporaries have yearned for a long-lasting, if not a permanent, relationship but he is quite content, so it seems, with the arrangement that keeps him and his lady together, with each satisfying the other's physical needs.

Form : Language and Style

The opening lines are powerful enough to shock readers into attention. This is what one may call an 'unadorned' sonnet whose strength lies in its bareness The only word play and punning is confined to the couplet. The use of 'we' suggests a strange togetherness. Mark the balancing of euphemistic utterances such as "my days are past the best" with harsh expressions like "her false-speaking tongue". Read the couplet aloud, especially line 13 and hear the see-saw rhythm that finds itself repeated in the incantation "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" *(Macbeth* I i 11-12).

As in most of the sonnets in this Unit the three quatrains witness the step-by-step unfolding of the poet's problems and worries while the couplet with which the sonnet ends records his acceptance and resignation. The rhyme scheme is that of a Shakespearean sonnet—at -»b cdcd efef gg.

Conclusion

The Dark lady is Shakespeare's mystery woman disturbing the poet just as much as she disturbs her critics. A siren, she arouses dark desires in men who come in contact with her and it is her open promiscuity that makes it easy for an Elizabethan sonneteer to focus on female wildness and wickedness. She is as unattractive in looks as in deeds; yet like Lechery she tempts and lures men. What makes the two Dark Lady Sonnets, which do not idealize a mistress, academically interesting is Shakespeare's attitude, his refusal to be shattered either by her betrayal or by her falsehood at a time when Wyatt renounces love; Drayton spells out an ultimatum, "make her love, or, Cupid, be thou dammed" or decides to kiss and part; and Campion implores "Thou are not sweet, unless thou pity me."

Comments

Shakespeare has been targetted both by readers of de-colonized countries like South Africa and by feminists, irrespective of creed and colour, for his portrayal of both W.H. and the infamous Dark Lady. Read the excerpts given below carefully.

> Or mine eyes, seeing this, say this is not,
> "To put fair truth upon so foul a face?"

> (Sonnet 137)

> For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
> Who art as *black* as hell, as dark as night.

> (my emphasis. 147)

The colour black is here synonymous with depravity and baseness. A black face can match only a black soul. With Edward Said one may hold that to these English poets all good lies in Europe; the East and Africa seat wickedness and house men and women of questionable character, suspicion further raised by the colour of their skin and the absence of *whiteness*. Sonnet 127 with its apparent claim that "now is black beauty's successive heir" sounds too hollow to pacify Africa, nettled beyond endurance by constant insinuations, both insulting and unjust. The Dary Lady, as her name, description and nature imply, is the 'Other', the representative of an alien culture to be derided and scorned. Not for nothing have scholars accused Shakespeare of being a racist and after Toni Morrison's *Playing in the Dark* in particular, it is *whiteness* that is now open to probes and analysis.

Feminists brand Shakespeare a misogynist, a sexist for the unflattering picture of the

lady and the glorification of the young man. Note this brand of 'othering'. See how even when the issue is 'fairness', the youth's colour is superior to a woman's whose whiteness, enhanced by cosmetics, may strongly suggest duplicity and deceit (20, 21). The youth is admonished only for small offences such as not transferring his beauty to his children, for patronizing a rival poet and a corrupt lady (144) whereas the *dark* lady can hope for no redemption for her tainted spirit and dark soul. Had it been difficult for Shakespeare, we wonder, to accept female superiority evident from the dark lady's power of enticing men who come in contact with her?

Word Notes

1. made of truth — honest; faithful in love; unable to lie. With a pun also on 'maid of truth', a true virgin.

1 -2 When my...she lies — the poet pretends to believe her lies. Is there a religious implication that it is possible to believe the impossible only on the basis of faith?

3. untutored youth — inexperienced young man.

4. Unlearned... subtleties. — unaware of the ways of the world and falsehood. See Sonnet 66.

5. Thus..young — The poet's vanity is fed when he thinks that the mistress considers him young.

6. days are past the best — past his prime, no longer young.

7. simply...tongue — like a simpleton he accepts her lies. This may also refer to the glib lying of the fork-tongued Serpent to tempt Eve.

8. On both-suppressed: — both the parties lie, one about his age and the other about her fidelity. Both pretend to believe each other.

9-10 But wherefore old — Why can't she confess her untruthful ness and he his age?

11. love's best habit seeming trust — the best thing to do or the best adornment for lovers. to appear loyal or seem trustworthy and pretend to be devoted.

12. and age...told — one who is old and still in love need not have his age pointed > >ut. 'Age' has been personified in this line.

13. therefore...with me — A compromise has been struck and we tell lies easily or we cohabit in spite of being aware of each other's falsehoods.

14. in our faults	with our shortcomings, her false nature and his old age.
and...flattered be	through the lies that we utter we console ourselves and come to an understanding. Our needs are satisfied.

3.6 ☐ Conclusion

As stated earlier, the Shakespearean Sonnet Sequence is a class by itself following no pattern and refusing to be compared/slotted with others of the Age. But do not treat the Sequence as a separate entity within the canon for they do team up with his plays. Read the more mellow verses and seek parallels in his comedies but for female frailty and betrayal turn to *Hamlet, Troilus and Cressida* and the later plays. Mark the attitude of the poet-speaker in his Sonnets. Sidney stoops before a Stella, Daniel before a Delia but Shakespeare pleads for a young man's favour at the risk of jeopardizing his own reputation. In *Between Men* Eve Sedgwick does come to the poet's rescue by christening this longing as "homosociai". But suspicion lingers, for while others woo their ladies with honeyed words, Shakespeare, with eyes only for his 'lovely boy', is strongly critical of his mistress whom he denigrates with relish and delight.

This Sonnet Sequence, as you must have realized, has been so designed by the creator that, with its mysterious dedicatee and addressees of both genders and the poet's attitude towards them, it stands apart from its contemporaries. And William Shakespeare's experiment has yielded results, for no scholarly work on English sonnets, even now, can be considered quite complete without a mention of these "sugr'd sonnets" with which Shakespeare has redefined sonneteering and which even after four centuries continue to satisfy most palates with its marked difference in flavour and taste.

3.7 ☐ Questions

1. Write a brief note on the Elizabethan Sonnet.

2. Make a comparative study of Shakespeare's W.H. and the Dark Lady.

3. Comment on Shakespeare's use of the Love and Time theme in the six sonnets prescribed for your study.

4. What idea do you form of W.H. and the poet's attitude towards him from your reading of the four W.H. Sonnets?

5. "The Dark lady continues to baffle readers for she stands alone, different from her counterparts." Do you agree? Justify your answer.

6. Critically analyse any one sonnet of your choice.

7. Attempt a comparative study of Shakespeare and Spenser as Sonneteers.

8. Write a note on Shakespeare's language, style and the Shakespearean Sonnet form.

9. The Sonnets help us to look into Shakespeare's life and mind." Discuss.

10. Evaluate Shakespeare as a Sonneteer of Renaissance England. Do you think that new light can be cast on these poems written more than four hundred years ago?

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Unit -1 ▢ The Metaphysical Poetry

Structure

1.1 ☐ Objectives

In the following pages you will find analyses of what makes Metaphysical Poetry 'metaphysical' sections on characteristics of Metaphysical wit, conceit, Donne's poems, Marvell's and Herberts—all of which will help give you a clearer and deeper understanding of the Metaphysical Poets.

1.2 ☐ Introduction

The 'term' metaphysical was first used by Dr. Samuel Johnson in his Lives of the poets, to a group of early 17th century poets who attempted to analysis the most delicate shades of their psychological experiences in verse. However, the suggestion for this phrase, came to him from Dryden, who writing in 1963, said of Donne- "He affects the metaphysics...". But we must not understand the term 'metaphysical' in its strict philosophical sense (i.e. verse dealing with metaphysics; poetry dealing with a philosophical conception of the universe and of the role of the individual in this drama of existence. In this sense Lucretius and Dante wrote 'metaphysical' poetry. Actually, the term 'metaphysical' has been in use to describe the special characteristics and features of the poetry of John Donne and of those who were influenced by him, viz.-George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Thomas Carew, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvel I and Robert Cowley. Almost all modern critics of John Donne and his scheool, from H.J.C. Grierson to Helen Garden and R.G. Cox have used this term and analysed its various features. But it must be remembered that Dr. Johnson actually intended the adjective 'metaphysical' to be pejorative. He attacked these poets' lack of feeling, their learning and the surprising range of images and comparisons, they used. But finally after three centuries of neglect and disdain, the Metaphysical poets have come be highly praised and have been very influential in the 20th Century British poetry and criticism.

1.3 ☐ Characteristics

Modem criticism of the Metaphysicals dates from Grierson's anthology and T.S. Eliot's praise of their fusion of thought and feeling. Though subject to intense scrutiny, the Metaphysical poetry has fared well with later critics-some have remarked on the Metaphysicals' expression of the Renaissance individualism, namely that they present a private, nota public world. Many have concentrated upon stylistic features: recondite imagery, dissonance, logical argumentative structure, equivocal nature, and dramatic qualities. Most favoured of all has been the view that 'Wit'-imaginative intelligence shown in verbal and intellectual agility-is a defining characteristics. Now, let us consider the main characteristics of the Metaphysical poetry in detail.

1.4 ☐ Intellectual ism

The Elizabethan poets dealt with certain conventional themes, namely madrigals and love lyrics, in a style of conscious artifice and verbal elaboration. On the other hand, the Metaphysical poets exercised their intellectuality to convey their subtle experience. Actually, these poets were learned, cultivated and intelligent men of rich and wide experience, engaged in the various fields of life. Their world around them was far more complex and it was moving fast-the old simple style was not enough to explore the complex ideas and feelings of the changing phenomena of their world. The worn-out Petrarchan conventions, 'the melodious fluency of Spenser's verse', 'the sweetness-long-drawn out' and the 'decorative use of classical mythology' failed to express the sensibility of the new age in which various warring emotions and sentiments were rife. There wa§ a cry everywhere for "More matter and less words". Anthony Bacon commended Tacitus because he "hath written the most matter with the best conceit in the fewest words of any Historiographer". The metaphysical poets incorporated their learning and intellectual training in their art of poetry. They used words which call the mind into play, rather than those which speak to the senses or 'evoke an emotional response through memory'. They used word's which have no associative value. These erudite poets drew their imagery from such varied sources as Medieval theology, Scholastic phi losophy, the Ptolemaic astronomy of the Middle Ages, and the concept of the contempory science and belief. Their mind move with great agility from one concept to another and it requires an equal agility on the part of the readers to follow them. We are at once reminded of Helen Gardener-"Poetry, like prose, should be close packed and dense with meaning, something to be "chewed and digested", which will not give up its secrets on a first reading" **(The Metaphysical Poets)**. Jim Hunter rightly calls this intellectualism-'brainwork in poetry'.

1.5 ☐ The Metaphysical Conceit

Probably the most commented-upon device of the poetry of the Metaphysical is the conceit. Originally meaning a concept on image, 'conceit' came to be the term for figures of speech which establish a striking parallel-usually an elaborate parallel-between the two very dissimilar things or situation. In other words, a conceit is a highly exaggerated, fantastic and absurd comparison. As Dr. Johnson pointed out much earlier that in a conceit most heterogeneous elements are 'yoked by violence together'. Helen Gardener explains this device as a 'Comparison whose ingenuity is more striking than its justness, or at least is more immediately striking'. Generally, comparison between two unlike things shows for the time being a likeness; but a comparison becomes a conceit when it impresses upon our mind the image of likeness while we are every moment conscious of the basic unlikeness.

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It is generally supposed that the conceit was a curious innovation of the metaphysical poets. But the Elizabethan poetry, both dramatic and lyric, is full of conceits. But an Elizabethan conceit differs from a metaphysical conceit in several ways. Obviously unlike an Elizabethan conceit, a metaphysical conceit is learned. The Metaphysical poets exploited all knowledge-commonplace oresotenc, practical, philosophical, ethical or theological, true of fabulous-to form these conceits. But there is another equally important difference bewteen the metaphysical poets and the Elizabethans, regarding the use of conceits. The Elizabethans used their conceits as ornaments; their conceits were merely decorations. But the Metaphysical conceit is organic rather than decorative: that is to say it embodies and develops the thought rather than merely embellishes it. They are a part of the poet's technique of communication, amplification and persuasion. Helen Gardener rightly sums up-". In a metaphysical poem, the conceits are instruments of definition in an argument or instrument to persuade. The poem has something to say which the conceit explicates or something to urge which the conceit helps to forward".

In sharp contrast to both the concepts and figures of the conventional Petrarchism is John Donne's **The Flea** a poem that uses a flea who has bitten both the lovers as the basic reference for its argument against the lady's resistance against the importunate lover. But the most famous conceit is Donne's Parallel (in **A valediction: Forbidding Mourning**), between the continuing relationship of his and his lady's soul, despite their physical parting, and the co-ordinated movements of the two feet of adraftman's compass. Joan Bennet rightly pointed out that the metaphysical conceit at its most complete is a focal point at which emotion, sense-impression and thought are perceived as one.

1.6 ☐ Argument and Persuasion

As was mentioned earlier, an intellectual quality is an important feature of the Metaphysical poets. Invariably, the demand is made of the reader that the connection of ideas be grasped. The reader is held to a line of argument, a sequence of thought where every stage of development must be accurately followed and understood, if the poem is to make sense. Here, for example, is Donne's The Flea. Here the argument is a clever syllogism which pretends to trap the unwary listener who accepts the analogies or premises Donne offers. He delights the reader by his daring anologies, but in particular by his ingenuity in making so much out of so little.

"Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deny'st me is;
Me is sucked first, and now sucks-thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods—mingled be;
Confess it, this cannot be said
A sin, or shame, or loss of maidenhood,

Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood—made of tvo.
And this, alas, is more than we would do".

'The premise upon which the poet bases his argument is a dexterous analogy between a flea bite, with the mixture of bloods in one flea, and the nature of sexual intercourse and the theology of marriage. From this equation he elaborates a flashing wcM-play which makes the flea the sacramental agency of their union and suggests that their lives an even children, are bound up within the flea. As an exercise in philosophical sleight of hand the poem appeals by its audacity and by its challenge to the reader to argue with the speaker".

1.7 ☐ Concentration

Helen Gardner reminds us of Keats' advice to pause upon a passage and "Wander with it, and muse upon it and reflect upon it, and bring home to it, and prophesy upon it and dream upon it..." and says that this dictum can be applied profitably to much poetry, particularly to the 'Elizabethan and Romantic poetry'. But Metaphysical poetry demands that we pay attention and read on; it does not aim at providing,, to quote Keats, 'a little region to wander in', where lovers of poetry may pick and choose. A metaphysical poem tends to be brief and is always closely woven. Specially Donne possesses this art of concentration ad a sinewy strength of style and that is why they were regarded by many younger writers as their masters. Behind much of the metaphysical poetry, lies the classical epigram and therefore it will be proper to agree with Helen Gardner that 'a metaphysical poem is an expanded metaphor'. Due to this a epigrammatic quality, a metaphysical poem becomes wity and sometimes it suffers from artificial skilfulness or cleverness which verges on Ostentatiousness. Unlike a Spenserian stanza, stanza of Donne and Herbert-"is more like a limiting frame in which words and thoughts are compressed, a box where sweets compacted lie".

1.8 ☐ Wit

In his life of Cowley in which Dr. Johnson first of all employed the term 'metaphysical for Donne and his followers, he used the word 'wit' to describe the special quality of their poetry. Actually the word 'wit' is a 'tricky' term having various sorts of implecations in various ages. The 'wit' of the metaphysical poets can be described in the words of T.S. Eliot-, "as a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience...simple, artificial, difficult or fantastic". Wit is seen in the poet's perception of similarity in dissimilarity and the ingenuity with which he brings together and combines opposites, whether in words or in ideas Donne's poetry is

the poetry of wir, the poetry which uses the intellect to build up complex unities of thought out of materials which are conventionally non-poetic. By the just position of ideas which seem at first sight unrelated and even violently discodant and by their reconciliation in the heart of the poet's imagination, a more concrent and organic body of truth is achieved than is attainable by the use of familiar comparisons. For example, in The Canonization, the lovers are uniquely compared to the phoenix and to the eagle and the dove. Again in The Flea, Donne's verbal dexterity is seen in his likening the body of the flea, which has sucked his mistress' blood and his own, to their bridal bed. Actually, Donne's wit can be constantly seen in his poems-in his use of puns, word play, oxymoron and paradox-they abound in all his poems.

The 'wit' of the metaphysical poets shows their love for learning, but Dr. Johnson's saying that "to show their learning was their whole endeavour" seem not to be justified. Actually, the wide learning of the metaphysical poets had become a part of their poetic sensibility and it proved itself of extreme value of them-in discovering universal analogy in the midst of the most diverse kind of experience.

1.9 ☐ Element of Drama

The dramatic elements of the metaphysical poetry cannot be compared with the excellence of the Elizabethan drama, yet the relation of the former with the latter cannot be denied. Both Shakespeare and Donne used in their works, words commonly used by people in their daily life, which could render a heightened sense of dramatic situations. Specially in his songs and sonnets Donne used the technique of dramatic monologue-(in a dramatic monologue, the poet takes the speaker in a highly critical moment of his life and through his utterances, makes him lay bare his motives, ideas and principles. The dramatic monologue, like a soliloquy, is predominentJy^rgumentative and analytical, but while the soliloquy is a sort of private debate, a dialogue of mind with itself, a dramatic monologue permits the presence of some other characters who generally keep mute. The rapid and subtle shift of mood within these poems shows the natural conversation and behaviour, the mystical devotion of the lover, his banter; and the externalisation of his cynicism and mystical devotion intensify the dramatic situation of his poems.

Even the opening lines of the metaphysical poems are dramatic e.g.-

"I wonder, by my troth, what thou, - and t

Did till we loved"?

(Donne: The Good-Monow)

"O" Who shall, form this Dungeon, raise A soul inslav'd so many ways?"

(Andrew Marvell: A Dialogue between the Soul and Body.)

1.9.1 Humour

Jim Hunter deplores the fact that poetry has been compartmentalised into the categories of light, tragic, lyrical, elegiac and some other forms. It is ridiculous to do so just as we may "allot specialised jobs to people" and may not "expect to meet much versatility in accomplishment". But the metaphysical poets are surely the exception. They on the one hand deal with serious philosophical themes and on the other they blend with them touches of humour. Humour makes a metaphysical poem sober and charming. A serious philosophical statement, coloured with a subtle sense of humour makes some of these pomes most unique and interesting. Andrew Marvell's **To his Coy Mistress** or George Herbert's **Easter wings** are two brilliant examples.

1.9.2 Unified Sensibility

T.S. Eloit (**The Metaphysical Poets: Selected Essays**) finds this peculiar quality in the metaphysical poets because they, he says, combined thought and feeling-the two components of sensibility. Their poems were the product of intellectual effort as much as of emotion. A poem, abounding in exuberant emotional outburst lacking the conscious effort on the plane of thought to tame it shows a dissociation of sensibility, dissociation of thought and feeling from each other. Shelley's **Ode to the West Wind** and Beethoven's Fifth **symphony** are such examples. They loosen the chains of their emotions which sweep violently. But in the words of T.S. Eliot, the metaphysical poets possessed mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience". They tried to "find the vertical equivalent for states of mind and feeling". In Chapman and Donne there is "a direct sensuous apprehension of through, or are-creation of thought into feeling. "To Donne," a thought was an experience; it modified his sensibility".

1.9.3 Diction and Versification

In reaction to the sweet sounding words and phrases and hackneyed poetic diction of the early Elizabethan poetry, the metaphysical poets developed their own poetic diction. Their words are often prosaic, rugged and 'unpoetic'. They prefer colloquial speech to the sweet cadence of sensuous poetry. Their diction is restrained and simple, but its most remarkable quality is that the etymological meaning of their words changes, particularly in the hands of John Donne; no word conveys its commonly accepted connotations. Without a detailed study of the contextual meaning of a word, its full force cannot be discovered-we shall have to suspend our modern interpretation of a word and work out from the text what a word in a poem stands for; they thus serve the purpose of the poet of fuse thought and feeling.

Their versification is coarse and jerky. They rhythm is dictated by the meaning. It functions as a stimulant to the intellect; it is intricate to the extent of complexity of thought; it is revealed only when the shifting of emphases, according to the sense it carries, is grasped.

1.10 ❑ The Canonization: Introduction

The Canonization is a popular love poem of John Donne, expressing his positive attitude, towards love, an attitude of satisfaction and deep absorption in a love relationship. In **The Canonization,** there is a factual evidence of its dating-, the evidence being of ruined fortune and the king's face. Donne's fortune was ruined after he married Anne More in 1601 and was dismissed from the service of Sir Thomas Egerton and at least for next fourteen years, Donne had to undergo severe economic crisis. So the ruin of the fortune of Donne has its relevance to his love affair and in this sense the expression- "... ruin'd fortune flout' in **The Canonization** has immense importance in our endeavour in fixing the time of composition of the poem. The reference to 'king's face' in the poem is also significant. After the death of Queen Elizabeth, King James-I had acceded to the throne in 1603. Hence, it can be confirmed that the poem must have been written sometime in or after 1603, that is, by the time Donne has already tasted the aversion of the world to love. In this poem he reacts sharply and yet cunningly and confidently against the resentful and hostile demean of the World. Here Donne takes his love for Anne More as divine love and in his unique way proves the lovers to be 'Canonized' for love and to inspire even the worldly minded people with intense desire to emulate the two lovers. Though the argument in the poem centres on the love affair of Donne and Anne More, the range of the poem is cosmic. In fact, the whole of the contemporary world and the associated materials that come within the range of Donne's baroque consciousness, are composed into the five stanzas of the poem.

1.10.1 John Donne (1572-1633) : Life and Works

Donne related on his mother's side to Sir Thomas More, was born into a devout Catholic family. Educated at home by Catholic tutors, Donne went at the age of 11 to Hart Hall, Oxford, favoured by Catholics because it had no chapels, so that recusancy attracted less notice. He may later have transferred to Cambridge, but his religion debarred him from taking a degree in either university. In 1593 his younger brother Henry died in prison after being arrested for harbouring a Catholic priest. Somewhere about this time Donne apparently renounced his Catholic faith. He forfeited his chance of a civil career when he secretly married. Anne More, Lady Egerton's niece and daughter of a Surrey landowner. He was dismissed from Egerton's service and briefly prisoned. Donne's next 14 years were marked by fruitless attempts to live down his disgrace and find responsible employment.

Donne's earliest poems, his satires and Elegies belong to the 1590s. His unfinished satirical epic. The progress of the soul' bears the date 1601 and some at least of his Holy Sonnets were probably written in 1610-11. His 'Songs and Sonnets' are, however, largely impossible to date even approximately. Of his prose works, Pseudo-Martyre, an attack on Catholics who had died for their faith, and an attempt to gain royal favour by encouraging surviving Catholics to take the oath of allegiance to James, was published in 1610; Ignatius His Conclave an onslaught on the Jesuits in 1611. Biathanatos was a defence of suicide. His sermons appeared after his death in three volumes.

1.10.2 The Thought of the Poem

The speaker blurts out an impatient rebuke to some critic who objects to his being in love and tells him to find some other occupations. The man who is dissuading the lover may attend to his own advancement, but at any rate he should leave the lover undisturbed. In the second stanza, the lover continues the argument for his love, this time in the manner of rhetorical interrogations. He asks what harm his love has caused-have his sighs drowned ships? Have his tears flooded grounds? Does the coldness of his sighs prolong the winter? How does the lover's passion affect the health of society?

Actually this is a sarcastic rejection of the exaggerated claims of sonneteers writing in the Petrarechan tradition (an increasingly degenerate form of hyperbolical praise of a lady, and itemization of the lover's pangs, deriving from Petrarch's sonnet sequence, written to immortalize his beloved Laura).

The world goes about its business, the speaker maintains even though they are in love and he admits that the most unsavoury similies may be applied to them (without reprehension, since it is love which make them what they are). Let them be called 'flies' (for blindly copulating?) On tapers, which at their "Owne cost die" (that is, candles, burning but consuming themselves-based on a common pun of the word 'die' which had a secondary meaning of 'complete the sexual act", a meaning which was itself probably founded on the popular superstition that each sex act shortened one's life by a day). The speaker cannot outdo his accusers in similes. The "Eagle and the Dove" may be found in them (possibly a reference to voracious appetite and peaceful constancy, both of which are aspects of love) and the riddle of the phoenix finds an example in them, since they are two sexes accommodated" to one neutral thing" and -

> "We dye and rise the same, and prove
> Mysterious by this love".

Beneath the rather graphic physical accuracy of the image, there is an almost blasphemous level of religious allusion. The phoenix (the fabulous bird which produced its own succession

from the ashes of its funeral pyre) of course "dies and rises the same" in a myth sense, but it is impossible to escape the suggestion of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, which is mystery in the proper religious sense, a sense insisted upon not only by the title (see word-notes), but by the marked religious vocabulary ('hymns', 'hermitage') which follows. Donne's witty metaphoric finds its basis, and ultimately derives its meaning, however, from the fact that romantic love had for many years been treated in literature as a 'religion' with its own god, saints, hymns, and so forth.

The speaker goes no to say that their 'legend' (an account of a saint's miracles and exemplary deeds) will be fit for sonnets, if not for chronicles, but that a "well wrought urne" (sonnet) befits the greatest ashes as finely as a 'halfe-acre tombe' (chronicle) and that by these hymns (sonnets written in their praise by succeeding generations of lovers) all men will recognise that they have been "Canonized for love". Future ages will 'invoke' them (that is, ask them to intercede at the throne of the deity) as lovers:

> "Who did the whole worlds soule-
>
> contract, and drove
>
> Into glasses of your eyes
> (So made such mirrors and such spies,
> That they did all to you epitomize,)
> Countries, Towns, courts: Beg from- above
> A patterne of your love!"

The 'religion of love' figure is here complicated by the Platonic concept, of the world -soul (in Plato's **Timaeus,** the physical world is regarded as a total organic body with its own soul) and the celestial Ideas, or forms which are the model (Patteme) for all earthly phenomenal. Donne is suggesting, through metaphor, the intensity of a love which, by excluding all external considerations, in effect creates its own little world - the idea or heavenly blueprint which is worthy for all aspiring lovers. There is also a neat union of the physical and the abstract in the image of the lovers' eyes as 'mirrors' (to be interpreted either as an optical device or as a speculum, a common title for encyclopedic works) which 'epitomize (either bring rays of light to a focus or gather together in summary form as in an encyclopedia) 'Countries, Townes, courts'. (Based on the Coles)

Actually **The Canonization** is based upon a Paradox. (A PARADOX IS A STATEMENT WHICH SEEMS ON ITS FACE TO BE SELF-contradictory or absurd, yet turns out to make good sense). Love of women is profane activity denounced by the church, but here the poet daringly treats profane love, as if it were divine love. The lovers who are absorbed in the pleasure of the flesh are cunningly described as saints. But the poet cleverly argues his case and succeeds in establishing that devoted lovers are the saints' - saints', saints of love'. They

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have renounced the world for each other and the body of each is an rhermitage' for the other. They are as devoted each other as a saint is to God and so they are the saints of love. Thus a physical relationship is treated like a spiritual relationship. We are not sure whether it is a parody of Christian sainthood. But if it is at all parody, it is intensely a serious parody.

1.10.3 Wit in the Poem

The element of wit is present in The Canonization to an appreciable context. The poem contains many devices of wit, the apostrophies of the first stanza, the exaggerations and rhetorical questions of the second and the associations and conceits in the remaining stanzas. It is also to be observed that there is in the poem that particular kind of wit that results from the complexity of attitudes and wide range of experience. It begins with a tone of impatient defiance and end on a note of pious exultation. The breathlessness of the opening stanza with short clipped phrases gives way ultimately to the invocation and prayer. Thus even in the space of one short poem, the poet's mood and tone shift' from one extreme to the other and the rhythm and diction keep pace to the swift transition.

1.10.4 Important Annotations and Explanations

1. **Title:** The Canonization - the fact of being regarded as a saint; achieving sainthood. The central conceit of the poem is that the lovers have been canonized - declared to be saints - for love. "This could imply that their love had a mysterious and unearthly quality or that they have been martyred by those who have excluded them from the public world or that their loving has been so vigorous they have become martyrs by wearing themselves out". (Richard Gill).

*l*1. - The words are addressed to some friend or well-wisher who tries to dissuade the poet from love-making. Here the lover is imploring in the name of God because secular love is being regarded as a saintly pursuit in parody of Christian sainthood. This colloquial outburst and many other lines in the poem are remarkable for the abruptness of their speech rhythm

l2-13: **Palsy** - Paralysis

Gaut - a disease affecting the joints, commonly associated with old men.

Just as it is useless for the friend to chide the poet for suffering from gaut, palsie or baldness, so it is equally useless to try to dissuade him from love-making.

l17: **King's real or his stamped face**

The critic of the poet's love either may contemplate the real face of the king by taking a job at the court or contemplate the king's face stamped on coins by hoarding wealth. He must not waste time in trying to disturb the poet's love-making. It is a fine example of Donne's wit. The language of economic is a recurring feature in the poem (e.g. - 'stamped face'). The

reference to the king shows that the poem was written after the accession of king James I in 1603.

l 10. - Alas, alas - more a parody of the cynically critical attitude of the people towards lovers than a regret over his own plight.

l 10-*l* 18. "What is the poet's attitude in this stanza? If there is scorn in his voice, is it still directed at the disturber, or is his real target are those petrarehan love-poets who write of lovers' tears drowning the world or their sighs creating storms."

l 15. **plague Bill** - list of the victims of plague. The plague broke out in epidemic form in London in the last decade of sixteenth century and again in the first decade of the seventeenth century.

Actually, the lover here argues that the heat of his passion has not affected the health of the society, his fevers have caused pain and sufferings only to his own self. Others have remained unaffected by his fevers; then why the people is so much antagonistic to his love-making?

l 20. **"Call her one, mee another fly"** -

- They are both like flies, beacuse they are constantly moving round each other without any specific purpose. They love each other equally well.

l 21. - The lovers are also like tapers (candle) for they burn themselves out for each other's love. A.B. Chambers argues that the reference is to the taper- fly which burns itself to death by approaching a flame. Both the flies and taper consume themselves and enjoy their being consumed to death. Donne uses the same sort of image in Elegy VI, (U-17-19) -

"..... so, the taper's beamy eye

Amorously twinkling beckons the - giddy fly,

yet burns his wings...".

l 21. - 'die' - Here, as elsewhere in Donne, there may be a play upon 'die' meaning the loss of sexual power after sexual consummation. The-traditional idea that sexual intercourse shortens life may also be present.

l 22. - The eagle is a bird of prey while dove is mild and innocent. But the poet and his beloved combine in themselves qualities of both of the eagle and the dove. They are both gentle like the dove and both of them are also tyrannical and destructive like the eagle. They prey upon each other and destroy each other. Their love is self-consuming. Out of this image of death comes the image of resurrection of life- "the riddle of the phoenix".

l 23-*l* 27 - The phoenix is a mythical bird which every thousand years rejuvenated itself by being consumed in flames and rising renewed from its ashes. This riddle of the phoenix

makes more sense because of their love. Though the lovers are two separate personalities, their love makes them one and so they make a neutral sex like the photnix (the phoenix is not one bird, but, two birds - the male and the female - forming a single neutral whole.) Again like the phoenix, they as one are consumed by fire of their physical sexual passion, and out of each sexual consummation they are reborn afresh in their life.

Actually the phoenix image was used in Sicilian poetry and later by Petrarch and many Petrarchans, Petrarch made the bird the image of his desire for Laura; Daniel hopes that his verse, phoenix like, will renew his Delia's life, Giles Fletcher wishes to rise again like the phoenix from the fire of his love and Sindney refers to Stella as a phoenix. So Donne has plenty of precedents in this respect, but his brilliant originality lies in using the bird to mean both the lovers and makes it hermaphroditic.

l 28-*l* 33. The lovers can die by love, a possibility suggested in the preceding stanza. The suggestion in these lines is that when the lovers have died, their legends may not be fit for tombs and hearse, but it will be fir for verse. Their names and deeds may not be recorded in history (possibly a dig at the traditional books of history which cenre on only the deeds of misdeeds of the king on rulers) but their unique love story will be celebrated in sonnets.

It should be noted that the word 'hearse' here has not the modern meaning - i.e. car for bearing the coffon. Here it means a temple-shaped structure used in royal funerals, decorated with banners and lighted candles and on which it was customary for frineds to pin short poems or epitaphs. Again James Reeves points out a clever conciet in the term".... "sonnets pretty rooms". Here, Donne is using 'sonnets' loosely for love poems, and 'stanza' in Italian means a 'room'.

1.11 ❑ Questions

Essay type questions :

1. Comment on the appropriateness of the title of 'The Canonization'?

2. What is a 'conceit'? Comment on the use of conceits in the poem.

3. Consider 'The Canonization' as a metaphysical poem.

4. Elaborate Cleanth Brooks' statement that Donne daringly treats profane love as if it were divine in' The Canonization' ?

Short and objective type questions :

1. "The phoenix riddle hath more wit/By us." Brign out the meaning of the phoenix metaphor.

2. What does the word 'die' in the poem connote?

3. To whom does the poet address in the opening line of The Canonization' ?

4. Why do the lovers in the poem compare themselves to fly and taper?

5. For what do the eagle and the dove stand?

6. Name the disease images used in the poem.

1.12 □ The Extasie : Introduction

This poem is, in the words of Jack Daglish, a 'remarkably subtle work', perhaps the most famous of Donne's love poem'. By blending passion and ratiocination, the poet has presented a very fine case of the claim of the body in love. The soul may be responsible for the spiritual or platonic love, but the importance of the body, the physical basis of love cannot be denied. K.W. Gransden is right when he says that the word 'sex' is used in its modem sense for the first time. The two lovers meet and love and their souls leave their bodies and parley with one another. But physically, they are not aware of what they did before they loved each other: it was not sex which provoked them to do so. This is the state of 'ecstasy'. This is purely the plantonic conception of love arising out of physical relationship and culminating in the heavenly love. The idea of the parleying of the two souls is also derived from Plato's idea of the immortality of the soul, its rebirth and 'new knowledge of the personality achieved by the fusion of the two lovers' souls'.

They mystery of love will not be revealed unless the bodies of the lovers meet. The body is the book in which it lies hidden. The influence of the old Philosophy (in the Platonic idea of love and sex) and the Renaissance materialism (in the emphasis on the body) are evident in this poem. A.W. Gransden refers to this when he writes—

"The passion and certainty of **The Extaise** make it one of Donne's greatest poems. At the same time, the realistic 'earthing' of the poem's metaphysic which takes place at the end makes it one of the most metaphysical (in the literary sense) of all his poems".

Actually in **The Extasie**, Donne achieved for once the perfect reconciliation of the physical and the spiritual which he was seeking in so much of his poetic thought.

1.12.1 The Extaise : Commentary

Extasie refers strictly to the supreme mystical experience in which the soul, transcending the body, attains the vision of God. This idea, defined by the neo-platonists and taken over by Christian philosophers, in common 17th century use, simply meant the mind's transcendence over the body. The poem opens with the two lovers, "one another's best", sitting on a river bank their hands joined by a balme" which suggests an anointment of religious, magical

properties, and looking into one another's eyes. 'Entergraft', used to describe their intertwined hands, is a word of Donne's invention to emphasize the reciprocal force of the gesture. Their souls, however, have gone out of their bodies, and are compared to two armies, going forth to meet upon a battlefield, while their physical bodies, made pure by love, lie still upon the bank. This 'extasie' shows them the true source of their love as making one soul out of the mixure of the disparate elements in both of them. *Love* brings them together and as a transplanted violet, causes the one new soul, composed of both their former ones, to overcome loneliness. Yet the poet continues, this one new soul knows of what it is made, that is, that it must descend to the body for affections. Their bodies, while not the sum total of the lovers, are nonetheless their 'spheres' as they themselves identify with the intelligences or souls. They owe their bodies thanks, for that is how they were first drawn to each other and consider them alloy rather than 'drosse' - Heaven's influence on man operates in such a way that body must first encounter body before their souls can merge. Spirit, he says, holds together both man's body and his soul, and pure lovers' souls must descend to the sense and their faculties, "Else a great prince in prison lies"-i.e. the undiscovered bodily, provience. so they must turn to their bodies for further instruction. Although 'love's mysteries' are nurtured in the soul, the body is love's 'Booke', that is the source from which all mysteries of love are revealed. And the poet concludes, if anyone should have overheard or seen them, he will observe small change when the lovers do go about occupying their bodies - the same spiritual quality of their love will be in operation. This is a reversal of the first part of the poem, in which the lovers' spirits had left their bodies to negotiate on some purer ground. However, the logical argument has progressed to the point where soul needs body as the instrument of its revelation, and so the ending is the logical result of the initial argument. Donne's images are drawn from the realm of mystical experience, Christian philosophy, the neo-Platonic and scholastic psychology; they serve to progress the argument of his love poem.

The poem has a pastoral setting in keeping with the usual practice of the poets in the age. More specifically, Donne, in this respect, might have been influenced by Fulke Greville and Sidney. But Donne is unique in his setting of the poem. In The Extasie, the outdoor and the pastoral are mixed up with the indoor and the human. There is a fertile bank, but it is raised high like a pillow. The raised bank is the resting place of the violet, but the lovers are also resting close-by, in each other's arms. Thus through the use of suitable imagery, the indoor and the outdoor worlds are intertwined and human interest is imparted to the pastonal setting.

The Extasie is a clear expression of Donne's philosophy of love. Donne agrees with Plato that true love is spiritual - it is a union of the souls. But unlike Plato, Donne does not neglect the demand of the body. It is the body which brings the lovers together. Love beings in sensuous apprehension and spiritual love follows upon the sensuous. So the claims of body must not be ignored. Union of bodies is as essential as the union of souls. Thus Donne goes

against the teachings both of Plato and the Christian Divines in his stresses on the sensuous and physical basis even of spiritual love. In this respect he comes close to the Renaissance and modern point of view.

Again the philosophical background to the poem is provided by a number of medieval beliefs and philosophies and we have to understand those philosophies for a better appreciation of the poem.

Firstly, the idea of the soul, coming out of the body is derived from Plotinus who believed that in a blessed moment, the soul comes out of the body and converses with the Divine or the Over-Mind and ultimately the process resolves the mystery of life. In The Extasie the souls of the lovers come out of the body and the body remains inert, motionless. However, in the poem, the souls of the two lovers do not hold converse with the Over-Mind. They converse with each other and the mystery of love is thus resolved.

Secondly, the medieval theologians believed that the soul of man was formed of three different elements i.e. - (i) the animal or sensual soul, closely bound to the body; (ii) the logical or reasoning human soul; (iii) the intellectual soul. All these ideas are in background of Donne's poem. For example -

> "But as all severale soules contain
> Mixture of things they know not what,
> Love, these mixt soules doth mix again
> And makes both one, each this and that".

Thirdly, there was a belief in medieval Physiology that the blood contains certain power and spirits which together make up the soul. These 'spirits' or powers were thus regarded as intermediaries between the soul and the body. This faith is reflected in the following lines of Donne -

> "As our blood labours to beget
> Spirits, as like soules as it can,
> Because such fingers need to knit
> The subtile knot, which makes us - man".

Lastly, the conception of the older Ptolemic system of astronomy is also incorporated into the poem.

> "But O alas, so long, so faree
> Out bodies why doe wee forlocare?
> They are ours, though they are not wee :-
>
>   - Wee are,
>
> Th' intelligences, they the sphere".

The Intelligences were the s̶ts which inhabited the different heavenly bodies and imparted motion to them. Thus souls are the Intelligences which inhabit the body and impart to it life and movement.

In conclusion, we agree with the opinion of George Williamson about the mature of love in Donne's "**The Extasie**". Donne like Herbert is interested less in the moral casuistry of love than in the philosophical question provoked by it. Hence the debate in **The Extasie** may involve body and soul, rather more than two lovers".

The Extasie is one of Donne's best metaphysical poems in the literary sense because conceits are drawn from several branches of learning as well as in the philosophical sense because it is concerned with such metaphysical problems as the union of souls and the relationship between soul and body. Moreover, it tries to fashion a language adequate for souls. The music of the verse - its rhythms and cadences - might be said to be so refined that it sounds like the elevated language a soul might be imagined to use.

1.13 ☐ Questions

Essay type questions :

1. How does Donne combine thought and feelings in 'The Ecstasy' ?

2. Consider The Ecstasy' as a metaphysical poem.

3. Do you agree with the view that 'in many respects 'The Ecstasy' resembles some of the love and the religions poems.

4. How is the dichotomy between physical and spiritual love resolved?

5. Comment on the use of conceits in the poem.

6. Would you call The Ecstasy' a poem of seduction? Give reasons for your answer.

Short and objective type questions :

1. What is meant by the term 'ecstasy' ?

2. What is the function according to a contemporary medical; idea of 'balm' in the human body?

3. What is actually meant by the 'intelligences'?

4. Explain the meaning embodied in 'Else a great prince in prison lies?

5. What is referred to as 'subtle knot'?

6. Why do the souls of the lovers return to their bodies?
(Hints for the answer: The respective souls return to their bodies so that the lovers 'may

find in physical union the mystery of love revealed, just as the mystery of religion is revealed in the Bible.')

7. What does the ecstasy at last 'unperplex' ? (/. 29)

8. Why do the lovers owe their bodies 'thanks'? (/. 53)

9. What do you mean by the term 'subtle knot'? (/. 64)

10. Is there any significance in the comparison of the body to 'book'?

1.14 ❑ Suggested Readings

1. John Carey, John Donne: Life, Mind and Art. (1981)

2. Gardner, Helen, ed. John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays. (1962)

3. Leishman, J.B., The Monarch of Wit. (1962)

4. The complete English Poems of John Donne; ed. Patrides, C.A.

Unit -2 ☐ The Garden: Andrew Marvell

Structure

2.1 ☐ Andrew Marvell (1621-78): Life & Works

Marvell was born at Winstead in Holderness, Yorks. In 1624 the family (Andrew, his parents, and three older sisters) moved to Hull on his father's appointment as lecturer at Holy Trinity Church. Marvell attended Hull Grammar School. He matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, as a sizar in December, 1633, being elected to scholarship in April 1638 and graduating B.A. in 1639. In 1637 he had contributed Greek and Latin Verses to a Cambridge volume congratulating Charles I on the birth of a daughter. His mother died in April 1638, his father remarried in Novemebr. In January, 1641 his father drowned while crossing the Humber. Between 1643-47 he travelled for four years in Holland, France, Italy, and Spain, learning languages and fencing, and perhaps deliberately avoiding the Civil War.

From 1650 to 1652 Marvell tutored young Marg Fairfax, daughter of the parlimentarian general, at Nun Appleton in Yorkshire. In this period he wrote 'Upon Appleton House' and lyrics such as 'The Garden' and the mower poems. In 1653 he might have written 'Bermudas'. In 1654 with 'The First Anniversary' he began his career as an unofficial laureate to Cromwell and was appointed Latin Secretary to the Council of State.

From June 1662 to April 1663 Marvell was in Hbland on an unknown political business, possibly espionage and in July 1663 he travelled with the Earl of Carlisle as private Secretary on his embassy to Russia, Sweden, and Denmark. His satires against Clarendon were published in 1667. Later that year he composed his finest satire 'Last Instructions to a Painter', attacking financial and sexual corruptions at Court and in parliament and took part in the impeachment of Clarendon. The Rehearsal Transpos'd which set new standards of irony and urbanity, appeared in 1672.

The history of Marvell's reputation is extra-ordinary. Famed in his day as patriot, satirist

and foe to tyranny, he was virtually unknown as a lyric poet. Even when his poems were published in 1681, they were greeted by two centuries of neglect. Charles Lamb started a gradual revival. It was not until after the First World War, with Grierson's Metaphysical Lyrics and T.S. Eliot's Andrew Marvell, that the modern high estimation of his poetry began to prevail.

2.2 ❏ The Garden: Commentary

Of MarvelFs longer lyrics The Garden' is probably the best-known and most enjoyed. It has wit and beauty, variety and depth. It is very original and adventurous. It is also very difficult.

A keen analyst will see that the nine stanzas divide into two sets Of four, with a final signleton by way of a coda. It is no .accident that only I, V and IX start with exclamations, or that IV and VIII alone delve into the past.

In stanza I the poet deprecates ambition, which driven men to distraction as they vie for hollow honours, crowns of leaves from this tree or that plant. The slight shade cast by an isolated tree or plant hints at a prudently possive life-style. The thick shades of congregated trees and flowers in the garden weave the only garlands worth having, 'garlands of repose'.

In II, III, IV he goes on to say that, far from being ambitious himself, he has long sought Innocence and Quiet, those inseparable sisters. He has looked for them for years in great cities. Now he has stumbled on them in the garden, where he ought always to have expected them to be. No society is half as civilised as this solitade: no women are as loving as these trees. Foolish lovers do not understand this, but the God of Love does; it is to the garden that Cupid comes to relax when not employed in affairs of the heart. Garden trees and plants were what the ancient gods loved on earth all along. The myths have misrepresented their aims.

Stanza I is a single sentence, despite they heavy punctuation employed to slow the pace down. Thus the antecedent of 'Whose' in line 5 is 'Herb or Tree', more especially 'Tree'. The limited shadow cast by the isolated tree reproaches, from the standpoint of prudence, the professionals who overtax themselves in the sun. 'Narrow verged' is a compound adject! ve despite the lack of hyphen. It covers many square yards. In line 7 'Close' means 'Combine'.

A crown of palm leaves traditionally reworded the warrior, a crown of oak leaves the citizen or athlete, a crown of laurel (bays) the poet. Marvell seeks on Laurel here for himself. Crowns were also woven in classical times from grass or parsley, wild olive or pine, ivy or myrtle: 'Some single Herb or Tree' could be any one of these.

The word 'heat' provides the first pun in the poem. In Marvell's day gentlemen 'ran a heat' when they raced their horses against each other for practice; for purses they 'ran a

course'. There was also the 'heat' engendered by the 'Passion' of love, the 'Flame' of line 19. Love too was hotly competitive. 'When we have run our passions heat' plays on the two senses.

There is a second pun on 'race' in line 28, or so it would seem. There was the obvious 'race' on foot between the fleeing Daphne and the ardent pursuing god. But, as such races always ended in the metamorphosis of the maiden, which happened here. Daphne's barrenness was the end of their 'race' or family. 'It is your duty to give me grandchildren'— Perseus, the father of Daphne, had told her in Ovid.

There is no pun or ambiguity, however, in 'retreat' in line 26, where the keyword is 'hither'. Freed for a time from active service, Cupid 'makes his best retreat' to this garden. He travels to it as unerringly and expeditiously as he can. The Garden is not being called a retreat.

In V the poet is the innocent lord of creation as he wonders through the garden-alone: innocent, because he is free, and the place is free, from all carnal desires—there are not even any animals about; lord, because he is so much superior to the trees and the plants. But he can still be the target of innocent love. Mature fruits play the feminine role. They welcome his approach and, within their physical limits, ply him with their individual charms; his senses are innocently gratified.

Stanza VI takes a step up the scale of valves. 'From pleasure less', meaning (as Leishman rightly says) 'from the lesser pleasure of the senses'; the mind withdraws 'to the greater pleasure of its own inner happiness'. The withdrawal began in line 39 (hence the 'Meanwhile' of line 41). Significantly 'the Mind' is not called 'my mind'. The pleased body, now mindless, remains on the grass. 'Withdraws' is not a military metaphor, but a social one. It is as though the lord leaves the high table on the dais in the thronged hall for the privacy of .the quiet withdrawing room.

The new paramountcy of 'the Mind' is asserted and hammered home by the repetition of the word in the triplerhyming 'Mind-kind-find' of lines 43-4. Thus detached, it becomes the reader's mind as much as the poet's; the mind of man.

The 'ocean' metaphor is born of the belief, old as pliny, that each 'kind' of land creature has its counterpart or close 'resemblance' living in the sea. Similarly in the mind. Marvell argues, the image or idea matches the reality; they recognise each other straight-away ('straight' is an adverb).

Since stanzas V and VI form one episode. It is likely that Marvell intended 'a green thought in a green shade' to epitomise the active mind of the abstracted thinker, physically passive in shadow on the grass, where line 40 Left him. As M. C. Bradbrook and M.G.

Lloyd Thomas wrote, 'There must be a green shade, otherwise no green thought: that is, he only achieves the power of complete detachment through the instrumentality of that particular time and place'.

Between VI and VII there is an interval of time and a change of scene. And though in VII the poet resumes in the same present tense, he is in fact recalling separate ecstasies in different parts of the garden on various occasions in the recent part:

> Here at the Fountains sliding foot,
> or at some Fruit - trees mossy roof...

In VIII the tone changes completely and Marvell goes back to the part with his tongue in his cheek, as he had done in IV. There it was the mythical part of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Here it is the Biblical part of Genesis, the story of Adam and Eve.

A thorough re-reading of stanzas V to Vn will show that, in selecting the material, Marvell was quietly devising a solo paradise of his own which in due course would stand comparison with the solo paradise of Adam in VIII. Thus, in V to VII the trees are all fruit-trees and an apple-tree is specifically named; in legend, though not in the Bible, the fruits of the tree of knowledge were apples, of course.

And now the last part, the final stanza, arrives; but only after another interval of time and another change of scene. Paradise is forgotten. Adam was the only gardener there. Here in the sunshine, away from the canopy of trees, a professional artist has laid out the latest seventeenth century garden novelty, a floral sun-dial.

2.3 ☐ Interpretations

The Garden' is MarvelFs evocation of the green world, of the world, of the attraction of the retreat into solitude in nature, not only "because of the sheer delight in nature ... but because of the way in which the poem problematizes the very pleasures that it celebrates, raising questions about the moral validity of retreat at the same time as it portrays its attractions. Nor is 'the Garden', Marvell's last or only word on the pleasures of gardens. The garden served as a potent and variously significant symbol in seventeenth century literature and art and Marvell's garden poems reflect the variety of meanings and associations of gardens at that time. Garden could represent a sinful presumption of human culture and the garden itself could be seen as a place of sin. Examples of such negative gardens include the so-called power of Bliss in Spenser's Faerie Queene and the kind of garden as in Marvell's own poems. "The Mower against gardens' where the mower 'argues that not content with falling from God's grace himself, man next conspired to make all nature fall alongside him; and that the art of gardening represents man's reduction of the innocent plants and flowers of the field,

meadows into sinfulness. "Luxurious man...sold". The moral disapproval of garden and gardening is clear from mower's diction - words such as luxurious, vice, seduce, dead, double (in the sense of duplicitous or false), all reveal a view of garden and gardening a sinful presumption. Marvell actually satirizes the excess of seventeenth century garden-mania.

However, Marvell's The Garden' gives us a vision of a perfected world. The perfect world here is such a place which offers intense pleasure, insight and enlightenment and which also allows the harmonious exercise or fulfilment of all faculties - sensual, intellectual, and spiritual. It is a would where perfection has been achieved by means of certain exclusions. This world of the garden contains no society, no business, no politics, no sex (and that means certainly no woman), and also attempts to exclude time and history. The poem thus challenges the reader to consider the moral validity of experience attained at the expense of all social commerce and responsibility.

The celebration of the garden takes place at stanza five, the first four stanzas of the poem jibe at the activities of the mundane world beyond this garden. The garden lays bare its riches, resources and reveals the poverty and deficiencies of all pursuits in comparison with the rich rewards of the garden life. Marvell satirises the wordly awarding of laurels for achievements in various fields—military (palm), civic(oak), and literary (bay). On the other hand the rewards offered by the garden are superior to those offered by endeavour in the world beyond. Activity in the world is cast in an unfavourable light by means of words such as 'vainly', suggesting either vanity or feutility, and 'amaze', suggesting a state of perplexity, even madness.

Stanza two further upholds the argument that the pleasures which one obtains in the garden surpass those of the world beyond the garden. 'Quiet' and innocence which men frantically and phrenetically look for are found in the garden. The poet rejects the society in favour of the 'delicious solitude' of the garden. He calls society rude in comparison to the pleasure of the garden.

Rejecting the claims of military, civic and literary endeavour and the world of society and business Marvell boldly proceeds to compare the relative attractions of amorous and sexual pleasures with the pleasures offered by the garden. In stanza three of the poem the poet compares the innocent pleasures of the garden with those of amorous pursuits, sexual activity, and women. The 'White' and 'red' of line 17 stand for the physical attributes, specifically those of sexual allure of women. Against the appeal of the white and the red, Marvell pits the 'Green' of the garden, arguing that green far surpasses the other colours in its beauty and appeal. Marvell vehemently is against the practice of the lovers who carve the names of their mistresses on the bark of the trees and argues that these lovers little realise that how far the beauty of the trees itself exceeds the beauty of any woman.

To reinforce the argument that plant beauty surpasses that of women the speaker has

recourse to classical mythology. Mafvell maintains that Apollo and Pan described Daphne and Syrinx, the two mortal women., not as women, but desired them expressly because they were to become plants - Daphne was transformed into the flower that now bears her name and Syrinx was transformed into a reed.

Stanza five introduces the reader to the garden via the great, but innocent, sensual pleasures it provides. The description of the pleasures moves from the oral pleasure offered by the grapes, to the tactile pleasure of the suggestively rounded nectarines and peaches, to the total abandonment of the poet ensnared, stumbling and falling on the grass. Unlike the original garden, Eden experience which was lost through the transgression and fall of man into sin, the 'fall' described here is harmless, merely a "fall on grass".

In addition to the sensual pleasures provided by the abundant fruits and flowers of the garden, the speaker's mind 'Withdraws into its happiness". The garden provides the ideal setting for contemplation, for meditation, for those creative or re-creative functions out of poetry itself is produced, indicating the links or affinities between poets and gardens:

> Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less.
>
> Withdraws into its happiness:
>
> The mind, that ocean where each kind
>
> Does straight its own resemblance find,
>
> Yet it creates, transcending these,
>
> Far other worlds, and other seas,
>
> Annihilating all that's made
>
> To a green thought in a green shade.

MarvelPs >mage of the mind as an ocean is based on the common belief that the creatures found on the land had their counterparts under the sea, a belief which led to names, such as sea-horse, sea-cow, sea-lion being given to marine species. The mind, the poet believes, has its enormous creative powers; not only it can re-create all kinds of life found in the external world, but transcending these, it is also capable of creating 'Far other world's and other seas' hitherto unknown. The intellect/mind moves beyond the known world to uncover or create a transcendent reality which, importantly, has its roots in nature. The reality created by the mind and the act of writing poetry) has the capacity to supersede, even replace, external reality annihilating it.

The garden, as we have already mentioned, offers a visionof a perfect world. Apart from its divers wonders, the garden does provide an occasion and a setting for spiritual reverie:

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Here at the fountain's sliding foot,

Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,

Casting the body's vest aside,

My soul into the boughs does glide:

There like a bird it sits, and sings,

Then whets, and combs its silver wings;

And, till prepared for longer flight,

Waves in its plumes the various light.

The experience here in these lines quoted above is the experience of the soul leaving the body. The speaker's soul leaves his body and, 'like a bird', glides into the boughs of a tree, preening its wings. This separation of the soul from the body is a rehearsal for the 'Longer flight' that it will take on the death of the body and has been achieved through nature.

The ninth and final stanza poses something of a puzzle for readers of the poem. For many readers, 'the final stanza serves to complete the celebration of the garden as a true retreat from the world outside, complete with its own sense of time (with a pun on herbal thyme), innocent and wholesome, in the form of the floral sundial. For others, however, the sense of time complicates or compromises the celebration of the garden experience, possibly suggesting its own temporality or conditional nature'. But the final perhaps provides a frame in which to view the garden experience presented in and by the poem. Denish Cuthbert points out The attractions of the garden are great. It offers the opportunity for true re-creation—both in the sense of a pleasant way of passing the time and in the sense of an imaginative re-ordering or re-creation of human experience. The garden serves the needs of the body with an innocent sensuality, of the mind as a place for contemplation, and of the soul by offering communion with God's creation through which the speaker experiences a transcendent moment of spirituality, to be surpassed only by the final flight of the soul from the body at death: till prepared for longer flight." As this allusion to the future event of final transcendence suggests, the garden, while coming very close to that experience, does not offer finakranscendence itself. It offers a rehearsal, a metaphor, an analogy, an approximation of that longed - for event. It offers also various reminders that as rich and rewarding as its experience may be. there is a world beyond the garden with obligations, and responsibilities that cannot be overlooked —a world of time, of history, a world of society and politics, a world of human commerce. As the speaker himself reluctantly acknowledges, true solitude is 'beyond a mortal's share'. The garden may be entered and enjoyed, but must also be relinquished again. Its experience provides a temporary respite from the rigours of the world, but not a permanent

escape. The garden itself highlights both its wonderful difference from the world outside and also the necessity of returning to that world.

But the poem is not as simple as it looks. There is a major antithesis in the poem and this antithesis depends upon the distinction between the active and contemplative life. The garden of the title is primarily a garden of solitude and contemplation, to which the poet retires from society (and women) to muse. One will find in the poem a depiction of different kinds of gardens. For example, in stanza three, the garden is presented/depicted as a superior substitute for sexual love, in stanza five, we have a picture of a sensual, natural garden.

The first and second stanzas introduce this antithesis. Whereas ambitious men enter into the garden to win a garland as an emblem of their success in the world, the poet retires to nature/garden for solitude and for contemplation. Peace is wrongfully sought in 'the busy companies of the man'. Society is "rude/to (compared to) this delicious solitude, the poet says in stanza two, "thereby reversing the conventional association of civility with society.

This garden of solitude and contemplation excludes not only society in general but women in particular. Eden, the poet says, would be greater without the distracting presence of Eve. But on the other hand, the images of sensual ripeness in stanza five "luscious clusters of the vine", "melons", "ripe apples", and soon, suggest that "the garden may after all be suffused with a kind of feminine presence... perhaps sexual pleasure is not so easily renounced as the poem's explicit argument asserts. Can one finally imagine a garden of Eden without an Eve?

2.4 ☐ Questions

Long answer type questions :

1. What values or qualities are evoked by the image of the garden in Marvell's poem?

2. Attempt a critical estimate of Marvell's'The Garden'.

3. Comment upon Marvell's treatment of nature in The Garden'.

4. Examine The Garden' as a typical metaphysical poem.

5. What is the meaning of the lines "Mean-while the Mind, from pleasure less/Withdraws into its happiness?

Short and objective answer type questions :

1. Explain the meaning contained in the line "Society is all butrude"?

2. What is meant by the phrase "delicious solitude"?

3. Who are Apollo. Daphne, Pan and Syrinx?

4. How was Daphne changed into a laurel and why? (Hints for the answer: the legend has it that when pursued by Apollo, Daphne called upon her goddess mother to save her. She was changed into a laurel.)

5. How was syrinx transformed into a reed? (Hints: Pursued by pan, the nymph Syrinx fled into the river Ladow. where she was changed into a reed.)

6. What is the significance of the bird in stanza VII?

7. Are there any images in the poem which suggest that 'the garden may after all be suffused (with a kind of feminine presence?' Hints: the images of sensual ripeness in stanza five.

2.5 □ Suggested Readings

1. Ann E. Berthoff: The Resolved Soul: A Study of Marvell's Major Poems. (1970)

2. Kenneth Friendenreich. cd, Tercentenary Essays in Honour of Andrew Marvell. (1977)

3. Arthur Pollard, ed. Andrew Marvell Poems: A Casebook. (Includes major essays on The Garden' and 'To His Coy Mistress'. (1980)

4. Christine Rees, The Judgement of Marvell. (1989)

5. Michael Wilding, ed. Marvell: Modern Judgements (1969) (Includes essays on The Garden', To His Coy Mistress etc.

Unit -3 ❑ The Pulley: George Herbert

Structure

3.1 ❑ George Herbert (1593-1633): Life & Works

Herbert was born in Montogomery into an old and prominent family. He was educated at Westminster School and was elected a scholar in Trinity College, Cambridge, when he was named King's Scholar in 1609. George published his first poems (Two sets of memorial verses in Latin) in a volume mourning Prince Henry's death in 1612. George was ordered deacon, probably before the end of 1624, and installed in 1626 as a canon of Lincoln Cathedral and prebendary of Leighton Bromsworld in Huntingdonshire.

In his short priesthood he gained a reputation for humulity, energy, and chanty. He was also a keen musician and would go twice a week to hear the singing in salibury cathedral which was, he said, 'Heaven upon Earth'. He died of consumption. When he realized that he was dying he sent his English poems to his friend Ferrar with instructions to publish them, if he thought 'they might turn to the advantage of any dejected soul, and otherwise to burn them. The Temple, containing nearly all his surviving poems, was published in 1633.

3.2 Q Herbert: Religion Poetry

Herbert was born and brought up in an age of religions controversies. In the early 17th century, Christianity under the impact of the Renaissance and new scientific knowledge, was no longer a matter of unquestionable faith. The new religious leaders were humanists who had a rational approach to religion. Hence various religious views emerged and competed with each other for popular acceptance. Thus in Christianity, there were at least three branches existing simultaneously - the Roman Catholics (they were Orthodox and demanded adherence

to the medieval church, the puritans (they were progressive and pleaded for liberty of the individual in matters of faith) and the Anglicans (they were moderatists; they chose the middle course, avoiding the excesses of the other two). In fact, the Anglican church was the most popular institution both in the reign of Queen Elizabeth and James I. The Anglican church represented the spirit of the age. It was product of the English mind at a seminal stage of its social and religions history. Its aim was to preserve all that was worthwhile in the past. In short, it was a model for the 'British' church which, as Herbert said, 'Neither too mean nor yet too gay'.

Herbert's religions faith had grown and developed in the Anglican church. He was influenced by it right from his childhood, under the benign guidance of his pious mother. When he came of age, he felt a natural and congenial attraction towards it. His subject matter was Anglicanism which appealed to him because of its moderation and dignified humility. It will be therefore, apt to say that all the time he wanted to be an Anglican poet. He says—

> "Give me the pliant mind, whose - gentle measure
> Complies and suits with all estates;
> Which can let loose to a crowne -
>   and yet with pleasure
> Take up within a cloisert's gates".

Herbert's poetry may be called a long Christian song with all the possible melody and sweetness. He writes of the perennial conflict between the spirit and the flesh, virtue and vice, life and death, the mortal and the immortal. He sings of the infinite behind finite, of the light behind darkness. He talks of eternal truths and his anthology, The Temple is like Tagore's Gitanjali; his cry is the same as Tagore's—

"That I want thee, only thee — let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core". (Gitanjali - xxxviii). But what is most interesting is that in some poems, his theme is the humanist aspect of Christianity. He sees Christ's sacrifices not only as a doctrine of substitution and imputed righteousness, but as a history of human goodness and suffering, of how a man who was also God, gave his life for the erring, ungrateful humanity.

3.3 ❏ The Pulley: Introduction

It is said that Herbert's poetry is "the expression of an ardent temperament with a single emotional outlet". Herbert was a priest of the church of England and alone among Donne's followers, Herbert composed religions verse exclusively. **The Pulley** deals with God's device to lift man up to him. When God created man. He gave him all his choicest blessings except

only one - rest. God withheld next because he thought that when man would feel restless, he would surely turn to God and so the bond between the creation and the created would never be snapped.

3.3.1 The Pulley : Thought of the Poem

When God first created man, He thought of best owing on him all his choicest blessings. Thus he gave man strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, pleasure and all other gifts till only rest was left to be endowed on him. At this stage, God pondered for a little. He thought that if man would enjoy rest, he would be so contended that he would forget his creator, and hence both God and man would be losers. Therefore, God decided to keep back rest from man. He wanted that when man would be weary, he would feel restless and this restlessness would make him remember God and pray to him for peace of mind.

3.3.2 Commentary

The Pulley is a fine example of Herbert's preoccupation with religious themes and his devotion to God. The poet deales with the relationship between man and God and it clearly shows how both man and God would be losers if the link between them is severed. The theme of the poem has not been taken from the story about the creation'of man as we find it in the Bible; but Herbert seizes upon the theme by virtue of his own spiritual experiences and treats it in a highly imaginative manner.

Actually, **The Pulley** recreates in Christian terms, the classical story of Pandora, the first mortal woman. Jupiter gave her the box, now proverbially known as Pandora's box, packed with all the blessings of the Gods. The Jewel of the blessings was 'hope' which lay at the bottom. When the box was opened, all the blessings, except 'hope' slipped out and were lost. In Herbert's poem also, God gives man a box, full of all gifts—strength, beauty wisdom, honour and pleasure. But "out of his" glass of blessings standing by. "He does not pour out the Chief blessing 'rest', for the thinks that if man was given that benediction, he would have no incentive to seek Him. In this way, God uses 'restlessnesses' as the pulley to toss man towards Himself. The deeper implication is that man's profaneness, his defects, darkness and harsh passions cause him repining 'restlessnesse' which can be transformed into mental peace and serenity by God's grace and adoration.

The poem has a fantastic title like some of Herbert's other poems, **The Quip** for example. Actually, a pulley is a wheel, used for raising weights. The word 'pulley' is not used in the poem directly. However, Herbert makes the pulley signify the device; God used to lift man to Himself. The title is thus an example of metaphysical conceit.

The image of the "glass of blessings" reminds the reader of metaphysical wit. but of course, the image is unlike the far-fetched images of Donne.

Grierson remarks that the poem" is inspired by a philosophical conception of the universe and the role assigned to the human spirit in the great drama of existence". Herbert does not directly say that God withholds peace of soul from man until he turns to him for it - he. - the poet does not openly preach a sermon about the salvation of the soul, but he presents this familiar religions doctrine in a novel manner. The concept of the 'glass of blessings' the punning of the word 'rest' and the portrait of God as a kind, wise benefactor serve to translate Herbert's idea into something vividly dramatic. As one reads the poem, one becomes increasingly aware of that fusion between thought and feeling which constitutes Herbert's belief.

3.4 ❑ Questions

Essay type questions

1. Comment upon the appropriateness of the title of the poem 'The Pulley'.

2. Consider The Pulley' as a religious poem.

3. Assess the greatness of Herbert as a poet with special reference to his 'The Pulley'.

4. Comment on the use of the various images in "The Pulley'.

5. Is 'The Pulley' related to the myth of Pandora and her box?

Short and objective type questions

1. What is'pulley"?

2. What does the 'glass of blessings' contain?

3. Why did not God bestow 'rest' on man?

4. Explain the meaning contained in the line 'And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature'.

5. Sum up the theme of the poem.

3.5 ❑ Suggested Readings

1. Charles, Amy **The Life of Gvorge Herbert** (1977)

2. Fish, Stanley, **Self-consuming artifacts** (1972)

3. Harman, Barbara, **Costly Monuments** (1982)

4. Stein, Arnold, George **Herbert's Lyrics** (1968)

5. Vendler, Helen, **The Poetry of George Herbert** (1974)

Unit -4 ❏ John Dryden : Absalom and Achitophel

Structure

4.1 ❏ Objectives

This unit has several objectives:

(a) It aims to provide detailed background information about the age and outline of life of Dryden.

(b) It will relate the text *Absalom and Achitophel* to its social background.

(c) It will discuss the literary qualities of the text.

(d) It will critically comment on the various themes present in the text

4.2 ❏ Introduction

The death of Elizabeth-I led to the accession of Stuart monarchs of Scotland on the throne. James-I believed in the Divine Right of Kings and he passed on this belief to his son and successor Charles I. However, by the seventeenth century conditions had changed in England and absolute monarchy as exercised by the Tudors was no longer possible.

There were frequent clashes between Parliament and the king. Matters were worsened by religious conflicts. The Puritan groups wished to have no truck with Catholicism while the Stuart dynasty was uneasy with their power and was inclined to be more tolerant, particularly since Charle's Queen was a Catholic. In addition many of the more radical elements (like Milton) wished to have a Republic rather than a monarchy, as being more in accordance with God's will. Finally, Charles I did not have the charisma or genius of Elizabeth. Soon the Civil War broke out between the Royalists and Republicans, known as Cavaliers and Roundheads respectively. The Civil War ended with the beheading of Charles I and installation of Oliver Cromwell, the general of the Parliamentarian army as the Lord Protector. The royal family fled to France; Charles Fs eldest son Charles II became the king-in-exile. After Cromwell's death, his son became the Protector but he did not possess his father's ability. People were growing increasingly restive under the restrictive rule of the Puritans. Finally, by popular acclaim Charles II was brought back as the king. Since monarchy was restored, this age is called the Restoration. This period extends from 1660. the year Charles II was restored to the throne, until 1700.

However, restoration of the king did not mean an end to political troubles. The old conflict between Protestant and Catholics still went on, with the Protestant majority always suspicious that the Catholics had nefarious plans. The fact that James, Duke of York, next in line to the throne, was a Catholic did not help matters. The period saw many conflicts and intrigues in the royal court, including the Popish plot and Exclusion Bill crisis. The power of the king was also reduced with proportionate growth of the power of Parliament. The age saw the rise of the two parties. Tories (supporters of the king and conservative policies) and Whigs (supporters of Parliament and Protestant supremacy). Even today the two principal British parties are referred to by that name. But by his charm and cleverness, Charles II managed to keep control.

In literature the tone is markedly different from that of the Renaissance. The Renaissance was marked by imagination and originality, as Marlowe, Shakespeare, Donne, Spenser testify. The Restoration writers preferred classical models. Their writings were characterized by reason, moderation, good taste, control and simplicity. Wit was highly prized, as the mark of the truly sophisticated cultured man. The ideals of scientific experimentation promulgated by the Royal Society of London (established in 1662) influenced the development of clear and simple prose. The great philosophical and political treatises of the time also emphasize rationalism. **Essay Concerning Human Understanding** (1690), by John Locke, insists on strict rationalism and empiricism as the basis of all knowledge. In **Two Treatises on Government** (1690), Locke establishes the theory of Social Contract, which states that the authority of the governor is derived from the governed and is always revocable if the people are dissatisfied with their rulers. These trends influenced eighteenth century as well, so that sometimes the period extending from 1660-1780 is taken as one

cultural unit, divided into three ages only by the names of the three most conspicuous writers of the periods.

Almost inevitably the age saw the organized development of satirical poetry on political topics. Various political parties have become sharply polarized; but they were afraid of another civil war and so contented themselves with literary assaults on each other. London had become more sophisticated and the aristocracy and educated townsmen could enjoy the cut and thrust of satire better. Lastly the development of the strongly knit heroic couplet, which could show off wit and was well adapted for sharp, hard practicalities also stimulated satirical composition.

In literary history, the forty years between the Restoration and the beginning of the eighteenth century is sometimes called "The Age of Dryden". Dryden, of all great English poets, was the least original; he produced hardly anything new, whether in the realm of ideas or in the realm of new artistic forms. But he assumed leadership of every literary movement and his genius gave new vigour to the currents and passions of his time. The literary world of his time cannot be complete without an estimate of his dominant contribution to it, hence this labelling of an age-by a single writer.

4.3 ☐ John Dryden : Life & works

John Dryden was born on 9 August, 1631, in the parsonage house of Aldwinkle. All Saints, near Oundle in Northamptonshire, where his maternal grandfather, Henry Picketing, was rector. His family was connected to the Parliamentarian side. Though his family belonged to the gentleman class they were not rich. After early grammar school education, he was admitted as a king's scholar at Westminister. He went on to Trinity College and got his B.A. His poems gained him both admirers and enemies. In 1668 he was appointed poet laureate and as historiographer royal. When James II became the king, Dryden became a Catholic. After the Protestant Revolution he was deprived of his post. However, after death he was buried in Westminister Abbey.

Dryden began to write poems from his schooldays. His earliest elegy *Upon the Death of Lord Hastings* is clumsy. His next important poem is *Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell*, where he expresses admiration and grief for the dead dictator. But when the king returned he wrote *Astrea Redux* in celebration; since the title means. The Return of Justice' he was obviously hoping for better times. He continued in this vein in *Annas Mirabilis* (The Year of Miracles): here he describes the events of the year 1666 which included a naval bettle with the Dutch and the Great Fire of London. All three pieces were written in heroic couplets. They show his mastery over the verseform and are vigorous at places. In his late life he also wrote two long religious poems - *Religio Laid* and *The*

Hind and the Panther. But Dryden's true genius lay in satirical poetry. In *The Medal* he made a stinging attack on the Whigs. In *MacFlecknoe* he makes a satirical and personal attack on a rival poet, Thomas Shadwell. Shadwell is represented as the heir of Flecknoe, a very bad poet, and the new ruler of the kingdom of dullness and nonsense in prose and verse. A combination of geniality and witty contempt gives the poem its special flavour. His greatest achievement of course is *Absalom and Achitophel.* Dryden was a popular dramatist as well. His most successful play written in the style of Restoration Comedy of Manners is *Marriage a la Mode.* He also popularized the Heroic Tragedy through plays like *The Conquest of Granada, Tyrannic love, The Indian Emperor, Aureng-zebe,* and *All for Love,* an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra,* written in blank verse. However, all his tragedies are artificial and cannot satisfy us. Dryden's prose marks the beginning of modern English prose and the birth of proper English literary criticism. His most famous critical work is *Essay of Dramatic Poesy,* It is in the form of a dialogue and discusses the merits of various English dramatists. His prose is conversational, lucid but elegant. It is marked by intimacy and vigour.

Dyden excelled in nearly every variety of verse-forms: lyrical, didactic, satirical, narrative. Above all, he produced the first successful mock-epic. *Absalom and Achitophel* is also a model for all times for political satirists. He established the heroic couplet, making verse more mellifluous and regular. His prose is clear and direct. In both he set up certain trends that endured till the Romantic movement. It is not therefore surprising that the Restoration Age is known as the Age of Dryden. His achievements is summed up as, "the genius of our countrymen...rather to improve an invention than to invent themselves."

4.4 ☐ Background to *Absalom and Achitophel*

Dryden's best known poem *Absalom and Achitophel* is political in its origin and scope. The occasion of its writing is this :

In 1678 there was great uproar over the so-called Popish Plot. One Titus Gates, warned the government that the Roman Catholics were plotting to murder the King and establish their religion with the help of foreign invasion. The magistrate Godfrey before whom he had given testimony was murdered shortly after. This was taken to be proof of Gate's accusations. The men accused by Gates were arrested and many were executed. Later the accusations and the conspiracy were found to be lies but at that time the majority believed in the danger of a Catholic takeover of England.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, the leader of the Whig party, became Gates' patron. Charles II had no legitimate son. Therefore his brother, James, Duke of York, a Catholic, was the legal successor. Shaftesbury decided to force the King to exclude him from succession to the throne. He wanted to make the King's illegitimate son, James, Duke of Monmouth, a

Protestant; the heir instead. In 1680 he introduced the Exclusion Bill for this purpose. Though the House of Commons passed it, it was defeated in the House of Lords. Though the king loved his son he was opposed to overturning the settled order of succession. So he dissolved the Parliament in January 1681. He also signed a secret agreement with Louis XTV by which he obtained a subsidy in return for acquiescing in French foreign policy. This meant that he did not have to ask Parliament to vote him money. A new Parliament met at Oxford, but the king dissolved it. Shaftesbury was arrested on charge of high treason. Dryden wrote this poem then to prejudice the people against Shaftesbury. But Shaftesbury was acquitted by a London jury the same year. However, the king's party ultimately won the day as he had to flee as a fugitive to Holland.

Naturally Shaftesbury's allies felt that such criticism cannot go unanswered and there were many pieces abusing Dryden. This led to the production *of Absalom and Achitophel, Part II.* However, this poem was mostly written by Nahunn Tate, with Dryden lending a hand only occasionally. Consequently this is not as brilliant as the first part. When we speak of Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel,* we mean *Absalom and Achitophel, Part I.*

The poem is frankly political. However, Dryden's brilliance lies in not explicitly attacking those who opposed the king. Instead the pretended to write about-the biblical story of David and Absalom (II Samuel 13-18). David was a shepherd who as a young man killed the giant Goliath and rose high in the service of King Saul of Israel. Saul' grew jealous of him and David had to flee and hide. After Saul's death, the people of Israel elected him king. Under David who was favoured by God Israel grew to be a great kingdom. David had a number of wives and children. In his old age, his favourite son Absalom, led astray by Achithophel and others rebelled against him. For a time he was successful but ultimately was defeated and killed. The parallels between the careers of the two rnonarchs led Dryden to select this story as his vehicle of satire. In the poem the various biblical characters represent actual figures of English politics. Various biblical places mentioned also stand for contemporary countries. The concordance is exact and done most artistically.

4.4.1 The Opening of *Absalom and Achitophel*

The opening of the poem is brilliant, simultaneously censuring the king and deflecting criticism. Charles was a notorious womanizer. The way of the biblical David in this respect was "displeasing to God". So in the opening the two kings merge together to form the single figure of Charles/David. But it cannot be denied that such adultery is wrong. It is the original illegitimate act by the king that ultimately led to this crisis Dryden solved the problem in an audacious manner. He implied that such an abundance of animal spirits is natural and the overflow of a generous nature. The law and priestcraft is seen as a form of denial. Charle's vigorous warmth is seen as a gauge for his vital personality, even though it is not controlled by law. The idea of liberality is sustained by judicious use of words like **variously, wide,** ungrateful. It is even hinted that such prolixity may have divine approval.

If God created man in his own image and ordered them to multiply, then David is only going about His business and scattering God's image on the land. The naturalness of his conduct is further supported by metaphors of agriculture. He is seen as the tiller and the women as the soil which bore harvests. The king's promiscuity is further legitimized by his role as the father of the nation. There is witty juxtaposition of divine creativity and human fertility— God's abundant creation is reflected in Charles/David's prodigality. Just as God is father to mankind, so too Charles is father to his subjects, and in some cases literally. It further emphasizes David as the indulgent father than the head of the state. Dryden confuses three chronologies: the prelapsarian age when men were innocently libertine, the Old Testament age which allowed some freedom but was strict about adultery, and contemporary England which frowned on any kind of sexual immorality. We are presented with a topsy turvy world and good humouredly cajoled into accepting the king's behaviour.

The opening picture is thus mock-heroic, giving cosmic dimensions to a human failing. But it also deals with the overarching theme of law. From the very beginning the poem stresses Monmouth's illegitimacy. The law denied that Monmouth/Absalom was legitimate or that Charles/David could legitimize him. The fact that the queen was barren did not mean that he could attain 'true succession', because his mother being a concubine was like a slave. The king is criticized for allowing such a state of affairs to pass: since the king is sick, the nation is sick. Yet, Charles/David as the legitimate king does stand for the law and divine authority. He has only to speak in his proper role and all disorder would cease. Thus the beginning of the poem implies its end.

The opening of the poem has most of the characteristics that mark *Absalom and Achitophel:*

(a) Emphasis on law and unlawful nature of rebellion.

(b) Generalization of human nature.

(c) The use of biblical and Miltonic allusions and the use of lofty language.

(d) Refusal to be limited to the time and circumstances of his composition.

4.4.2 Political Theme

The poem had its genesis in the hysteria of the Popish plot. The country was split between two camps Whigs and Tories—those who wanted the Catholic Duke of York removed from succession and those who supported the king respectively. In between were great many uncommitted people towards whom the poem is directed. Dryden composed the poem to summarize the king's position, show the opposition as dangerous, ludicrous and vindicate the king. But the problem was that he must shed his overt partisanship if he is to persuade the people of the justice of his cause. Therefore, he uses biblical allegory which projects the rebellion onto a neutral set of circumstances. Again this political scenario

would soon be forgotten, if he is to" create an enduring work of art he must identify the archetypal pattern underlying the present troubles. Dryden takes up the stance that he is a spokesman for stability protesting against anarchy—a topical satire becomes universal. Thus there are two political themes underlying the poem—at the surface it is about Restoration politics; but at a deeper level it deals with the Divine right of Kings, the relation between a king and his subjects and the role of the state.

The poem moves between two poles: Biblical narration and contemporary England. Charles, Monmouth, Shaftesbury can never be seen as themselves—they are always Charles/ David, Monmouth/Absalom, Shaftesbury/Achitophel. A three dimensional effect is created: it has happened before, is happening now and will happen again. Also the scriptural commentaries had always read the struggle between David and Absalom as a type of the continuous struggle between Christ and Anti-Christ. Therefore, by using this particular story Dryden exalts the satire to the cosmic level.

Dryden relied heavily on Hobbes' theory of Social contract. In *Leviathan* Hobbes says that the life of man in "state of nature" was brutish, cruel and nasty; to preserve themselves the people banded together; a sovereign contract was signed between the two with the king promising to govern and protest and the people vowing to obey him and his successors. This contract is reaffirmed every time a king takes his coronation oath; it is also unbreakable. In Dryden's eyes the rebels were trying to destroy this contract, shaftesbury argued that power is only lent to the king by people, at need they could revoke it. But the Royalists insisted that even if kingship is based on a social contract the covenant is continuous and cannot be contracted' out by altering the succession: "They that are subjects to a Monarch cannot without his leave cast off Monarchy", nor can they choose the heir disrupting "Artificial Eternity of life...which men call the right of Succession". By law Monmouth/ Absalom is not the successor; since law is the fabric of society, ignoring it would only bring anarchy. Hence from the very beginning Dryden stresses that as the king's illegitimate son Monmouth's very existence is unlawful. The theory of contract is debated throughout and Dryden points out the penalty for revoking it—"For who can be secure of private right/ If sovereign sway may be dissolved by might?"

Dryden universalizes topical theme by depicting various clashes of interest that are universally present in any inflammatory political situation. Three groups are present here that are found in all political scenarious everywhere at all ages. They are:

I, King and Royalists/State/Establishment n. Rebels/Revolutionaries/Anti-establishments

III. Mob/Masses/Populi/Electorate who oscillate between the status quo and the revolutionaries.

Both groups try to seduce the masses with their rhetoric and win them over. Intergroup

rivalries and relations between the three are fundamental constituents in every political crisis. Here the king, the rebels and the public are the parts that make up the universal scenario. But Dryden is not content by merely using an archetypal pattern; individual figures are turned into easily identifiable archetypal figures. Charles is the typical generous, zestful, kindhearted ruler whose authority derives from law, custom, inheritance and.ultimately from God. Monmouth is the attractive charismatic leader of the rebels with mass appeal but no legal right to rule. Shaftesbury is the scheming politician who sets up a figurehead and rules from behind the scenes. In Dryden's hand he also becomes a type of Satan. The theme becomes the age old one of temptation, of Satan tempting man with visions of godlike power, and man succufnbing. Politically speaking, the State is like a Noah's ark, which if overturned will drown everyone in a deluge of violence and chaos. The conspiracy is imaged as a weapon of war whereas the State is a bulwark of peace and security. The war machine rumbles forward until it breaks in vain against the solid sustaining body of the State. Yet there is real danger that the authority of the State would collapse. Dryden is not against the desire to renew the 'Prime'. But the question is whether the insurrection heralds restored health and creativity or is the signal for inexorable decline towards dissipation. For him the acid test is the imaginative remembrance of the Lawful Lord who stands behind all images of authority. Without this image the imagination becomes gross and disorted. Hence Dryden "is the spokesman for civilization who wishes to save society from destabilization.

The king is equated with God. His promiscuity is excused wittily. However, there is also a hint of rebuke—the king's frailty has sown the seeds of rebellion since Monmouth is the product of his immorality. The law bars Monmouth's succession because the king has behaved unlawfully; the king himself is the source of disorder. Nevertheless the king we see is the indulgent father; it is only in the last lines that he is revealed in his true light. Perhaps that is why there is no formal portrait of David save what can be gleaned from Absalom's and Achitophel's conversation—tie is a loving father and a mild merciful king whose gentleness is interpreted as weakness. In the royal speech, focus shifts from Charles to David the ideal monarch who is blessed by God. He is brought out at the end because once God's Viceroy has spoken, sealed with the traditional peal of thunder, there is nothing more to add. The tone of the speech—more of sorrow than of anger—has an air of calm fulfilment more appropriate to the restoration of law and order. About the conclusion. Dr. Johnson complains, "who can forbear to think of an enchanted castle which vanishes at once into the air when the destined knight blows his horn before it". But that is exactly how Dryden wishes to present the king. The poem ends not only with remembrance of the king's power but with the reinstatement of the Divine Presence that makes the power meaningful. Dryden uses the myth behind all myths.

As a result, the action is carried forward from the mere political wrangling in the

direction of an universal vision. Dryden blended the heroic with the witty thus raising a political satire to the level of high art. Politics become blended with religion and metaphysics. The political theme that Dryden harps On is that the king can do no wrong. As the lawful lord he only has to speak to restore order and rule of law. Dryden presents *Absalom and Achitophel* not as a monarchist poem supporting an immortal king, but a heroi-comical meditation expressing need for discipline and established authority to save civilization from chaos.

4.4.3 Art of Characterization

It is in *Absalom and Achitophel* that Dryden's skill in characterization is expressed in full. The poem is made up of a string of portraits held together by a slender narrative. Each individual is transformed inttxsomething approaching a composite 'character' of a person. The tradition of such portraiture goes back to Theophrastus who in his characters satirically commented on certain social and domestic types like Ambitious Man, Hypocrite, Sycophant etc. During the Renaissance and after, this tradition was developed in the works of Hall and Overbury from whom Dryden may have received inspiration. Perhaps Dryden also learned something from Chaucer who created a unique picture-gallery in his *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*. Dryden too creates "a gallery of portraits". His characters fall into two groups—the malcontents and \worthies. The rebels are ruled by restless, uncontrolled misdirected energy while loyalists are marked by their devotion to Law and Order. Nevertheless like Milton's Satan, it is the portraiture of the rebels that is most memorable.

Achitophel is the most powerful figure occupying one-fourth of the poem. He stands for the Earl of Shaftesbury who was attempting to make thq Duke of Monmouth the legitimate heir hoping to be the power behind the throne. A politician of great craftiness and energy he was popular with the public. In the poem he is inevitably associated with Achitophel who had led Absalom astray. Dryden makes him even more formidable by associating him with Satan. At no point does satire degenerate into lampoon and readers are obliged to take him seriously. He has great talents and intelligence, high eloquence and ambition all warring within a pygmy body. He had been an excellent judge "unbribed, unsought the wretched to redress". By allowing the villain good qualities Dryden could present himself as unbiased and make the reader realize that this is not a simple melodramatic villain to be easily dismissed. Dryden points out that Achitophel's ambitions do not allow him to rest; he flatters the young prince countering every objection with the typical politician's argument that he is motivated solely by patriotism. He is clearly a Machiavellian statesman, his political appetite unrestrained by virtue or morality. Dryden gives us a marvellous picture of both his powers and defects" "a daring pilot in extremity", "turbulent of wit", "In friendship false, implacable in hate". The adjectives accumulate to suggest a volcanic energy which must erupt regardless of ensuring disaster. He would "shake the pillars of public safety" because he could not bear to live in peace. The very verse structure suggests the

hopelessness of one whose nature can find no ease either in personal relationships or public life. All his great energies are directed not towards creation or preservation but destruction, "to ruin or rule the state". His nature is summed up in one line—"great Wits are sure to madness near allied" and gradually from being a crooked statesman he is transformed into the personification of Anarchy.

Another villain presented with equal vigour but in a more vituperative manner is Zimri, Achitophel's second-in-command. Zimri represents the Duke of Buckingham another minister of the king. One of the richest and foremost peers of the land he was also the most profligate and wasteful, about whom it had been said "He was true to nothing for he was not true to himself...he had no steadiness nor conduct...he could never fix his thoughts nor govern his estates". Dryden bring out sharply this fickleness.

> A man so various, that he seemed to be
> Not one, but all Mankind's Epitome.
> Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
> Was everything by starts, and nothing long:
> But in the course of one revolving moon,
> Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.

He had no steady opinions of his own, nor a constant interest in any one subject or principle. He is further described as a debauchee, a wild spender, a vicious and intriguing politician. Yet he is not a formidable figure. He is easily fooled and easily parted from his fortune. He is an old hand at forming parties but too irresponsible to be a leader. He is a madman (but not like Achitophel) who is constantly searching for new novelties and whose judgement is so poor and extreme "That every man with him was god or devil". He is thus reduced to a figure of fun, a harmless man meddling in affairs beyond his skill. In this way Dryden appears to make the rebels of no consequence. But what he shares with Achi'tophel is lack of self-control. The only portrait that in neoclassic satiric literature can be compared with Zimri is that of Sporus by Pope.

There is no formal portrait of Absalom, who represents the Duke of Monmouth Contemporaries spoke of his exterior graces, his popularity with women and Charles' love for him. In this case Dryden was in a quandary. Charles had refused to legitimize his son; nevertheless Momnouth was still his favourite and a reconciliation was possible. Hence Dryden had to avoid blaming the young man too much. Moreover, by mixing praise and blame Dryden appears to be a credible and objective writer. The poet acknowledges Absalom's charm:

> Of all this numerous progeny was none
> So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:
> Whether, inspir'ed by some diviner lust.

His father got him with a greater gust;
For that his conscious destiny made way,
By manly beauty to imperial sway.
Early in foreign fields he won renown.
With kings and states allied to Israel's crown:
In peace the thoughts of war he could remove.
And seemed as he were only born for love.
Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
In him alone, 'twas natural to please:
His motions all accompanied with grace;
And Paradise was opened in his face.

He is handsome, brave, a successful warrior, graceful in his manner. It is the picture of a son any father would be proud to have and explains why David is so indulgent to him. Yet. in spite of his charismatic leadership he also has faults and also "Ambition ungoverned by reason". This means he is easily manipulated and led astray. The poet constantly excuses his conduct by arguing that ambition is a spark of divine fire, but also makes clear that he is unable to penetrate the lies. Achitophel weaves only because he is unwilling to do so. His folly is great because he cannot see that in giving away David's royal prerogative to rule and choose his successor by law, he is giving away .his own as well. He is never condemned directly as Zimri or Achitophel is, but he is allowed to condemn himself. At first he speaks like a dutiful son but soon starts to deceive himself that his rebellion would benefit the state and ultimately David as well. He conveniently ignores whatever disorder and civic turmoil would ensue. Dryden constantly emphasizes that his excesses were due to the same high spirits and generosity that mark his father. He was guilty only because in him the celestial metal was present in too great amount, and it is more the fault of Destiny that he was great but not great enough. Praise and blame are blended so well that a double effect is produced: the impetuous but basically loving youth deceived by wicked counsellors and the specious ambitious deceitful politician.

The character of Charles/David is handled very tactfully. Charles both in his role as king and identification with David occupies the position of God. Yet the poet must also excuse the very real faults of this all too human monarch. Again identification with David, a noted sexual transgressor whose adultery was punished by God, had its own liabilities when Charles also shared the same failings. Dryden solved the problem by audaciously arguing that such abundance of animal spirits is only the overflow of a generous personality. His promiscuity may be condemned but it is the work of a vital personality and besides by having many children Charles is fulfilling God's command to "be fruitful and multiply" and spreading his Maker's image through the land. Dryden also tries to excuse this failing by identifying Charles with David who in spite of his "use of concubine and bride" still

remained God's favourite. Moreover, in the opening lines Dryden stresses Charles the father and not the king. Charles is seen as the indulgent father of both the nation and Absalom, forgiving the faults of both and treating them mildly. Just as God rejoiced in creation of man and gave him a helpmate, so too the king rejoiced in his son and gave him a bride. It is only at the end that he assumes his role as God on earth. Absalom has already given a picture of his godlike nature, his mercy, humility and generosity. But Achitophel also presents us with an old weak man, tottering on the brink of senility, easily manipulated by his lust. Both are from their perspectives correct. However at the end, David the king/ God appears in the full splendour of his office. He would no more allow people to clamour and rule the state. So far he had shown only mercy; but now he would show the face of Law. He now reasserts his Jehovic qualities of wrath and "the Almighty nodding gives consent". His figure does carry with it the giant-killer dimensions as accused by Dr. Johnson, because hs is not a mere human being but a Divine Presence.

The secondary characters consist of remaining rebels and king's supporters. The rebels are mostly commoners and lesser nobles who yearn to see themselves exalted by upsetting the status quo, without understanding its danger. Only a few are singled out for special notice. One is Shimei who is portrayed as a miser and hypocrite. On the outside he led an ausetre lifestyle, but Dryden imputes it to his parsimony and illiberality. He pretended to be pious but was ready to transgress if there was profit to be gained. As judge he misused his powers: he allowed criminals to go free, he would "pack" the jury with chosen men to acquit his friends charged with any crime, and spent his free time plotting treason. His friends were as wicked as himself. Dryden caps it by saying that he loved his wicked neighbour as himself, parodying Christ's injunction to "love one's neighbour as oneself. This portrait differs from that of Achitophel's which is more balanced. Still another rebel described is Corah. Dryden attacks him brutally, implying he is a fraud and liar, who is sheltering his ambitions and love of evil under the cloak of religious zeal. The other rebels are of no great account: they are conspiring because either they love to riot or because of coin. The king's friends are few in number and consist of worthies. Barzillai is the leader "crowned with honour and years". He had suffered exile with his prince and served him loyally. Warrior and a poet, he is generous to all. His now dead son is eloquently praised and the poet expresses the hope that he would act as a guardian angel to the king. A roll of names follow all of whom share the characteristics of honesty, soberness, frugality and loyalty. The Protestant Churchmen who stood with Charles are also praised for their integrity. Interestingly Dryden stresses that many of these noble supporters of the king were also supporters of the Muses and warns that rebellion and anarchy cannot support the arts. Since Art is held to be a cornerstone of civilized cultured society, once again Dryden demonstrates that Law and Order is the only guarantee of civil society. Such friends are also evidence of the king's moral superiority. These secondary characters do not fit as well into their biblical namesakes as their leaders do, nor are they as exquisitely crafted.

At the background is the mob. The English people are identified with Israelites. Though they are God's chosen people they also have a propensity for moral and political deviation. From a generalized characterization "The Jews a headstrong, moody murmuring race", Dryden moves to specific examples of Jewish political instability—their rejection of Ishobeth and the golden calf. The phrase 'Adamwits' connect their rebellion with the Fall and political disobedience is linked to Satan's temptation and the first disobedience. It is expanded in several places—'giddy Jews', 'stubborn' and reference to regicide which is connected to the crucifixion of Christ Irony is directed towards religious hypocrisy and political opportunism. They have no positive system to advocate, no sense of responsibility for their conduct, lacks discrimination and is easily gulled: they are tools manipulated by leaders. The liberty they wish was really license and through rebellion they search for novelty. The mob assume's the status of a character: fickle, ruled by 'humour', restless and always dissatisfied. It culminates in the narrator's apostrophe. "Oh foolish Israel! Never warned by ill!" A firm believer in divine Right of kings, Dryden pictures the mob as a composite portrait of all elements of instability and self-interest in society.

Dryden's characterization like Chaucer's is twofold. The various characters have certain specific features—name, title, career, special temperament, physical characteristics and personal idiosyncrasies that mark them out as individuals. But they are also archetypal figures who have always appeared in history to foment crises. It is the villains who are the greatest attraction in this poem on politics and ambition. Absalom is the popular self-seeking leader inspired by bolder spriits yet not totally evil; Zimri is the second-in-command who supports the more able and popular frontrunners of the party; Achitophel is, of course, the talented Machiavellian minister, the Tempter whose talents are allied to a fundamentally unstable disposition. On the other side are good and loyal men, sober, patient and dedicated to Order and safety of the country. Every character is presented in exclusively moral terms. The result is a master-piece of 'history painting'. With Dryden, every hit is calculated, and every stroke goes home; in each character brought on the scene, those features only are selected for exposure or praise which are of direct significance for the purpose in hand.

4.4.4 As a Heroic Poem

For all Europeans since the Renaissance, epic or heroic poetry has always been esteemed as the greatest work of human nature. It was a great artistic challenge making immense demands on the poet's knowledge, skill and invention to sustain the scope, grandeur and variety of a poem that tends to encompass the world of its day and a large portion of its learning. Moreover it was the form in which the ancients excelled and hence it fired the moderns to rival them. Generations of poets, from Milton to romantics sought to create an epic but hardly anyone succeeded, with the exception *of Paradise Lost.* For Dryden too, the epic was the "most noble, most pleasant way of writing in verse and withal the highest pattern of human life". But what he succeeded in creating was not a true epic

but a mock-epic. Before him Boileau in *Le Lutrin* had mixed the majesty of the heroic, with the venom of satire. Dryden takes up this form in *Absalom and Achitophel*. His main purpose was to lampoon the king's adversaries in the succession quarrel but he also wanted to attain the dignity of the heroic. Hence he applies the biblical story of David and Abslaom to his own times giving universal dimension to a topical satire.

The story Dryden chose was particularly appropriate [see 1.3]. The advantages of such identification are many:

(a) Dryden has the freedom to manipulate the story as he chooses and to adapt features of the archetypal figures.

(b) He is able to give the appearance of projecting the theme of rebellion onto a neutral set of circumstances. This note of objectivity, of moral detachment is necessary if the readers are to be persuaded of the justice of the king's cause.

(c) A three dimensional effect is created—it has happened before, is happening now, will happen again.

(d) We are given a bifocal vision: the actual people and the universals. The story of David was a familiar one and the effect of the mock-heroic depends on elements of familiarity.

Typology was a popular scholarly activity in medieval ages. This involved identifying a character of the Bible with another, or with a figure from the real world. Events described in the Bible were seen as types of events that occurs again and again. Dryden uses similar tactics is using the Biblical theme. Contemporary characters, events and places find their echo in the Old Testament story, [see the key in 1.8; point out a few.].

The narration is on an epic scale. One-third of the poem consists of narration, the rest of speeches. It follows the epic style in that it consists of a mixture of styles—we have the serious grand style, the dramatic style, the elegiac style, and the narrative style. Dryden uses the heroic couplets extensively to create sonorous verse, choosing words as much for their music as their meaning in the manner of Virgil. Dryden never allows it to descend to the level of mere abuse or satire—throughout it is always dignified which rises to "long majestic march and energy divine". The poem is not mock-heroic in the sense *Macflecknoe* or the *Rape of the Lock* is. Though the conspirators are ridiculed Achitophel is taken very seriously; he is presented as a kind of Satan the arch-tempter who can destroy the state. Though Charles is gently ridiculed because of his promiscuity yet he appears as the representative of God and in the end as restorer of Order. The theme itself is serious: the struggle between the State and rebels, father and son, which in their turn reflects the conflict between Jehovah and Lucifer, Saturn and Jupiter. Thus it co-opts myths that go back to the very roots of 'European culture. At its deeper level Dryden makes this into the eternal conflict between good and evil rendered more dramatic by the fact that with the future

unknown in the real world, there was every chance of evil succeeding in ruining the State and civil society.

Characterization of Charles, Monmouth, Shaftesbury [1.6]. Dryden had no desire to label *Absalom and Achitophel* as mere party propaganda. Rather he presents it as a heroi-comical meditation on political conflict expressing the need for order, discipline and belief in authority. The Biblical story broadens the canvas of the poem—it includes the whole past and future history of mankind, instead of being merely confined to its own time; this gives the poem the majesty of the heroic.

In a heroic open what matters is its scope and the human importance of its subject. The scope *of Absalom and Achitophel* is vast for contemporary characters and events became identified with archetypal ones. Dryden deliberately mingles three chronologies— the prelapsarian age when man was ignorant of sexual guilt; the Old Testament age when man strictly adhered to the Law; and Restoration England which broke laws and was shamelessly libertine. The subject is the same as that *of Paradise Lost*—the rise of evil and its eventual defeat by God. In fact Dryden closely copies *Paradise Lost*. Like Milton's epic, the poem opens in confusion; is followed by a list of all those who conspire against David. Charles-David acts out the role of God[1]—like God he takes'joy in his son who is his own image and his rule is a reflection of God's rule in Eden. Absalom is the false Messiah while Achitophel is Satan. But Absalom is also Adam/Eve misled into rebelling^ against God. The theme is the eternal one of temptation. Again in Christian theological history, David had always been associated with God and Absalom's rebellion against him had always been interpreted as a type of Lucifer's revolt; by associating Charles with David, Dryden manages to make the rebellion into an analogical re-enactment of the Fall. The poem was written to save civilization from chaos and attains the dignity of an epic.

4.5 ❑ Textual Annotations

(a) The following is a key for understanding who is who in the poem and other references:

Aaron's Race: The Clergy (in the Bible, God appointed the descendants of Aaron to be the preists of Jews; here it refers to Christian clerics)

Abbethdin: Lord Chancellor.

Absalom: James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleugh (1649-1685), the natural son of Charles II and Lucy Walters.

Achitophel: Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury (1621-1683).

Adriel: John Sheffeld, Earl of Mulgrave (1648-1721).

Agag: Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey (1621-1678).

Amiel: Edward Seymour (1633-1708).

Annabel: Anne Scott, Countess of Buccleugh. Charles II married her to his son James/ Absalom.

Balaam: Theophilus Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon (1650-1701). Barzillai: James Butler, Earl of Ormonde (1610-1688).

Bathsheba: Louise Renee de Keroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth and Aubigny (1649-1734), Charles II's mistress. (In Bible, Bathsheba was David's mistress and later his wife)

Caleb: Forde, Lord Grey of Werke (Dryden. 1701).

Corah: Titus Dates (1649-1705).

David: Charles II.

Egypt: France. (In Bible, the Jews had been enslaved by Egyptians)

Ethnic Plot: Popish Plot.

Gath: Brussels.

Hebrew Priests: Church of England clergy.

Hebron: Scotland.

Hushai: Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester (1641-1711).

Ishbosheth: Richard Cromwell (1626-1712).

Israel: England.

Issachar: Thomas Thynne of Longleat (1648-1682), famous for his wealth.

Jebusites: Roman Catholics.

Jerusalem: London.

Jews: English people. (In the Bible the Jews are described as being chosen by God. Here Dryden cleverly flatters Englishmen by comparing them with the Jews. Since the Jews were notorious for forsaking Jehovah and worshipping gods of other cultures, the comparison with Englishmen who had deposed their lawful king Charles I to have a commonwealth, and even now was agitating against their rightful king to have another heir besides the legal one, is particularly apt).

Jewish Rabbins: Doctors of the Church of England.

Jonas: Sir William Jones (1631-1682).

Jordan: In Bible a river in Israel, here the English seas or the Irish Channel.

Jotham: George Savile, Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695). Levites: Presbyterian ministers displaced by the Act of Uniformity.

Michal: Catherine of Braganza (1638-1705), the childless Queen of Charles II. (The original Michal was the childless Queen of David)

Nadab: William, Lord Howard of Escrick (16267-1694).

Pharaoh: Louis XIV of France.

Sagan of Jerusalem: Bishop of London.

Sanhedrin: Originally a council of Jewish elders. Here it refers to the English Parliament.

Saul: Oliver Cromwell. (In Bible, Saul was David's predecessor and his enemy. David had to hide from him until after his death the Jews made David king. Since Cromwell was the Lord Protector of England while Charles II was in exile and monarchy was restored only after his death, the comparison is particularly apt).

Shimei: Slingsby Bethel (1617-1697).

Sion: London.

Solymean rout: London mob.

Tyre: Holland.

Zadoc: William Sancroft (1617-1693), Archbishop of Canterbury.

Zimri: George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham (1628-1687).

(b)

39. Ammon's murder. This may refer to an attack made on Sir John Coventry at Monmouth's instigation after he had criticized the king's affairs.

58. Ishboseth: Oliver Cromwell's son who became Protector for a few months after his death.

66. Golden calf: When Prophet Moses went up the mountain to talk to God, the Jews grew tired of waiting and built a golden calf to worship. Hence the phrase implies turning away from the true God to worship of material things.

231-235. The whole passage is filled with biblical symbols and imagery. In Ishiah, a pillar of cloud and fire are prophesized as signs of God's renewed presence among the Israelities. Absalom is compared with Moses who led the Jews to the Promised Land.

273. Prince of angels: Satan or Lucifer. He was the chief among angels until he rebelled against God and was thrown into Hell. From then on he became Satan, the symbol of evil.

302. Noah's Ark: when the earth was flooded, Noah at the command of God built

an ark where he loaded a pair of every kind of animal to repopulate the world.

334. Dog-Star: Sirius

418. Early Israelites had no king, being supposedly governed by God's law alone. But after some time they clamoured for a ruler. An angry God sent them Saul as their king.

600. Here Dryden wittily turns the biblical injunction of loving one's neighbour as oneself upside down.

624. Towns once burnt refers to London which had burnt down once.

697. Hybla: drops of Hybla honey. Mt Hybla in Sicily was famous for its bees and honey.

955. Samson: Samson the champion of Jews were imprisoned by his enemies the Philistines. They blinded him and cut off his hair which was the source of his magic strength. But in captivity his hair grew. When he was brought out to entertain the Philistines, he pulled down the temple and killed everyone himself included.

1016. Belial and Beelzebub: two prominent devils.

4.6 ☐ Conclusion/Summing-up

In this poem Dryden took a contemporary political event whose appeal is limited and which would soon be forgotten in the wider historical canvas, and disguising it as Biblical allegory made it universal. His verse portraits are brilliantly done. By giving the characters Biblical names, Dryden was emphasizing that rebellion against the king and the settled law of succession is as evil as the Biblical revolts against God and Israel. Dryden's main problems were to excuse Charles' faults and respect his love for his son. He did so by constantly presenting Charles/David as God's anointed and deflecting our attention from his faults. The skilful way he does so (for example, by arguing that Charles sexual intrigues are an indication of his generous nature, equating him with sun and making him thus the source of fertility) is a stunning *tour deforce*. However, Dryden was not concerned with writing a mere lampoon. Instead we have serious discussions of the relations between subjects and kings, the social contract, the law of succession, the clash between Catholics and Protestants and the poem concludes by upholding absolute monarchy. Charles is presented as a Godlike figure who restores Law and Order. Dryden wrote the poem in heroic couplets. The verse is admirably controlled, variously cadenced, richly rhetorical and vigorous, abounding with epic similes. What Dryden achieved in his satirical poem is to create the mock-heroic style: it mimics the epic style to perfection, maintaining a truly lofty tone throughout. But the judicious use of irony and the conscious lowering of style also produce laughter. Though it is an attack on individuals, yet he always manages to keep control over his passions and never indulged in open invectives. It is this controlled contempt that makes his mockery so

incisive. Above all he could elevate' his targets so that he never appears mean-minded. As Lliot once remarked, "Much of Dryden's unique art consists in his ability to make the small into the great, the prosaic into the poetic, the trivial into the magnificent". Even as he satirizes, he endows his targets with heroic, dimensions. Achitophel is really dangerous, he is the type of intriguers present in every government. Charles/David is truly a heroic, almost divine figure and the conclusion touches epic sublimity. Thus the appeal of the poem becomes universal. Johnson complained that the ending is forced, but in reality the king is a divine figure who only has to command to make his people obey. The poem therefore should be more properly called a comic epic than a mock-epic, with emphasis on the word 'epic'. In this way Dryden raised the status of satire into an elevated literary form and fixed the direction of English satire for several generations.

"It is in this poem that the satirical possibilities of the heroic conflect are fully revealed for the first time. When Dryden exposes the stinginess of shingsby Bethel by telling us that.

His Cooks, with long disuse, their Trade forgot;
Cool was his kitchin, though his Brains were hot...

He writes more grimly of Shaftesbury that he is

For close Designs and Crooked Counsels fit.

Sagacious, Bold, and Turbulent of wit..

The cadence, the allitration, the antithesis, and the polysyllatic emphasis of **Sagacious, turbulent** and **implacable**, all unite to give the words an air of authority and even of finality. The cumulative effect of a sequence of such couplets is still more devastating...

Finally, Dryden greatly deepened the significance of his poem by finding a biblical parallel for the contemporary situation. When we feel that it has all happened before the present event assumes an increased importance...'Pacsy', we are told by Bacon 'is nothing else but feigned history'. By basing his **Absalom and Achitophel** on true history, Dryden served his purpose far more effectively than he could have done if he had invented a fiction of his own. A story, too, that was. taken from the Bible had a special sort of prestige, specially for a generation that knew its Bible for better than most of us know our today, and for whom the old Testament was still sacred a book... The biblical parallel gave still greater audacity to the daring wit of the poet who could compare Charles II with King David on the ground that both of them had fathered so many bastards...The contemporary reader had the satisfaction of following Dryden's ingenious application of ancient history to current events and characters, a satisfaction similar to that which the reader of Pofe's imitations of Horace of Johnson's imitations of Juvenal obtained from their substitution of modern names for those of ancient Rome." (James Sutherland, *English Satire*)

4.7 ☐ Questions with Suggested Answers

1. Discuss Absalom and Achitophel as a satirical masterpiece, [see 1.3, 1.4, 1.7]

2. Comment on the portraits of characters in the poem that you found specially appealing, [see 1.6]

3. How does Dryden transform contemporary politics into a universal topic? [see 1.4, 1.5, 1.7]

4. What according to you is the secret of success of the poem? Do you think the poem deserves the praise that has been heaped on it? [see 1.5, 1.6. 1.7, 1.9]

5. How does Dryden apply the Bible story to English national affairs in **Absalom and Achitophel?**

6. **Absalom and Achitophel** is a masterpiece of argument in verse. Discuss.

4.8 ☐ Suggested Readings

Biography :

Paul Hammond, *John Dryden: A Literary Life,* 1991. James Anderson Winn, *John Dryden and His World,* 1987.

Ctiticism

David Hopkins, *John Dryden,* 1986.

James and Helen Kinsley, *Dryden: The Critical Heritage,* 1971.

Earl Miner. *Dryden's Poetry,* 1967'.

Earl Miner, ed.....*John Dryden,* 1972.

John Churton Collins. ed. *The Satines of Dryden.*

H. T. Swedenborg, ed., *Essential Articles for the Study of John Dryden,* 1966.

James A. Winn, ed., *Critical Essays on John Dryden,* 1997.

David Wykes, *A Preface to Dryden,* 1977'.

Steven N. Zwicker, *Dryden's Political Poetry: The Typology of King and Nation,* 1972.

Steven N. Zwicker, *Politics and Language in Dryden's Poetry: The Arts of Disguise,* 1984.

Ian Jack, Augustan Satire

The California Edition of the Works of John Dryden: Univ. of California Press.

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Unit -5 ❑ Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot: Alexander Pope

Structure

5.1 ❑ Objectives :

This unit has several objectives:

(a) It aims to provide detailed background information about the age and outline of life of Pope.

(b) It will relate the text *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* to the poet's life and discuss it as an autobiographical poem.

(c) It will critically comment on the various themes present in the text.

(d) It will discuss the literary qualities of the text and its genre.

5.2 ❑ General Background

The age of Dryden is followed by the age of Pope. It is generally considered to extend from 1700-1744. However one must remember that the Age of Pope comprises only first

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half of what is loosely called the Eighteenth century; the second half is termed the Age of Johnson, after Samuel Johnson.

The Restoration of monarchy did not lead to stability as Catholics and Protestants still clashed. The Exclusion Bill crisis was proof that England was neither willing to accept Catholic monarchs nor obey a king blindly. Charles II was followed by his brother James II who was a Catholic. He too believed in the Divine Right of kings and tried to rule arbitrarily. However, he had two popular daughters who were Protestants and were his heirs. The breaking point came when his second wife gave birth to a son who was to be raised as a Catholic. This led to yet another Revolution; but this time: it, was bloodless. The king fled with his son; Parliament officially invited his eldest daughter Mary, married to William of Orange to be the new sovereign. Thus Mary II and William III came to the throne; as price for their support, Parliament promulgated and passed the Bill of Rights which restricted royal power and made the ruling system more democratic. It also ensured that no Catholic can become the monarch—a law that is still in force today. Since this revolution was accomplished without blood and demonstrated the power of the people, it is known as the Glorious Revolution. They had no children and after their death, James' youngest daughter Anne became the Queen. After Anne died issueless, the throne passed on to the House .of Hanover, a Protestant German dynasty. Under the rule of its first three kings, George I, George II and George III, England continued to grow more prosperous in spite of unsuccessful insurrections by Jacobins, the supporters of the displaced Stuart dynasty. The power of parliament kept on growing and a centralised bureaucratic government as we see in the modern age developed.

However the Eighteenth Century was more stable and prosperous than the Restoration age. It is generally known as the Augustan age, because of its similarities to the Augustan period of rome. It is also called the Age of Enlightenment, because of the various intellectual currents of the time that laid the foundations of modern society. A number of scientific discoveries were made which made people visualize the world as an orderly place. Rationalism and decorum came to be valued highly. Two great works during this period is **The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire** (6 volumes, 1776-1788), by Edward Gibbon, which is permeated with district of all religious emotions, and **An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding** (1748) by David Hume. Philosophers like Bolingbroke, Shaftesbury, Mandeville. Hume gave varying definitions of virtue and vice, self love and social love. About man more or less the humanists decided that:

1. Human nature is unchanged by time and place and is uniform everywhere.

2. Man is irrational, his nature being fundamentally corrupt and flawed, yet he has a certain dignity.

3. Mind and Imagination are quintessential human attributes.

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4. The primary duty of man is moral questioning.

Now that the world was more or less stable and prosperous, the well-to-do did not want any radical changes. Since the enthusiasm of the previous age had led to war and disruption of familial bonds, people now preferred control over passion, harmony and decorum over romantic extravagance. In the religious sphere people preferred a sober view than zeal and we have the rise of Deism which advocated that the natural world is all that is required to know God. Even the language of periodical literature—calm, elegant, urbane .testifies to the new taste. Yet another symptom of this is that most literature of this period is utterly serious and devoted to moral discourse. In the emerging genre of the novel, we see writers trying to preach sober middle-class virtues to the readers. The novelists like Defoe, Richardson, Fielding thought that men are virtuous by nature. They did not deny the existence of physical and moral evils, but they felt that improvement and reform of both the individual and society is possible leading to the re-establishment of the Golden Age. Therefore, the greater part of the Eighteenth Century fiction draws a positive image of man. However, Eighteenth Century poetry has a more dualised vision of man: intellectual yet also an animal; rational yet emotional; fallible yet virtuous and so redeemable.

Another characteristic that marks out the Eighteenth century is how the relation between writers and readers changed. Previously, the arts flourished under private patrons. But by the Eighteenth century a new situation developed. In the first place the readership enlarged with the spread of education. The middle class who insisted on sober virtues and conventional morality now formed the main reading public and it is to them that the writers catered. Politics also played a role. Since politicians were elected, they appointed writers to publicise their views. People of various classes also mingled in the coffee houses leading to increased fraternisation between the two. This in its turn led to patronage of writers and poets by political leaders, but such patronage was due to party politics and personal friendships, rather than literary merit. It also led to the growth of the subclass known as hack-writers or Grub-street writers, who wrote for pay a situation denounced by Pope and his circle as detrimental to culture. However, by the time of George III, the party system had developed in which.rewards went to politicians rather than to scholars, so that state patronage disappeared. The coffee houses also broke up, so that opportunities of fraternisation lessened. However, there were already booksellers through whom the author could make money. It is symptomatic of both the changing social system and the decay of the patronage system that Pope became the first writer to successfully make his living by the pen,

5.3 ❑ Alexander Pope : Life & Works

Alexander Pope was born in London on May 21, 1688, to a linen merchant. He laboured under serious disadvantages from the start. He family was Roman Catholic: at that

time the English government had placed serious financial and legal disabilities on Catholics which forced Pope's father to move out of London to the countryside. As a Catholic he could not attend an English university; though he received some schooling from Catholic institutions, he was largely self-taught. He was also unfortunate in contacting tuberculosis of spine from his wet nurse. Throughout his life he remained short, physically weak and rather ugly; a normal family life was impossible for him. People, particularly his enemies made cruel fun of him on account of this.

His literary career began with the translation of classical writers. He soon attracted attention from influential men of letters and poems followed in quick succession. His earliest published works is the elegant Pastorals. In An Essay on Criticism he discusses the functions of a true critic and how poetry should be written. Windsor Forest is a landscape poem combining nature description with politics and a moral vision of Utopian England. Discussions about morality continues in his Moral Essays and Satires. But his most didactic and mature philosophical poem is An Essay on Man. However his two mock-epic poems are the most well known. One is The Rape of the Lock a delightfully crafted satire on the theft of a lady's lock of hair treated in the epic style. The other is The Dunciad, where he powerfully attacks the bad poets of his day and predicts how the loss of education and culture would lead to the return of chaos. On the other hand he was also capable of composing a love poem in the gothic style as in Eloisa to Abelard. He also did a number of translations of classical works. Indeed with translation of Homer, Pope gained financial independence— the first author in English literature to be a commercial success. Today his translation is not read, but to his readers it summed up the very essence of the Augustan age—Pope's Iliad and Odyssey focus not on glory, but ori milder virtues and the characters speak in the tones of Eighteenth Century intellectuals interested in philosophy, politics and ethics. Though Pope did not receive any official honours because he opposed the corrupt government of his day, in the later portion of his career he was considered to be the unofficial laureate of England.

5.4 ☐ Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot: Introduction

Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot is addressed apparently to his good friend Arbuthnot. But it is largely an account of his poetic career and his reasons for choosing satire as a medium to correct the evils of society. The great Roman satirists Horace and Juvenal had each defended their actions in verse formally, and this is what Pope does. Arbuthnot while dying made it a last request that "you continue in that noble disdain and abhorrence of vice, which you seem naturally endued with, but still with a due regard to your own safety". Pope replied back that it would be as he had said. But he defended himself by saying that in times of general vice it is of no use to write general satire. Only if some individuals are pilloried

might others be deterred. He hastily published the poem, in 1735 before Arbuthnot died. It is a compilation of various verses he had written before in the heat of the moment, but now produced as an integrated harmonious whole. In the Advertisement to the first edition of the poem he explains, 'This paper is a sort of bill of complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several occasions offered. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleased some persons of rank and fortune (the authors of Verses to the Imitator of Horace, and of an Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court) to attack, in a very extraordinary manner, not only my writings (of which, being public, the Public is judge) but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof, to those who know me not, a truer information may be requisite. Being divided between the necessity to say some thing of myself, and my own laziness to undertake so awkward a task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this Epistle. If it have anything pleasing, it will be that by which I am most desirous to please, the Truth and the Sentiment; and if anything offensive, it will be only to those I am least sorry to offend, the vicious or the ungenerous. Many will know th.eir own pictures in it, there being not a circumstance but what is true; but I have, for the most part, spared their Names, and they may escape being laughed at, if they please. I would have some of them know, it was owing to the request of the learned and candid Friend to whom it is inscribed that 'I make not as free use of theirs as they have done of mine. However, I shall have this advantage, and honour, on my side, that whereas, by their proceeding, any abuse may be directed at any man, no injury can possibly be done by mine, since a nameless character can never be found out, but by its Truth and Likeness". The attack on him was orchestrated by Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Montague, once his friends but now his bitter enemies.

John Arbuthnot (1667-1735): Scottish author and scientist, court physician (1705-14) to Queen Anne. He is best remembered for his five "John Bull pamphlets" (1712), political satires on the Whig war policy, which introduced the character John Bull, the typical Englishman. He was .deeply admired for both his professional skill and his kindness and loyalty. With his friends, Swift, Pope, and Gay, Arbuthnot was a member of the Scriblerus Club, which was devoted to satirizing pretensions to literary greatness and false tastes. He contributed a great deal to **Memoirs of....Martinus Scriblerus,** first published in the quarto edition of Pope's works (1741). He was also be author of several progressive medical works. Johnson said of him. "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning and a man of much humour. "Thackeray called him "one of the wisest, wittiest, most accomplished" of men.

5.4.1 Art of Characterization:

Pope was a master of characterization, of both good and bad characters. However, he was careful to insist that his characters are not real individuals but only types. The

Augustan age was a believer in universal quality of man and stressed essential human nature over individual eccentricities. Pope therefore followed a well-trod path in his characterization. Added to this is the fact that he regarded himself as a satirist whose business was to correct the world. When he chose individual targets of his satire, he naturally chose his personal enemies. However, these portraits need not be always true to life. This is not due to any chicanery on Pope's part, but due to the fact that the exigencies of satire demanded that the individuals be transformed into something more. The portraits are not untrue, but they are also public icons—this is what must be remembered when we analyze his characters.

Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot contains three detailed portraits—that of Atticus, Bufo and Sporus. Atticus represents the type of literary dictator and coterie leader. In real life he is Joseph Addison. Pope's relationship with him was a complex one. When Pope first appeared on the London literary scene he was warmly welcomed by Addison and the two became friends. However Addison praised Ambrose Philip's **Pastorals** preferring it to Pope's, though Pope's was artistically superior. Moreover, Addison in 1715 had managed to welcome both Pope's **Iliad** and Tickell's rival translation, a hypocrisy that enraged Pope, also Addison had prodded Tickell to do bring out a 'Whig' translation and thus his literary judgment is perverted by political sentiments. It is on these grounds Pope attacks him. Maynard Mack in his biography points out that both were vain, sensitive to criticism, and devious in publicizing themselves. However, they were also opposites in many ways. In the literary portrait itself however it would be more useful to regard Atticus as Dustin Griffins does— that Atticus is a kind of anti-self to Pope: a real or imagined other against whom he could thrust and assert himself.

Pope actually begins with praise of Atticus. He has true genius, is charming to all, and is easy and polished in his writing and conversation. Yet all these graces are marred by vanity and concomitant insecurity. He could not brook any rival to his fame. Nevertheless he did not have the courage to attack a rival openly. So he would pretend to be a friend and stab others behind their back. He would "Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer, And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer". His praise of a rival's work was so faint that people would realize he is being courteous and though he never traduced anyone, he influenced others by his behaviour to mock. He neither blamed nor commended—the former for fear of anyone censuriivj him, the latter for fear of raising up a rival. Indeed he was so insecure that he feared even fools and constantly surrounded himself with flatterers. Though he pretended to please all, he never actually obliged anyone. Atticus with his coterie is compared with Cato: "Like Cato, give his little senate laws, And sit attentive to his own applause". It was a double hit—it paints Atticus as a politician who gets laws passed by a pliant/senate; it also pointedly refers to Addison's play *Cato*. He pronounces literary judgements without considering their artistic or moral merit and is applauded by his hand-picked sycophants. Thus Atticus/Addison becomes the archetype of civilized treachery, the man of culture who lacks moral courage. He betrays his obligations as a critic. The

perversion is made even worse by the fact that he does possess true genius. This is what makes honest men watching his antics laugh and weep at the same time: Atticus' cowardice and attempts to 'do in' rivals is comic; but his squandering of his god-given gifts is tragic.

Bufo in real life is the earl of Halifax, a statesman who was known as a patron of poets. Though he had offered Pope a pension Pope had refused it. In the poem he is the symbol of the undiscerning patron and a bad poet. The mass of the world cannot tell the true poet from those pretending to be one. Bufo is one of them, but being rich and having literary pretensions, he wishes to partonize poets and so spreads his largesse without discrimination. Since his liberality is dictated not by critical judgement but his personal preferences, it is inevitable that talented poets would be neglected by him. Bufo is described as being as proud as Apollo, the god of poetry. As ancient poets dedicated poems to Apollo, so too modern scribblers dedicated poems to him hoping for his patronage. But of course this human Apollo has nothing to be proud of. He filled his library with books and statues of dead poets, but since he appreciated only undistinguished wits, it is doubtful whether he actually read any of the books. The point is further stressed in his having a 'headless' bust of Pindar. As Pope is besieged by favour seekers, so too Bufo is surrounded by hacks who praised him and his possessions; but unlike Pope who is conscious of the importance of good literature, Bufo patronized them ail. But he could be frugal as well, thus adding the sin of niggardliness to his other flaws. That his judgement cannot be trusted is proved by the fact that he ignored Dryden. Yet though he would not help Dryden in his poverty he donated generously for a magnificent funeral to demonstrate he appreciated poets. This is because people like Bufo are more interested in poets who could cater to their whims— defend a politician, attack someone, flatter him. Thus Bufo is the typical patron who is devoid of critical taste, miserly yet foolishly extravagant, encouraging flattery and bad poetry. Pope makes it a point that seeing patrons like these he has decided not to accept patronage.

The most venomous picture is that of Sporus. He is based on Lord Hervey, a powerful politician who had once been Pope's aHy but now was a personal enemy. Sporus was the name of one of Nero's eunuchs, whom he later married. In calling Hervey by this name Pope is pointing out his bisexuality and his position in the court as the Queen's favourite. Arbuthnot tries to restrain him from attacking Sporus because he is not worth the effort.— it would be like torturing a butterfly on a wheel: just as the butterfly would not be able to feel pain, so too Sporus is so destitute of sensibility that he could not even feel the sting of satire. But this only provokes Pope the more..The insect imagery connects Sporus with the swarm of scribblers v/ho plagued' Pope. This insect may appear to be prettier than others, but it is only gilded, not golden. Its paint cannot conceal the dirt underneath. Like a gadfly he can irritate better people than him but lacks ability to appreciate either beauty or wit. He is like a cringing spaniel who does what he had trained to do. A pet spaniel does not dare to bite game, so too though Sporus drools he does not dare to do anything.

He is compared with a shallow river that ripples gently but has no depth. Throughout the •emphasis is on Sporus' impotence contrasted with pope's 'manly ways'—an attack on Sporus' sexuality. Now Pope attacks his speech. Hervey was Walpole's spokesman in the House of Commons. He is painted as a ventriloquist's dummy and then as a toad in the ear of Queen Caroline. The latter picture is drawn directly from the image of Milton's Satan as a toad tempting Eve into evil. He is ready always with lies and blasphemies and poetry— whatever profits him the most. His intelligence is unsteady and he himself is "one vile antithesis". Satan had been painted with an angel's face and a reptile's body—that is how Sporus must be regarded. He has a beauty of its own, but is untrustworthy. He has neither wit nor pride, but is vicious and deceitful.

The portrait of Sporus is savage in its denunciation, comparable only with Dryden's attacks on Zimri and Corah. Whereas the portrait of Atticus is civil, and Bufo's is expressed in comparatively polite language, here Pope lets go of all discretion to indulge in personal feelings. But precisely because the feeling is so intense here that the portrait is so vivid. Sporus is both deceived and a deceiver, a fool and a betrayer, and as such deserves no mercy. He acts different parts like Zimri—only he is not mad, but calculating. He is false in every breath. His bisexuality is indicated as an inability to commit himself to any cause: even Nature had made him rootless. Throughout animal imagery is used: from butterfly to bug, to dog, to load, to serpent—it is comparable with Milton's degradation of Satan was plain: as Satan took the shape of a toad to tempt Eve so too Hervey misguides the Queen. He is the antithesis of everything that is good and decent: his heart is corrupted; his creeping wit and "pride that licks the dust" is plainly a reference to Satan who took the shape of a serpent. Thus Sporus becomes the archetype of fawning courtier and sycophantic hanger-on. He is directly contrasted with the satirist who is nobody's tool and has no vanity. The satirist consciously serves a cause greater than himself, whereas Sporus' connection is with filth.

However, it must be understood that though personal animus dictated the portraits, they are not confined to the topical. All three are antitypes of Pope. Atticus is a talented writer like Pope. But he is desperate for praise and envious of rivals unlike Pope. So he had given up his identity, too concerned with what others think of him. Bufo is an empty headed vain patron who has no identity left. Sporus is more dangerous than the others. While they are passive, he is mobile; Bufo feeds on others; Sporus is a satirist turned scandal monger: Pope is none of them. Instead he is the self-dependent poet and moral teacher.

At the background is the vast mob of nameless faceless scribblers. The poem begins with their description. They pursue the poet eagerly hoping to have him help them. The poet regards them as madmen who rave and roam the land. No matter where the poet tries to hide, they seek him out: land, water, road, church, walls, nothing can hinder them. The poet

regards them as a plague, as a swarm of insects. Pope gives a brief sketch of various types of would-be poets, some wish the poet to edit their works, some for a loan, some offer a bride, even previous enemies apologize and shamelessly ask for favours. Pope compares a scribbler with a spider spinning his cobweb. Pope's disdain for grub street hucksters come out plainly here. However there is a long description of how lesser poets fawn on him embarrassing him. by comparing him with great classical geniuses.

What is amazing in Pope's characterization is how compressed his pictures are. He brilliantly uses allusions, epithets and similes to make his point. In the process we are given pictures of enduring types. Though based on real people, they have wider implications. Pope manages to make them individuals as well. However he is not primarily a poet of characterization as Browning is. His aim in satire is to create characters that are recognizable in all times and all places.

5.4.2 Poetic Biography/Idealized Portrait of Himself

Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot is a brilliant piece of satire. But it is also something more. It is an autobiography of himself in verse. Just as in a later age. Wordsworth wrote **The Prelude or Growth of a Poet's Mind,** so too this poem's subtitle can easily be Growth of a Satirist. It is poetic biography in a special sense, imitating Horace and Dryden's style. However, like all autobiographers. Pope is perhaps anxious to leave behind a favourable account of himself. So what we have here is an idealized portrait of himself as the virtuous satirist.

The Epistle falls into three sections. From line 1-124 he expresses his disgust at the scribblers and fawners who make his life miserable. The poem begins highly dramatically with Pope calling on his servant to shut the door in an effort to gain privacy. He is angry; the repeated caesuras used in the lines expresses his indignation. Even the boundaries of his property fail to protect him from the madmen. The would-be poets relentlessly pursue him. Nothing can shame them or deter them. In desperation he asks Arbuthnot for medicine to make them disappear but it is in vain. The verses are packed with interjection, thrust and counterthrust. We recognize in the scribblers the modern equivalent of celebrity hunters and tabloid journalists! However their very presence is significant: they consolidate his own pre-eminent position.

The poet regards himself as an injured innocent; he had not hurt anyone by his poetry and starts naming people in higher reaches of society who are so thick-skinned that they are unaffected by his jibes. Arbuthnot attempts to restrain him as he had done in his letter but such restraints only fan his ire higher. Flattery of fools is like the saliva of a mad dog which is venomous. Such attacks forces Pope to publicly defend himself. This is the crux of the poem: he is not giving an account of his career out of vain-glorious motive, but to clear himself of malicious accusations and protect his friends and family a noble motive is

thus attributed to the poem.

From line 125 we have an autobiographical account clearly idealized. He begins by wondering why he became a poet. It was something instinctive, for even as a child he 'lisped in numbers'. He defends himself.

I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobeyed.
The .Muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life,

He had not quarreled with his family in order to become a poet or even written poetry to court a beloved. At most it brought some consolation in his wretched life. Again and again he stresses that his writing of poetry is motivated not by love of exterior gain, but by an inner compulsion. Similarly he published his poems not for self-aggrandizement but because men of letters praised them.

He protests that his first poems attacked no one, yet he was attacked by less gifted and more malicious critics and poets. Pope's view of his career as Leslie Stephen points out suggests a problem—why is so inoffensive a man the butt of such hatred? Pope answers it himself: this is because dull people hate men of genius. He insists that he does not attack someone for personal reasons but because the target is the representative of vice. From line 147-192, he vigorously defends himself against charges brought against him and strives to show he loves a quiet modest life, and is a foe only to liars. Critics like Denis and Gildon attacked him without reason but he kept his patience. He excused them on the grounds that they needed to earn a living or were not in their right minds. When a sober critic correctly pointed out his faults, Pope accepted his criticism. Yet this becomes Pope's launching pad for attacking all those he regarded as bad critics and poets. A bad critic is one who is more converned with textual details and emendation than with the spirit of the works. He specifically names Bentley and Theobald as guilty of this, because both had criticized his work. Such critics may append their names to the edition of great writers like Shakespeare and Milton, but that is akin to finding impurities like hair or insects embedded in amber. The other poets who had abused him is dismissed on the grounds that they have no objective standards to judge literature: they either strain themselves to produce barren verse, or produce nonsense or writes poetry that reads like prose.

Having deposed of lesser mortals Pope now moves in to attack three persons who had injured him and the public the most—Atticus, Bufo, Sporus. [see the analysis of characters of the three in 1.4].

As a contrast to them Pope paints a picture of himself as virtuous and sober. His only desire is to be his own man, "Oh let me live my own, and die so too!". He is independent doing only what pleases him. Unlike Atticus he does not strive to please anyone else. In

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a hit at Bufo he declares that he has no need for any patrons. He is not a man for intrigues either. He believed in leading a simple life, paying all his debts, reciting his prayers like a devout man and sleeping peacefully without worrying about his critics or his next composition. For him life has other joys and he is scronful of detractors and admirers alike who pigeonhole him. Now he moves on to explain the nature of satire and distinguish it from slander. A poet who tells lies about others, or insults good people without cause, who defends no friend is a liar. By implication Pope stresses that he is not such a poet. His lash is meant only to correct and will not be dreaded by an honest man. This ties him to what he has written earlier about his attitude to critics—if the critic is correct then he accepted criticism without demur. Thus again he emphasizes that he is a man without vanity or malice—two things of which satirists, and himself, personally have been accused of.

From line 134, the tone changes, as Pope launches on to another magnificent description of himself, who is also the ideal virtuous man. He never worshipped fortune nor hungered for money, he never flattered anyone. The purpose of writing poetry was to preach morality. It was not fame that he wanted, but to be virtue's champion. He endured all calumnies, all threats, all libels against his name, all abuses on people he loved—yet he has no regrets because his life is dedicated to virtue. This portion is the most moral and moving, because Pope was desperately trying not only to project his idealized image, but perhaps also trying to persuade himself that this is what he is. In the final portion of the poem Pope sets up his father as the virtuous ideal as against the corrupt scribblers and mercenary peers. His father was not arrogant, he was not a fanatic whether in politics or religion, never lied, knew no sophistry, was always honest and sober, wise, healthy and he died a tranquil painless death. It is such a life that Pope wishes to lead, for it will be a happier life than that of kings. The poem ends on an exquisitely tender note as Pope wishes to take care of his mother and begging heaven to spare Arbuthnot.

One characteristic that distinguishes this poem from other autobiographical poems is that this is public poetry. Unlike Romantics this is not confessional. Instead Pope deliberately sets out to project a particular vision of himself. He is the first poet perhaps who set up his own Public Relation department and deliberately managed his own image through literary media. There seems to be two overriding reasons for this. One is the caricature his enemies produced of him. they lampooned him as an asp, an ape, a spider, a hunchbacked monster. The second is money—he was marketing not only his goods but also his image to persuade customers to buy his books. This image by necessity would extend to posterity also, a mark left on the world by a man who is unable to leave any other physical evidence.

In his previous poems, Pope had given a certain vision of man as a generous creature. He constantly rails against the wealthy who squander their money or spend it selfishly. Timon is the picture of profligacy. Burlington on the other hand builds not for his own glory but to strengthen the nation. Pope is pragmatic enough to understand through his own

circumstances that money alone allowed one to be independent of social ties leading to effective disinterested public works. That is the mould in which Pope cast himself—the independent enlightened philanthropist. Avarice of all kinds are rejected in a series of denials, from lines 334-59. Coming immediately after the picture of the vile fawning Sporus, it creates a noble dignified Pope. This Pope has worked hard, kept his integrity, did not aspire to greatness—yet he had become prosperous, built up sufficient social status, and is highly moral throughout his life. Above all he emphasizes his moral and financial independence—to him they two are necessarily linked. His fundamental loyalty was to virtue alone and so he denies any party loyalty in the age of bitter partisanship. He is aloof from all this. He is th'e embodiment of propriety, had been generous and censorious according to context, and constantly loyal to his principles—he has nothing to reproach himself with.

We must however contrast this picture with the reality. As a Roman Catholic the Pope family was subject to greater taxation, denied any government post and more financially deprived. In his letters Pope is always anxious about investments and often asks his friends to help buy him an annuity. Far from regarding money-matters as something distasteful, he played the stock market. He also used the subscription method cleverly and grew wealthy. During his translation of Odyssey, he had not told anyone that two others had collaborated in it-; this cast doubts about his integrity. Pope is actually money conscious, but he felt he ought not to be—this creates a tension between reality and the public image. This tension is manifested in his insistence simultaneously on the filthy nature of money and its necessity. Nor were his interactions with literary critics as innocent as he claimed. He had first criticized Dennis—though justifiably—which had led to a lasting quarrel between them. Bentley and Theoblad were good scholars who do not deserve such attacks merely because they criticized certain aspects of Pope's works. Pope was sensitive to criticism in spite of his pretence and he was capable of—as his pen-portraits of people who had offended him show—of venomous enmity. However in the poem he projects himself as the calm, temperate, reasonable, man—the ideal Augustan gentleman. He did the same with his private letters: before publishing them he re-edited them to present himself as a man of dignity.

Critics have called this poem Pope's apologia. But the reader must take some pains if he is to comprehend it. In the first place, some knowledge of the important events and people in the poet's life must be known. Secondly, it tells us not what Pope actually was but how he wanted others to think of him. Nevertheless, the discrepancy does not take away the poem's greatness—either as a satire, or as the portrait of what a virtuous man should be like. The poem ends where it begins in home, but this time not in flight but with assurance that it is in the home alone where true virtues exist. The Epistle is both personal and universal, turning ephemeral events into enduring monuments.

5.4.3 Imagery

One of the chief devices used by Pope to make the Epistle vigorous and united is his imagery. Various kinds of imagery run throughout the poem; each one is a unit by itself, yet together they create an organic whole.

The most memorable imagery is that of animals. The first striking imagery is-that of the scribbler as a spider. A spider spins a cobweb which is thin and dirty; if it is broken he spins it a new. Similarly the hack writers produce their works that are equally flimsy and dirty, in the sense of being devoid of all artistic merit. If their work is condemned, they happily produce yet more works consisting of lies and sophistry. Thus the favour-seekers who through around Pope are nothing more than a swarm of irritating insects; probably the implied comparison was partly suggested by the fact that most of these hack writers lived and worked in the place named Grubstreet. A flatterer is compared with a mad dog; just as the saliva of a rabid dog is dangerous, so too the flattery of fools is more dangerous to the poet's peace o" mind than outright condemnation.

The most brilliant use of imagery occurs in the description of Sporus. Arbuthnot calls him a colourless thing made from ass milk—his whiteness indicates he is .of no consequence. Then Arbuthnot compares him with a butterfly. This image has a double purpose. A butterfly looks very beautiful and painted on the outside, but is very frail. Similarly, Lord Hervey is very pretty, almost feminine in his looks, but has no sensibility. Pope does not even call him a butterfly; instead he sneers at him as a bug with filded wings, as a painted child of dirt. Both 'gilded' and 'painted' refer to the Hervey/Sporus' use of cosmetics. Just as in spite of its beauty the insect is still born of filth and feeds on dirt, so too Sporus in spite of all his looks and graceful manners remains a corrupt creature at heart. The insect imagery connects Sporus with the swarm of scribblers who plagued Pope. This insect may appear to be prettier than others, but it is only gilded, not golden. Its paint cannot conceal the dirt underneath. Like a gadfly he can irritate better people than him but lacks ability to appreciate either beauty of wit. He is like a cringing spaniel who does what he had trained to do, but has not the courage for anything else. A pet spaniel does not dare to bite game, so too though Sporus drools he does not dare to do anything. He is compared with a shallow river that ripples gently but has no depth. Throughout the emphasis is on Sporus' impotence contrasted with pope's 'manly ways'—an attack on Sporus' sexuality. Finally he is compared with a toad whispering blandishments at Queen Caroline's ears. The latter picture is drawn directly from the image of Milton's Satan as a toad tempting Eve into evil. Satan had been painted with an angel's face and a reptile's body—that is how Sporus must be regarded. From butterfly to bug, to dog, to toad, to serpent, to Satan—thus Sporus is degraded and his viciousness immortalized.

Representation of Atticus and Bufo. [sec 1.4]

There is also a brief passage where Pope mocks his flatterers who try to compare him with other literary greats. They eagerly tell him that his cough is like Horace's, that his deformed body resembles Alexander's, his nose is like Ovid's. Such comparisons are meant to flatter him, but all it does is to make him conscious about his defects. So he sarcastically says that wnen he would be ill they should tell him that this was how Virgil suffered, after his death they would say that Homer also died in the same manner. Here the comparisons are taken to their extremes to show how ridiculous they are. The images are concrete and vivid.

But Pope is also capable of producing equally forceful portraits of people he loves. His parents' portraits are examples. They had been born in gentle families but not so noble as to be meaninglessly proud of their lineage or quarrelling with other families over material wealth and status. His father did not marry a noble wife to enhance his status and thereby bring discord into the family. He was not a fanatic about any Cause though it was an age of bitter partisanship. He never sued anyone, always kept his promise, never lied, knew no sophistry, was honest by nature and died peacefully. Pope speaks more movingly of his mother as being sick. He prays that he would be allowed 'To rock the cradle of reposing age"; the image inverts the common picture of a mother rocking the cradle of her child and so is unexpectedly poignant. He would cheer his mother and pray that she would not die. Both portraits by their very nature lack the sharp sting of attacks on Pope's enemies, yet we can visualize both clearly.

Though concrete images convey maximum intensity, Pope can soar aloft with his abstract images as well. From line 334-359, we have a splendid description of what the virtuous poet should be like, as embodied in himself. It begins with a series of negations:

Not fortune's worshipper, nor fashion's fool,
Not lucre's madman, nor ambition's tool,
Not proud, nor servile;

In short he is the antithesis of everything Atticus, Bufo or Sporus is and by negating he is asserting his own virtues. He did not care what other people thought of him. He was not greedy for money, nor for political power. He was not proud or servile: he had struck the nice balance of modesty and sense of self-worth. He pleased by behaving as a proper man should—again the term 'manly' is a hit against the effeminate Sporus. He never flattered, never lied. Then followed a list of tribulations he had withstood. The enemy, the false friend, the coxcomb, the harsh critic, the lampooners, those who attributed to him trashy poems not his, "the dull, the proud, the wicked and the mad",—he kept his patience and served Virtue alone.

The whole poem, both a personal attack and a didactic discourse, succeeds mostly because of Pope's skilful handling of imagery. Though the reader might not be aware of

it, it is the images that unify the poem and impress the theme upon our minds. Byron points out about Sporus' portrait, "there is hardly a line from which a painting might not be made".

5.4.4 Satire

The poem belongs to the long tradition of defence of satire. Horace and Juvenal had formally written in their verse about their profession. This poem, too, was intended to be a defence of Pope's personal character and it explains why he had become a satirist. In his advertisement to the poem he emphasizes the composite nature of the collection. He is publishing it only because some persons of rank and fortune, i.e. Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Montague attacked him personally. He pretends there is no personal enmity here and gives an idealized image of himself. It must be remembered that to Pope satire was simply not a chance to abuse his enemies. Pope saw satire as a corrective. He wrote in a letter that his satires will have more morality than wit and grow graver. In the process a topical satire becomes universal.

The Epistle opens with the poet seeking refuge from scribblers and fawners who make his life miserable. The poem begins highly dramatically with Pope calling on his servant to shut the door in an effort to gain privacy. It is an informal dialogue and the reader immediately participates in his anger and disgust. He is angry, with the repeated caesuras used in the lines expressing his indignation. Even the boundaries of his property fail to protect him from the madmen. The would-be poets relentlessly pursue him. Nothing can shame them or deter them. In desperation he asks Arbuthnot for medicine to make them disappear, but it is in vain. The verses are packed with interjection, thrust and counter-thrust. Bedlam and Parnassus are wittily juxtaposed—pretenders to reason and pretenders to poetry are one. They are compared with spiders spinning dirty cobwebs. However their very presence is significant: they consolidate his own pre-eminent position and provide a contrast.

Portraits of Atticus, Bufo, Sporus. [see 1.4]

Contrasted to these miserable creatures are the portrait of himself and his father as the ideal virtuous men. Since Pope regarded satire as a corrective, it would not do to merely chasten others, a model must be provided to follow as well, [see 1.6]

The satire is both general and particular. On one level the besieged poet is certainly the actual poet. But he is only one of the poem's voices. Another is Arbuthnot himself, another is the idealized poet, still another is the classical satirist. This is in the mould of Horace and Juvenal. Horace is urbane and \witty, always good humoured, trying to cajole men into laughing at vices and correcting themselves. Juvenal is angry and violent, more inclined to denounce than cajole the readers. Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot seems to be a combination of the two, though Pope saw it as an imitation of Horace.

5.4.5 Style

Pope is considered to be one of the most polished craftsmen in English literature.

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Many denounce him because he is nothing like the Romantic% and think that lacking passion he is only as Arnold commented a classic of prose. Yet we must remember also Johnson's enthusiasm, "If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found?" Pope's greatness lies in his style, which is far more sophisticated than Dryden's. His medium and material seem to be perfectly suited to one another. What marks out Pope's poetry is his wit. Similarly **Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot** demands 'judgement' and appreciation of the way language is manipulated.

The poem was originally a composite collection of snatches of verses written at various limes. For example, he had written his verses on Atticus/Addison a long time ago and since then had been on civil terms with him: when the poem was published his mother had already passed away. Yet after Pope had finished his polishing, it gains a central theme and unity which is all the more potent for not being overly stated. The theme is that of personal integrity. Pope is defending his own moral character as much as he is attacking others, they are there for contrast. He explains that he is forced to become a satirist because of honour and not malice. The poem is organic in the sense it shows the development of a satirist. The poet shows how he was attracted to poetry, how he was praised, how he was traduced and how he never swerved from Virtue. Earlier poems were more static defining the nature of a thing, as in *Essay on Criticism,* but this one deals with the process of becoming.

Pope uses a number of literary devices like ambiguity, literary allusions, and figures of speech. Some of his lines are plainly sarcastic, as the hanger-on who is "happy to catch me just at dinner time". But several of his statements do not express his feelings unequivocally as in the witty juxtaposition of Bedlam and Parnassus, or about the would be poet who was "obliged by hunger" to write poems, or whether he is entirely serious when he says, he "can sleep without a poem in my head". Another potent weapon are the allusions. Bufo' for example means toad which connects him with the later image of Sporus and makes him ridiculous. Sporus was an eunuch whom Nero married—a palpable hit at Hervey's ambiguous sexuality. The Dog-Star was supposed to bring down lunacy. Atticus is compared with Cato, playing on the fact that Addison had written a tragedy called **Cato**. Even a pun brings out the poet's wit as in "much bemused in beer"-ordinarily bemused means confounded, but muses are also goddesses of poetry and so bemused is a witty way of implying that the poem is so nonsensical that it must have been written while drunk. The whole poem is filled with allusions of this kind. Of course to get the full impact the reader needs to understand the references. Yet while detailed knowledge increases appreciation it is necessary to enjoy the comedy. Again figures of speech like irony, chiasmus and antithesis are used with great effect. For example, lines like: Not fortune's worshipper, nor fashion's fool,/Not lucre's madman, nor ambition's tool/Not proud, nor servile..." assert the poet's positive qualities through a series of negations and thereby makes it more forceful. The heroic couplet is here brought to perfection.

The poem has the unity and style proper to its kind, as a Horatian Epistle. It is written in the form of both an Epistle and a dialogue, mingling the qualities of both. It is urbane and witty, vividly personifying actual people under other names, yet turning personal concerns into universal and eternal topics. The poem begins dramatically, gathers tempo, rises to a climax and then descends, finally ending in a picture of peace focusing on Pope's parents. The readers journey from exasperation to disgust to composure—from denunciation of the corrupt reality to the ideal.

5.5 ☐ Annotations

Introduction: Neque serrnonibus vulgi...".".you will not any longer attend to the vulgar mob's gossip nor put your trust in human rewards for your deeds: virtue, through her own charms, should lead you to true glory. Let what others say about you be their concern; whatever it is, they will say it anyway" (Cicero, De Republica, VI, 23).

1: good John: Pope's servant John Serle.

2: Dog-star: Sirius. It is associated with madness with the August rehearsals of poetry in Juvenal's Rome.

4: Bedlam: an insane asylum in London; Parnassus: mountain sacred to the Muses (goddesses of arts and sciences) and Apollo (the god of poetry)

13: the Mint: a sanctuary for insolvent debtors (so called because Henry VIII's mint had been there). On Sundays the debtors were allowed to come out without being arrested.

21: Twit'nam: Pope's home at Twickenham.

23: Arthur: Arthur Moore (16667-1730) was a politician, whose son James Moore Smythe (1702-1734), a writer, had used some of Pope's verses in a play, The. Rival Ladies (1727). Later, he collaborated in a poem attacking Pope. Smythe is also said to have been a leader of English freemasonry (cf. line 98).

25: Comus: from Latin cornu, a horn. Thus it refers to any cuckold. It can refer to Sir Robert Walpole, whose wife left him in 1734.

40: Keep...nine years: This was Horace's advice in his **Ars Poetica.**

41: high in Drury lane: living in a garret in Drury lane. Drury Lane was a place of bad reputation where actors, prostitutes and shady types lived.

43: before Term ends: the end of the summer law court terms, which coincided with the close of the London publishing season.

49: Pitholeon: According to Pope the name taken from a foolish poet at Rhodes, who pretended to be a Greek scholar..

53: Curll: Edmund Curll (1675-1747), a publisher accused of spreading sedition and pornography. He and Pope were enemies.

62: Lintot: Barnaby Bernard Lintot (1675-1736), a bookseller, who published most of Pope's earlier works.

66: go snacks: "to divide profits"

69: Midas: legendary king of Phyrgia. He was given the golden touch uritil he renounced it. Apollo gave him ass's ears for having awarded the prize in a musical contest between Apollo and Pan to Pan. Variously his minister, his barber or his Queen revealed the secret.

85: Codrus: a traditional name for a bad poet, borrowed from Juvenal. 97: Colley: Colley Gibber a moralizing critic who wrote against the theatre.

98: Henley: John Henley (1692-1756), a preacher, who delivered a sermon celebrating the trade of the butcher.

99: Bavius: a Roman poet who Horace and Virgil, and so was attacked by them.

100. Philips: Ambrose Philips (1675-1749), a pastoral poet, Philip's Pastorals had been attacked by Pope.

101: Sappho:-Greek lesbian poetess of the seventh century B. C. The name is applied to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

113: my Letters: Curll had published without permission some of Pope's letters to his freinds. 114.

117: Ammon's great son: Alexander the Great. 122: Maro: Virgil.

135-141: Granville: George Granville, Baron Lansdowne (1667-1735), who had encouraged Pope in his early years. Garth: Sir Samuel Garth (1661-1719), poet and physician to George I. His Dispensary (1699) is one of the earliest example of mock-heroic in English. Talbot: Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury (1660-1718), Somers: John Somers, Baron Somers (1651-1716) Whig statesman, who. encouraged Pope in writing of the Pastorals. Sheffield: John Sheffield, third Earl of Mulgrave. Rochester: Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester (1662-1732), a Jacobite sympathizer, who was banished in 1732. He was a close friend of Pope and a member of the Scriblerus Club. St. John: Henry St. John (1678-1751), Ist Viscount of Bolingbroke, politician and philosopher who had profound influence on Pope.

146: Burnets: Thomas Burnet (1694-1753), a follower of Addison, who had attacked Pope. Oldmixons: John Oldmixon (1673-1742), a miscellaneous Whig writer. Cooke: Thomas Cooke (1703-1756), poet, pamphleteer, and translator. He attacked. Pope.

149: Fanny: Lord Hervey.

151: Gildon: Charles Gildon (1665-1724), a critic who had attacked some of Pope's earlier works.

153: Dennis: John Dennis (1657-1734). a critic and dramatist who had been offended by an comment on him in line 585 of the **Essay of Criticism**. Dennis's reply began a long period of hostility between himself and Pope.

164: Bentley: Richard Bentley (1662-1742), famous English classical scholar. Tibbalds: Louis Theobold (1688-1744), scholar and dramatist who edited Shakespeare (1734). He attacked Pope's edition of Shakespeare in 1726 and Pope retaliated by making him king of the Dunces in the earlier version of the

180: a Persian tale. According to Pope Ambrose Philips translated a book called the Persian Tales." Philips received a half a crown for each section of this book.

190: Tate: Nahum Tate (1652-1715), a poet who is famous chiefly for producing a **King Lear** with a happy ending.

209: Cato: a famous Roman senator who could.sway others with his eloquence. Here the reference is more to Addison's tragedy **Cato** (1713) for which Pope had written the prologue.

214: Atticus: the name of Cicero's cultivated friend, chosen both to suggest Addison and indicate some of his qualities.

222: birthday song: refers to the practice of poet-laureate writing odes on the king's birthday. The George is George I who had contempt for poetry.

230: Bufo: meaning a toad. Castalian state. Castalia is the name of a spring on Mount Parnassus; hence this refers to the poetic state.

231: forked hill: Parnassus, sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

256: Gay: John Gay (1685-1732), poet and dramatist, member of Scriblerus Club, a close personal friend of Pope's loved by all who knew him for his character. He was the author of **The Beggar's Opera.**

276: Balbus: George Hay, seventh Earl of Kinnoul

280: Sir Will: Sir William Yonge, Whig politician, widely held to represent "everything pitiful, corrupt and contemptible." Bubo: George Bubb Dodington, Baron Melcombe (1691-1762), another minor Whig politician noted for his ostentation and lack of taste. Bubo < Latin owl, with suggestion of booby.

299-300: Pope's enemies had charged that in **Epistle to the Earl of Burlington** (Moral Essay IV, 141-50). Timon's Villa was the Duke of Chandos' estate. Cannons (line

300). The "dean" and "silver bel" are both mentioned in the description.

305: Sporus: a homosexual favourite of the Emperor Nero. Pope applies the name to Lord Hervey, Vice-chamberlain, advisor to Queen Caroline, friend of Lady Montague.

306: ass's milk: Hervey used to drink this.

363: Japhet: Japhet Crook (1662-1734), a forger

365: Knight of the Post: one who got his living by giving false evidence

375: Welsted's lie: apparently he had said that Pope's poetry had led to the death of a lady and that Pope had libelled his benefactor Duke ofChandos.

378: Budget: another person who reviled Pope.

380: the two Curlls: the publisher and Lord Herve, both whom had abused Pope's family.

391: Bestia: a Roman consul who accepted a bribe to sign a dishonourable peace. Probably refers to the Duke of Marlborough.

417: Arbuthnot, being a Tory, lost his place as court-physician on Queen Anne's death.

5.7 ❑ Summary

The poetry of Pope is sophisticated and complex, being products of the neoclassical age. He was primarily a poet of society, upholding civilized values. The vehicle he chose to do this was satire and didactic poetry. **Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot** is regarded as the most interesting of his satires because it is also an autobiography. Here he defends his satires-as being harmless and useful as a corrective. In nis characterization he is more interested in giving us types than specific individuals. Though much of the energy comes from the fact that his targets were people who had insulted him, yet they become something more. As a satirst he lacked the majesty of Dryden, but in its place brought clarity of thought and lucidity of language and moral discourse that is not tedious. All in all, **Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot** is resounding success both as satire and poetry.

5.8 ❑ Questions with Suggested Answers

1. Comment on the imagery in **Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot** [see 1.6]

2. Analyze **Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot** as a satire [see 1.7]

3. How far can **Eptisle to Dr Arbuthnot** be regarded as autobiographical? What view of himself is Pope trying to propagate? Do you think that Pope is trying to create an idealized version of himself which is removed from reality? [see 1.5]

4. How does Pope treat the objects of his scorn in this poem? [see 1,4J

5. What picture does Pope create of the ideal virtuous person? [see 1.4, 1.6]

6. Comment on the artistic success of the poem, [see 1.8. 1.10]

5.8 ❑ Suggested Readings

Biography :

Maynard Mack, Alexander Pope: A Life.

Select Ctiticism

Basil Wiley, **The Eighteenth Century Background**

lan Jack, **Augustan Satire**

lan Gprdon, **A Preface to Pope**

Geoffrey Tillotson, **On the Poetry of Pope**

Peter Dixon, **The World of Pope's Satires**

R. W. Rogers, **The Major Satires of Alexander Pope**

G. Wilson Knight, **Laureate of Peace: On the Genius of Alexander Pope**

R. Boower, **The Poetry of Allusion**

M. Mock ed. **Essential Articles for the Study of Pope**

Text

Selected Poems of Alexander Pope: ed. John Heath-Stubbs, Heinemann.

The Twickenham Edition of the Poems of Alexander Pope, ed. John Butt, Yale Univ. Press.

Pope, Horatian Satires and Epistles ed. H. H. Erskine Hill, O.U.P.

Unit -6 ❑ Milton : Paradise Lost

Structure

6.0   Objectives

6.1   Background to the age

6.2   Milton's life and works

6.3   Story and "Background to Paradise Lost

6.4   Outline of Book 1 of Paradise Lost

6.5   General Comments

6.6   Textual Annotations

6.7   Important Aspects of Paradise Lost Book I

    6.7.1   Satan's Character

    6.7.2   "Paradise Lost" as an epic

    6.7.3   "Paradise Lost" as a Christian epic

    6.7.4   Invocation of Paradise Lost

    6.7.5   Epic similies in Paradise Lost

6.8   Questions

6.9   Bibliography

6.0 ❑ Objectives

This unit has several objectives :

a) It aims to provide detailed background information about the age and outline of life of Milton.

b) It will relate the text *Paradise Lost* to its social background.

c) It will discuss the literary qualities of the text.

d) It will critically comment on the various themes present in the text.

6.1 ☐ Background to the age

The Protestant Reformation split the hitherto single Christian Europe into two broad groups—the Catholics and the Protestants. The Church in medieval age had grown corrupt and hedonistic, more interested in garnering material power than in spirituality. A number of reformers like Wycliff, Huss, Martin Luther, Calvin arose in various countries who protested against corruption at the highest levels of the Church, the sale of indulgences, the excessive veneration of saints and the low moral and intellectual standards of ordained priests. After the Reformation, the Protestant Churches in different countries took various forms. In England Henry VIII declared Protestantism to be the official religion with the monarch as the head of the Church. The persecutions by his Catholic daughter Queen Mary I. and the long rule of his Protestant daughter Queen Elizabeth I strengthened that religion in England. However soon there arose several factions within the Protestant movement, most notably the Presbyterians or Puritans, each of whom claimed to practice true Christianity and some even posed challenges to the government itself. Elizabeth was succeeded by James I, the Stuart king of Scotland. The official Church of England was Episcopalism which had a hierarchy of Bishops rtnd resembled in many of its rituals the Catholic Church. The Presbyterians on the other hand followed the Apostolic model of Church government, one in which there is no hierarchy and the king is not its head. They demanded a return to literal interpretation of the Bible which they held to be the sole guide for human affairs. James I dismissed their pleas with the statement, "No Bishop, No King" thus tying the form of church government directly to the power of kingship.

James' trouble did not end with religious questions alone. He was known as the ".wisest fool in Christendom"—wise on account of his scholarship and a fool on account of his inability to govern. His predecessor Elizabeth was a charismatic and brilliantly intelligent ruler who ruled as an absolute monarch without serious opposition. Unfortunately James lacked her qualities. He was a firm believer in the "divine right of kings"—the theory that God appointed kings and therefore the king could do no wrong and none had the right to rebel against him. However he had to deal with the English Parliament which was not inclined to look upon James in such a manner. There were constant clashes between the two, particularly over money. In 1611, James suspended Parliament and it did not meet for another 10 years. In 1621, James re-called Parliament to discuss the future marriage of his son, Charles, to a Spanish princes, Parliament was outraged at the thought that an alliance would be made with a Catholic princess and from a nation who had been at war with England during Elizabeth's time. The marriage did not take place but the damaged relationship between king and Parliament was never mended by the time James died in 1625.

James was succeeded by his son Charles I. Like his father he believed in the divine rights of kings. He argued with parliament over most issues, but money and religion were

the most common causes of arguments. He married a Catholic wife and continued to ignore the demands of the Puritans who were growing stronger and stranger. In 1629, he refused to let Parliament meet by locking the doors. For eleven years Parliament could not meet—a period called the Eleven Years Tyranny. Charles ruled by using the Court of Star Chamber. To raise money for the king,, the Court heavily fined those brought before it and sold titles to rich men. In 1635 Charles ordered that everyone in the country should pay Ship Money for the upkeep of the navy. John Hampden, a Member of Parliament refused to pay the new tax as Parliament had not agreed to it. Charles also angered the Scots by ordering that they should use a new prayer book for their-church services; the Scots invaded England. Charles was forced to recall Parliament in 1640 as only they had the required authority to collect extra money needed for the war. So he had to yield to many demands of the Parliament. In 1642, he went to Parliament with 300 soldiers to arrest his five severest critics. But they already knew of the plan and fled. This was the turning point. Only six days later, Charles left London to raise an army to fight Parliament. The king raised his banner at Nottingham and the Civil War started. The king's party was known as Royalists or cavaliers, while the Parliamentarians were known as Roundheads. At first the war was indecisive until Cromwell was appointed as general of the Puritan side and created the New Model Army. After the Battle of Naseby Charles surrendered to the Scots who sold him to the-English Parliament for £400,000. As the conquerors quarreled among themselves Charles made a treaty with the Scots who attacked England. But they were defeated. Charles was put on trial at Cromwell's insistence, found guilty and executed. England now officially became a Commonwealth. At first it was governed by the Parliament; but they proved to be so weak that ultimately Cromwell took over as Protector and ruled as dictator.

After the death of Oliver Cromwell in Sept., 1658, there was confusion, Cromwell's son and successor, Richard, was an ineffectual leader, and power quickly fell into the hands of the generals, chief among whom was George Monck, leader of the army of occupation in Scotland. In England also a strong reaction had set in against the Puritans. A new Parliament was elected, which decided to recall Charles II, son of Charles I, as the new king. Charles returned to England and landed at Dover on May 25, 1660. This is known as the Restoration period.

The Restoration period was marked by an advance in colonization and overseas trade, by the Dutch Wars, by the great plague (.1665) and the great fire of London (1666), by the birth of the Whig and Tory parties, and by bitter anti-Catholicism. Theatres were opened and drama revived giving rise to the notorious Restoration Comedy of Manners. Milton and Dryden were the great poets of this age. A great prose work is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). The age is vividly brought to life in the diaries of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn..

6.2 ❑ Milton's Life and Works

John Milton was born in 1608, December 9 to John Milton Sr., and his wife Sara, in London. His father had converted to Protestantism and was disinherited by his Roman Catholic family. Milton grew up under the influence of both Renaissance and the Bible., tutored at home by a Presbyter. In 1620(?) he entered St. Paul's School, under the high master Alexander Gill. Apparently he was very studious and already practised writing verses. In 1625 he was admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, under the tutor William Chappell. In 1626 disputes with Chappell caused him to be sent home to London or "rusticated" temporarily though he returned later. In 1629, December 25, he composed *Ode On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.* In 1632 he took M..A. at Cambridge. He now retired to family homes for more study. In 1634 *Comus* was performed as part of a private ceremony in a lord's home. While in 1637 *Comus* was published, *Lycidas* was published in 1638. He then went on a tour of Europe and met with prominent scholars, In 1640 he started a school in London. He now wrote several pamphlets reflecting his religious and political opinions. He showed himself to be a Republican and Puritan.

He married Mary Powell who left him within a month of their marriage. When the Civil War broke out, the Powells declared for the king. But when Milton announced his intention of marrying a second time after getting a divorce, she returned and later Milton sheltered the Powell relatives after the king's defeat. In 1649 he was invited to become Secretary for the Foreign Tongues (a post dealing with diplomatic correspondence, usually in Latin) by the Council of State. Milton was appointed Secretary. His first task was to answer *Eikon Basilike,* the book supposedly written by Charles I on the eve of his execution, which depicts the king-as a martyr He wrote *Eikonoklastes* ("breaker of icons"). He was also ordered to answer Salmasius's *Defensio Regia* ("defense of kingship"). In 1651 *Defensio pro populo Anglh~ano* ("defense of the English people," to vindicate the actions of the English on the Continent) was published.

After the death of his wife Mary who had given him several children, in 1656 he married Katherine Woodcock who died in 1658. After the Restoration he was arrested by Parliament but later pardoned. By this time he was old and had become blind. He was also famous for his learning. This probably influenced his pardon. He was allowed to retain a pension. He now settled down to tutoring and working on *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regain'd.* In 1663 he married Elizabeth Minshull. In 1667 *Paradise Lost* was published. In 1670 *History of Britain* was published. In 1671 *Paradise Regain'd* and *Samson Agonistes* were published together. *(Paradise Regained continues* where *Paradise U)sl* left off—with the temptation of Christ and his rejection of Satan so that he can redeem mankind. *Samson Agonistes* tells of the martyrdom of the Old Testament hero Samson who though blind and enslaved destroyed the Philistines—Milton saw himself as another

Samson and wished to emulate him). By the time of these publications he had become very ill and infirm. In 1674 he died and is buried in St. Gile's Church, Cripplegate.

Milton's famous poetic works are *Ode On The Morning Of Christ's Nativity, L'allegro, U'penwro, Counts, Lycidas, Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, Samson Agonistes.* He also wrote voluminous pamphlets and prose works. All of them have a distinctly Christian flavour.

Milton lived through exciting times. When he was born in 1608, Shakespeare was still alive and Queen Elizabeth was only five years dead. Her influence was still felt. When Milton died in 1674, Charles II reigned as constitutional monarch without any real power except that granted to him by Parliament.

6.3 ❑ Story and Background to Paradise Lost

The story of *Paradise Lost* is taken entirely from Christian mythology though it is obvious that Milton was deeply influenced by classical writers. Satan had been one of the highest angels in Heaven. But he was also vain and arrogant. When God declared that his Son Christ would share Godhead equally with Him Satan-saw it as an insult. He persuaded a third of the angels to rise in rebellion against God. Inevitably they were defeated in the war and cast out of Heaven into Hell. Undaunted Satan swore eternal War against God. He learned that God had created a new race, called humans, and had placed them in the garden of Eden. He flew there. He learned that though everything in the garden is for the use of Adam and Eve, the first Human couple, they were forbidden to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. In the guise of a toad and serpent he tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. She then persuaded Adam to eat it as well. After they had eaten they were no longer happy innocents but filled with sin and guilt. God then decreed that they would be cast out of Eden; from now on they would be forced to live by labour amidst hostile nature and know death, until Christ redeems mankind by his sacrifice.

Milton began *Paradise Lost* in 1658 and finished it in 1667. Since he had become blind, he dictated the poem to an amanuensis, who would read it back to him so that he could make necessary revisions. Milton claimed to have dreamed much *of Paradise Lost* through the nighttime agency of angelic muses.

Milton had several reasons for wrking this massive poem. In the first place the story of Genesis raised vexing questions about the nature of God's justice in the layman; he planned to demonstrate that the expulsion of Adam and Eve was just and it was humans who are to be blamed for their sins and sufferings and not God. Secondly, he was educated in the classical tradition and had written several Greek and Latin poems. However he became ambitious to make his native literature an extension of the classical tree. Like Homer and Virgil before him, Milton would be the epic poet of the English nation. But he

would not only be a national poet; his theme would be that of religion and cover the whole human race. As he wrote in a letter, "the bard is sacred to the gods; he is their priest, and both his heart and lips mysteriously breathe the indwelling Jove"! His poetry would serve both God and England by putting before it noble and religious ideas in the highest poetic form. In *Paradise Lost* he harmonizes both religious and political principles to become the writer of the first successful English epic.

In this poem, Milton was not only justifying God's ways to humans in general; he was particularly justifying his ways to the English people between 1640 and 1660. He felt very bitter about the failure of the Rule of Saints and the Restoration. He blamed the English people for failing to create a perfect society once they had got rid of the king. Like Adam and Eve, they had failed through their own weaknesses, their own passions and greed, their own sin. God was not to blame for humanity's expulsion from Eden, nor was He to blame for the trials and corruption that befell England during the time of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell. England had the opportunity to become an instrument of God's plan, but ultimately failed to create the New Jerusalem. The Restoration to him was the equivalent of Hell. *Paradise Lost* is therefore more than a work of art. Indeed, it was a moral and political treatise.

Still another reason for writing the poem was to improve, -in Milton's mind, the English poetic language. A note on "The Verse" explains: "The measure is English heroic verse without rime, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin,—rime being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modem poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rime both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like' endings,—a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rime so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of riming."

6.4 ❑ Outline of Book I of *Paradise Lost*

Book I *of Paradise Lost* begins with Milton describing what he intends to undertake with his epic: the story of Man's first disobedience and the "loss of Eden,", invocation of

the Heavenly Muse, subjects "unattempted yet in prose or rhyme" and above all to "justify the ways of God to men."

The poem proper begins in media res (in the middle) with Satan lying dazed in the fiery but dark lakes of Hell. When he regains consciousness he finds that his second in command, Beelzebub, has been transformed from a beautiful archangel into a horrid fallen angel. Satan's speech tells us the background. Presuming himself to be the equal of God, he and his followers had waged war on God; but they had been defeated and cast out to hell. Still all is not lost for he will never bow down to God. Instead they would wage eternal war and make evil victorious. The two then fly over the lake wherethey see their army lying. Satan calls to them and they respond. In a magnificent speech Satan rallies them and tells them that now they will attack God's latest creation, man. The rebel angels then construct a Temple, a throne room, for their general and for their government, greater in grandeur than the pyramids or the Tower of Babylon.

All the millions of rebel angels then gather in the Temple for a great council, shrinking themselves to dwarfish in order to fit.

6.5 ❑ General comments

The first book therefore (1) introduces the theme of the entire poem, (2) introduces Satan and the fallen angels, and (3) tells the readers that they are reading an epic.

Though Milton is apparently writing about the battle between Good and Evil and the Fall of Man, he is actually exploring human nature and why there is suffering. Milton tries to weave into his canvas all the accumulated learning of Western man so that it can truly be an epic. Milton is presenting his, and his culture's views on what good and evil mean, what mankind's relationship is with God, what man's destiny is as an individual and as a species.

Milton's portrait of Satan has led many in the Romantic period to claim that Satan is, in fact, the heroic protagonist of the whole work. Certainly Milton's depiction of Satan has greatly influenced the devil's image in Western art and literature since the book's publication.

Many of the structures and symbols used by both Heaven and Hell are similar. In heaven and hell there is a king and a military hierarchy of angels. Like Christ's twelve Apostles Satan too takes on twelve close associates. However there is reversal of values. While heaven is filled with light, hell is filled with darkness. While the unfallen angels were beautiful, now the fallen angels are ugly. The physical corruption-anddisfigurement that occurs to all the fallen angels is symbolic of the corruption which has occurred in their souls. While in Heaven all are attuned towards pleasing God, in Hell everyone is bent towards turning away from God.

6.6 ❑ Textual Annotations

4. One greater Man: Christ:

6. Heav'nly Muse: the Muse of Christian poetry, first invoked by Milton in *Nativity Ode 7*. Sinai, where God appeared to Moses and gave him the tables of the Law, was a mountain in the range Oreb;

8-10. that Shepherd: Moses.

10-11. Sion is Jerusalem, the Temple is the oracle or sanctuary of God there, and the pool Siloa is one with whose water Christ restored sight to the blind.

15. Aonian: Mount Helicon.

31. For one restraint: the prohibition to eai of the tree of Knowledge.

52. fiery gulf: the burning lake of Hell.

81. Beelzebub: Baal-zebub, the "Lord of Flies," the god Baal, worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron.

82. Satan: the term literally means "The AdversaiA,"

117. empyreal: fiery or heavenly substance which is indestructible.

157. Cherub: one of the orders of angels, belonging to the second rank.

198-200 The 'Iliads fought against iheir father t.'ranus (Heaven), loiter, they themselves were overthrown by /eus (Jove). Finally the Giants, sons of Earth (Earth-born), fought unsuccessfully against Zeus and his fellow Olympians.

Briareos: a hundred-handed monster, son of Uranus, here Milton uses him to imply an enemy of God.

Typhon: a hundred-headed serpent monster, who rebelled :i.ainst the gods and was punished.

200-8. Leviathan: a mythical seabeast, probably rose from sightings of whales. The prophet Isaiah described it as Hie dragon that is in the sea. A popular legend of the times told how a grou,. of sailors mistook the sleeping back of the leviathan for an island and anchored there; but when the beast woke up it swum away and the crew drowned. Here Milton is hinting at the deceptiveness and untrustworthiness of Satan.

209. Archfiend: Satan.

232. Pelorus: the northeast point of Sicily.

233. Etna: the great volcano near Pelorus.

236, bottom: valley;

239. stygian Flood; Styx is a river in Hell in Greek myth.

288. Tuscan Artist: Galileo, who perfected the telescope.

289. Fesole: Fiesole, a hill-town three miles north of Florence.

290. Vuldarno: Val d'Amo, the valley of the river Arno, which runs through Florence. 294. ammiral: ilagship, from the Arabic "amir al bahr," prince (emir) of the sea. 296. marie: soil.

303. Vallombrosa: "Shady Valley," a valley eighteen miles from Florence. Etrurian: the anqient state of Etruria included Tuscany.

305. Orion, a giant transformed to the constellation of that name, whose rising and setting coincided with storms.

306. The Red Sea.Coast: According to Old Testament when the Egyptians persued the Hebrews under Moses fleeing from them, God parted the Red Sea to allow the Hebrews passage and then closed it on Egyptian ranks drowning them.

307. Busiris: a legendary king of Egypt with whom Milton identifies the Old Testament Pharaoh.

Memphian: Egyptian, since Memphis was the ancient capital of Egypt.

320. virtue: valour (Lat. *virtus).

339. Amram's son: Moses who called up locusts, to cover the sky over Egypt.

345. cope: roof.

351-55. Milton compares the angels with the floods of barbarian invasions spreading from the north to Europe and Africa.

361-75. The names of the rebel angels were wiped out from the Book of Life kept by God. These angels later persuaded various races of men to worship them as gods forsaking Jehovah.

392-405. Moloch was worshipped by Ammonites. Solomon, the wise king of Israel due to the influence of his non-Jewish wives built temples to Moloch, Cheinos and Astaite on the Mount of Olives which therefore is called "the mount of corruption". The wooded valley of Hinnom, dividing the Mount of Olives from Sion where stood the Temple of God, was also used for pagan worship. It came to be called Gehenna and Tophet and each became the synonym of Hell.

406-18. Chemos was called "the abomination.of Moab". The places mentioned by Milton are in the territory occupied by the Moabites till taken from them by the Amorites. Chemos was associated with Moloch, and Baal-Peor. Solomon built temples to Chemos and Moloch on the Mount of Olives, but king Josiah destroyed them.

420. the brook that parts: Shihor, "the River of Egypt."

422. Baalim.and Ashtoroth: plural forms of pagan deities Baal and Ashtoreth.

438-57. Astoreth or Astarte was called by the Greeks Aphrodite and the Romans Venus. She was represented with crescent horns and worshipped as queen of Heav'n. Solomon built a temple to her.

446-57. In Phoenician myth and, ritual, Thammus (the original of the Greek Adonis) was annually slain in Lebanon by the wild boar, when the river Adonis ran red, supposedly with his blood, and annually revived.

457-66. Dagon was the national god of the Philistines. When the ark of the covenant was brought into his temple, the idol fell from its place and, set up again, fell once more on the threshold.

467-76. Rimmon was a Syrian god worshipped at Damascus. Milton alludes to two otherwise unconnected episodes. Naaman, a Syrian captain was cured of his leprosy, by Elisha, the prophet of God, and abandoned Rimmon's worship for God's. Ahaz, king of Judah, having entered Damascus as a conqueror, imitated the altar and worship of his vanquished enemy.

476-89. Osiris, Isis, Orus, were gods of Egypt. According to Milton the Israelites learnt worship of beasts from Egyptians and hence during their warderings worshipped the golden calf. The rebel king is Jeroboam, rebel against Rehoboarn who set up two golden calves in Bethel and Dan.

490-505. Belial: not a god but an abstraction, meaning "worthlessness,". In speaking of the Sons of Belial, Milton is referring to Restoration London and the courtiers of Charles II.

508-21. The Ionian gods are the Olympian deities worshipped by the Ionians, who stand for the ancient Greeks, supposedly descended from Javan, the son of Japeth one of the sons of Noah. They were the children of heaven and earth. The first offspring were the Titans ruled by Saturn who was displaced by his and Rhea's son Jove. Saturn fled to the Western fields.

534. Azazel occurs in Leviticus 16:8 (A.V.) as the marginal reading for "scapegoat" in the text Mere Milton maks him a fallen Cherub

546. orient: bright.

550. Dorian mood: a kind of Greek music.

575. That small infantry: the Pygmies; said by Homer to be attacked yearly by cranes.

577. Palegra: a peninsula in Macedonia, scene of the fight between the Giants and the Gods.

580. Uther's son: King Arthur.

581. Armoric: Breton.

583. Aspramont: town and castle near Nice, mentioned in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso:* Montalban: Castle of Renaud, or Reynaldo, a hero of Old French romance.

584. Trebisond.: a splendid city on the Black Sea 1204 to 1461, until captured by the Turks.

585. Biserta: the port from which the Saracens invaded Spain.

586-87. The scene of this famous battle was not Fontarabbia, but Roncesvalles, forty miles away. Charlemagne was not killed, but his nephew Roland.

609. amerc't of: deprived of. 672. scurf: scales.

676. pioneers: troops (now called engineers): so named formerly because they went before to prepare the road.

678. Mammon: an abstract term signifying riches; Milton however makes him one of the fallen angels.

713-17. pilasters: rectangular columns set within a watt] Doric pillars: the simplest of the three types of Greek column;

architrave: main beam resting on the row of pillars, with the frieze coming just above and the cornice projecting above this again;

bossy: done in relief; fretted: covered with designs.

728. cressets: iron vessels for holding burning oil or other inflammable matter and hung aloh to give light.

732-51. The architect is the Greek Hephaestus, Roman Vulcan, also called Mulciber (the softener or welder of metals, from Lat. *mulcae,* to soften'). Hephaestus, son of Zeus and Hera, enraged Zeus by taking the part of Hera against him, and so Zeus threw him down from Olympus which made him lame.

The Orders bright are the nine orders of angels, which were grouped into three hierarchies: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; Dominions, Virtues, Powers; Principalities, Archangels, Angels.

756. Pandemonium: place of all the demons.

6.7 ❑ Important Aspects of *Paradise Lost,* Book-I

6.7.1 Satan's Character

"Paradise Lost" has been described by Dryden as "undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, most sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced." Yet it raises a very important question central to its theme: who is the real hero of the poem? It has haunted critics for generations and has stirred fierce controversy. For most readers, Satan, (chiefly due to his portraits in the first two books) seems to steal the show. Yet Milton, a devout puritan, surely couldn't have intended to make Satan the hero. Indeed throughout the text Satan is constantly belittled while God and Christ are exalted. Armed with this fact many critics have argued that Satan is a hypocritical selfseeking cheap political orator and his "heroism" is a perversion of the true heroism embodied by Christ. But other critics have

answered along with Blake that unconsciously Milton was of the devil's party. The Romauucs in particular saw Satan as a Promethean rebel while many modern critics have compared him with a tragic hero. A.L. Rowse observes, "The subject is the biblical one of the Fall of Man but leading themes are rebellion, defeat, revenge: one recognizes civil war, commonwealth, restoration...Satan is the hero-Lucifer, proud and arrogant, of ambition illimitable, rebellious, defeated but unrepentant, unyielding, never giving in." It might be a description of Milton as well. This might explain why the official villain commands inspired poetry and why in spite of all efforts to render him loathsome Satan still seems to be the true hero of the epic.

C. S. Lewis who fights most stubbornly against the notion of a sublime Satan says caustically. "The proposition that Satan is a magnificent character may bear two senses. It may mean he is a magnificent poetic achievement or that he ought to be admired as a person. The first has been never denied and the second never affirmed before Blake and Shelley." Satan according to him is a ridiculous and contemptible figure. He suffers from *a* sense of injured merit because the Messiah has been appointed the Head of Angels though he is superior to Satan in both kind and degree. In rebelling against his maker Satan also rebels against himself. Also his pry for liberty becomes entangled with hierarchy: "order and decrees jar not with liberty but well consist". His justification for the revolt is thus,, nonsense for the intellect. Moreover he cannot conceive any state of mind other than the infernal - he cannot believe that the good angels find joy in their service instead of being envious and resentful. In war he proves himself to be a coward, when wounded he runs away. In Hell he is the typical politician manipulating his followers by cheap rhetoric. He proposes to voyage through the sea of chaos and hastily prevents anyone else from offering to take his place so that they might not gain a reputation for valor. Finally he sinks low enough to harm two innocent creatures who have never harmed him merely to annoy God. He spies on Adam's and Eve's tryst: this role of a voyeur is proof of how far he has degenerated. Later he takes on the form of a toad and a serpent, his outward shape becoming an expression of his base mentality. From Hero to General to Politician to Spy to Peeping Tom to the lowest form of reptiles, such is the progressive descent of Satan from his high estate, ending only when he can fall no lower.

Yet it is Satan's heroism we remember. We are first introduced to Satan as he lay in the burning lake. But still he would never repent of his rebellion or bow down to God's tyranny

> ".... *What though the field 'be lost?*
> *All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,*
> *And study of revenge, immortal hate,*
> *And courage never to submit or yield:....".*

Whatever qualms we might feel at such self-pride is swept away by the splendour of the lines; while his daring to be God's eternal adversary immediately wins our admiration.

Again Satan makes us feel the horrors of Hell and what a torment it is to one who has known Heaven :

> *"Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat.*
> *That we must change for Heaven,*
> *' this mournful gloom*
>
> *For that celestial light?..*
> *... Farewell happy Fields*

Where joy forever dwells; Hail horrors, hail. '.. " We are made to feel his deep anguish and mourn with him. But in the true heroic style he rises above his grief. He speaks in the accents of a born leader :

> *"The mind is it's own place, and in itself*
>
> *Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven...*
>
> *................................... Here at least*
>
> *We shall be free................................*

Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven. " We can only admire knowing that such majestic sentiments are beyond us. The same vein of implacable determination echoes in his call to his followers : "Awake, arise, or be forever fallen", and like a true leader he raises them from dejection. One cannot help feeh'ng that Satan's speeches have such eloquence and passion because they are Milton's innermost conviction as well.

The descriptions given by Milton also contribute to this impression. Satan is compared with a Leviathan implying great bulk and strength. His shield is as massy as the moon; his spear is taller than the tallest pine; the flames of the burning lake give way before him. The council of the Fallen Angels is reminiscent of Olympian Gods sitting in state, while Satan's regal splendor outshines the richest kings of earth. The scene where they proclaim him sovereign is magnificent. Like the roll of remote thunder they hail him as equal to "the Highest in Heaven." We know that Hell is a grim parody of Heaven and Satan to be the supreme evil, nevertheless the grandeur of the scene cannot be wiped away.

However, Milton does try to degrade him. We are told that though Satan vaunts aloud yet inwardly he is in pain and *"rackt with deep despair."* His words are only froth, not to be taken seriously. Again he is compared with the Leviathan because that beast is famous for deception which is Satan's speciality. He swears to do ill whenever possible and to employ guile-and fraud, which is not heroic. In the following books he is presented to us always as a villain. In Book IV he is wracked by despair and even thinks of repentance and submission. He is torn by his need for revenge and the pity he feels for the human couple's innocence. During the war in Heaven he is described as envious out of ambition.

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Though he is constantly in agony from the "hot hell" in him yet he refuses to change his condition, for he finds more pleasure in evil. In fact he is so changed that Waldock feels that Milton has made the heroic Satan disappear and created a new Satan who bears no relation to the original.

However, we must not forget that Satan is the source of all evil. Milton wishes to show how he slowly degenerated. Hence from the glorious Satan of Book I he slowly becomes ignoble and his lustre dims correspondingly. Moreover to make his theme interesting Milton must create a suitable adversary of the omnipotent God. Therefore Satan must be made majestic. Finally, Milton wished to show that evil is seductive. People would not be attracted to evil unless it has power and grandeur and so Satan as the prime evil must be splendid enough to attract us and lure us to evil. These are undoubtedly some of the reasons why Satan is so splendid.

Nevertheless our response to Satan is still to think of him as a tragic hero. Helen Gardner compares him to Macbeth. He is not a simple villain like Iago who is driven by vanity and petty malice. Instead he is a charismatic personage who has much good and potential in him. But like Macbeth he is driven by ambition and so rebels against the moral law of the universe. This corrupts him. However, all the time he is conscious of what he has lost and his agony haunts us. This acceptance of the full horror of the situation without a trace of self-pity and his vow that he is "One who brings/A mind not to be changed by Place or Time" bestows on him the aura of heroic magnitude.

Satan therefore remains an ambiguous character. On the one hand we have the heroic leader and prince, on the other we are constantly reminded that he is a liar, destroyer of innocence and adherent of evil. William Empson argues that Satan is morally innocent since to him God is only a tyrant whom it is right to defy. Even if we do not accept this we must acknowledge that Satan is the strongest character. W. Raleigh observes that anyone who opposes the Omnipotent is either a fool or a hero and Milton is far from having us think of Satan as a fool. Hence it is the heroic Satan who predominates proving that Milton created the last great tragic figure in English literature aiu' ilestroyed the unity of his poem in doing so.

6.7.2 "Paradise Lost" as an epic

An epic has been defined as a long narrative poem on a great and serious subject related in an elevated style and centered on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depend the fate of a tribe, a nation, or the whole human race. The earliest models in European literature are Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. They are "primary" epics shaped from traditional legends and are part of oral literature. After- him we have "literary" or "secondary" epics which are composed by selfconscious craftsmen in imitation of the traditional forms. Virgil's *Aeneid* is such an example and it formed the model for *"Paradise Lost"*. Milton borrowed heavily from all three epics as well as from others.

Milton uses a number of epic conventions in his poem :

1. **The Hero** : in an epic the hero is a figure of great national or cosmic importance, with a royal or even divine lineage. Achilles and Odysseus are the sons of kings while Aeneas is the son of the Goddess Venus herself and is the founder of the Roman Empire. In *"Paradise Lost"* Adam has no parents as such but he is created in God's image, while both he and Eve are the Parents of the human race. Christ is the Son of God while their adversary Satan is the First of all angels.

2. The epic must have a broad canvas. In both Odyssey and Aeneid the heroes travel all over the world and visit the underworld. The action of "Paradise Lost" is conceived in Hell, perpetrated on earth and punished by Heaven. Thus tne range is the broadest in Milton's epic.

3. **The Action** : it involves superhuman deeds including battles and journeys. In "Paradise Lost" we have the war in Heaven, Satan's creation of Pandemonium, his journeys to earth through the sea of chaos etc'. The action must be of great importance and here it involves the Fall of Mankind. These are the epic moments which make the action sublime.

4. **The Epic Machinery** : in epics gods and other supernatural creatures often take an active interest in the action and participate in them. In "Paradise Lost" we have Jehovah, Christ and angels. However, while in classical epics the action takes place on two planes, the human and supernatural, in "Paradise Lost" it is basically supernatural because the real battle is between Heaven and Hell.

5. **Epic Style** : An epic poem is a ceremonial performance and it is narrated in a manner which is deliberately distant from common speech to suit the grandeur and formality of the subject. This is the epic style. In "Paradise Lost" we have Milton's famous "grand style", latinate diction, stylized syntax, sonorous list of names, catalogues of principal characters (like the magnificent rollcall of the devils as false gpds), wide ranging allusions, and imitations of Homer's and Virgil's similes and epithets.

6. **Invocation** : In epics the harrative begins by giving the subject matter of the poem and invoking a Muse to inspire the poet. In "Paradise Lost", we have a prose argument followed by an invocation (lines 1-49 of Book I). We are told about the topic (of man's first disobedience), the characters ("our Grand Parents" and the "infernal serpent"), and Milton also calls upon the "Heavenly Muse" to inspire him.

7. **In Media Res** : the narrative begins at a critical point of the action. "Paradise Lost" opens with the Fallen Angels in Hell where they rally their forces to assault God and His creation.

Thus "Paradise Lost" faithfully follows all the conventions that are found in the traditional epics and are emulated by the literary epics. Thus it belongs to the epic tradition. Its debt to

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the older epics is even more evident in the constant echoes from Homer and Virgil we find in it.

Milton saw himself as another Homer. Like Homer he is blind so that he can tell the truths not perceived by other men. So again and again he invokes the spirit of God to inspire him to sing of the rebellion of the angels and the folly of our first parents, as Homer and Virgil invoked the muses to inspire them to sing of the "wrath of Achilles" and of "arms and the map". But besides being the English Homer he also wished to be the English Moses through whom God spoke to his chosen people.

The description of Satan's shield is taken from the shield of Achilles. The garden of Eden follows the pattern of Arcadinas in Aeneid. The picture of Hades provides the model for Milton's Hell. The descent of Raphael to warn Adam of impending danger is akin to the descent of Hermes to Calypso or Mercury to Aeneas. The picture of Nature lamenting the fall of man is taken from the storm during Dido's and Aeneas wedding. Satan's journey through the sea of chaos is reminiscent of both Odysseus' and Aeneas' wanderings. Even the lovemaking of Adam and Eve is taken from the tryst of Zeus and Hera in *Iliad*. The description of the war in Heaven is modeled upon Homer's description of the war of the gods : they fight like human beings complete with all the paraphernalia of war (chariots, shields, spears) but the situation becoms comic in both cases since neither side is capable of seriously injuring the other. Both Satan and Venus are wounded, bleed ichor, and run away in pain. The scales of justice are Zeus' golden scales. The fall of Mulciber is patterned after the fall of Vulcan. From Ovid's Metamorphosis comes the description of the creation of man, the awakening of Eve which is like that of Narcissus and her comparison with Proseipina.

Satan himself is presented as a heroic character who gives grand speeches, undertakes perilous journeys, and battles for glory and sovereignty like Achilles and Aeneas. God is equated with Jupiter: both rule in Heaven and defeat rebels. In fact the pattern of the first two books follows that of Aeneid : Satan's defeat parallels the burning of Troy and his finding a new home for the exiles is like Aeneas' quest. But Milton takes the identification further. In "Paradise Lost" the Fallen Angels relate to the classics on two planes. They are like the giants who sought to overthrow Jove but even more importantly they are also the pagan gods whom Greece and Rome once worshipped and whom Homer and Virgil celebrated in their epics. (According to Milton the rebel angels set themselves up as gods on earth). Thus classical and Christian theology mingle through analogies.

Thus we find that Milton owns a considerable .debt to the classical epics. The themes, the events, the style, the comparisons all are taken from earlier literatrue. Yet there are significant differences as well. Being a devout Christian Milton cannot wholly accept classical conventions so he Christianizes them. His muse is the Holy Ghost, his hero is not the kingly Satan but Christ who preaches mercy, and providence is more powerful than Fate. In

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classical epics gods were powerless against the three Fates, but here God can reverse the evils committed by Satan. Also this is a God meant to be loved, not feared.

Brought up simultaneously in the heady atmosphere of the Renaissance and the grim code of the Puritans, Milton combines Renaissance and Reformation elements in Paradise Lost. He follows Homer and Virgil so closely that no one can mistake it as anything other than an epic. Yet the classical world with its ultimately powerless gods and individualsistic hubristic heroes is rejected for a world of piety, mercy, and love. But what is important in an epic is its spirit, its scope, and its profound human importance and a text better suited to this description than "Paradise Lost" can hardly be found.

6.7.3 "Paradise Lost" as a Christian epic

For all his appreciation and adaptation Milton as a devout Christian sees this as an opportunity to denounce the morality of the classical epics and to exalt Christianity. In the epic there is a vast difference between gods and men. It is the lot of men to suffer on earth and after death to exist in the dark underworld without joy and sans end; but the gods sport forever in the irridiscent world of Olympus. In spite of their all too human behaviour and emotions their world is totally different and separate from that of men; it is the world of eternal delight where the tragi-: spirit cannot enter. But in Christian theology, a virtuous and pious man can know joy on earth and after death dwells in heaven with God. Again classical gods cannot save men from sin or Death but Christ can redeem man from sin and rescue humanity from the mortality one cannot escape in the classical world.

The classical counterpart of Christ is Athene, Both are offspring of the Highest God begotten directly by their Fathers. Athene alone wields the thunderbolts of Zeus, Christ alone can wield God's thunder. Athene has her aegis, Christ his cherubs. The chariot of Zeus thus blends with the chariot of Ezekiel. And the wrath of Achilles becomes the wrath of God. However, there's a crucial distinction between the two : Athene is a goddess but not all powerful, while Christ is indistinguishable from the supreme Godhead. Moreover Athene never offers like Christ to be incarnated as a mortal to redeem mankind. Indeed such a concept is foreign to classical theology. But as Milton emphasizes, this shows that Christ has greater love and compassion and so is more worthy to be worshipped. He also insists that Christ's offer constitutes true heroism. He is a hero in the epic tradition in his war against Satan, but the glory of the battlefield is a false glory. True glory comes from doing the will of God and from selfsacrifice. Here Satan behaves like an epic hero. Yet both Achilles and Aeneas excel him in virtue, and piety; while odysseus fights to preserve civilization Satan only wishes to destroy.-Thus the notion of epic heroism and the gods' essential remoteness from man is set aside.

There is also emphasis that Jehovah is greater than Jove. What had been fate in epics subject to no god's control becomes Providence designed and directed by God. Zeus cannot

overrule the decrees of Fate — he can neither save Hector nor prevent the fall of Troy; but God easily stops the war in Heaven. Again Zeus cannot save man from death, not even his own son; but Jehovah has the power to make men immortal and resurrect them from the grave and so His Son rises from death. Zeus is a partial reflection of God just as Athene is a partial reflection of Christ. Both Zeus and Jehovah make use of destructive blindness in their enemies (Zeus in men, God in angels) to bring them to their proper punishment. But while there is no way to escape the consequences of Zeus' wrath, the vengeance of Jehovah is followed by the sacrifice of his only begotten Son. Unlike in classical epics here Sin and Death are God's servants. The relationship between Heaven and men has also changed : people feared and obeyed the classical gods, but now it is possible to *love* God. It is a step upwards from Greek philosophy.

Again and again Milton transmutes epic devices to create a Christian framework. Eden can be considered as another Ilium which was destroyed when its inhabitants chose passion over duty and honour. Adam is like another Aeneas misled by female charm, but unlike Aeneas he capitulates wholly and the consequences are more serious. Eve is the bringer of death to mankind — but in this she is like the classical warriors whose delight was in war. Hence the warrior's code is rejected. Another interesting example is Milton's handling of the golden scales of justice. When Zeus weighs the fates of Hector and Achilles the scale that goes down signals death; but when God hangs the scales in the sky the scale that goes up signifies defeat. It is obviously an echo from the Old Testament: Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin, i.e you have been weighed and found wanting. Hubristic heroism that can end only in death is rejected. The goal of man is now changed. The classical heroes were eager for material wealth, power, glory, status and above all for earthly renown. But now man's ambition is to be worthy of Heaven. This new concept transcends the pagan philosophy : it is not this life of flesh but the afterlife that is important.

6.7.4 Invocation of Paradise Lost

The opening of Milton's "Paradise Lost" is both an invocation and an exordium. An exordium is the beginning of a discussion or a treatise; here Milton launches on a treatise on *thefelix culpa* and discusses how best to prove that God is just. But his work is an epic as well and so he begins in the time honoured fashion by invoking supernatural powers to aid him in his creation. It is an epic convention that the narrator must invoke a guiding spirit to aid him in his great undertaking and also address to the Muse the epic question the answer to which inaugurates the epic proper. Greeks and Romans believed that there are nine goddesses who preside over the arts and sciences. Both Homer and Virgil invoke them. But Milton invokes the Judeo-Christian God. Only then does he move to introduce the main characters and discuss the epic question in detail. Milton here creates double invocation and hence it is unusually long (homer's is 7 lines, Virgil's is 10, but Milton's is 49).

Milton's invocation has an inverted syntactical structure. He begins by stating the theme

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and then invokes the Muse. In this he follows Virgil who begins with "Of Arms and the Man I sing". But unlike other epics, in "Paradise Lost" the invocation focuses on man, not the gods. The emphasis is very clear: "Of Man's First Disobedience". The story is how Satan deceived the Mother of mankind so that our Parents trespassed and fell. It is also marked by anticipation of the sequel — the redemption of humanity. The emphasis is still on man: "till one *greater man* restore us". Adam is the hero and Christ is the second Adam. He is the Son of God but he is also the Son of Man born of Woman. Even the reason behind writing the epic is man: Milton wishes to justify God to man. There are two other invocations: to the "Holy Light" and to Urania but the first is the most important.

Milton begins by answering the epic question. The sin of Adam and Eve lay not in the actual eating of the fruit but in ignoring God's edict. He puns in the next lines:

"the fruit/ of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste/ brought death into the world". The fruit' refers both to the actual fruit eaten and also to results. It has a mortal i.e. deadly taste; as a result of eating it death entered Eden. Adam and Eve would die and so would their posterity. But the lost paradise would be restored by Christ.

Then in the sixth line Milton swings to the invocation proper with tremendous impact. He calls on the spirit that had inspired Moses who taught the chosen seed. The reference is highly significant since Milton saw himself as another Moses. The Puritans thought that they were the chosen race, a second Isreal. Milton as their spokesman wished to be like Moses, another poet-prophet. It is his boast that he would outshine the ancients and compose things "unattempted yet in prose or rhyme". But this piece of blatant egotism is counterbalanced by a deep Christian humility : he begs God to instruct him. This God is the God who loves the pure heart of man above all temples; He is a God to whom man has direct access. Here -we see the puritan ideal - man can reach God without the mediation of priests of Church. Hence Milton dares to call on the God who brooded "dove-like" over chaos and created the world. Here perhaps the poet is trying to link God's creative aspects with his own creative efforts. He freely confesses himself to be fallen and ignorant; the Muse must raise and enlighten him. He introduces here the metaphors of light and darkness, falling and standing that are to form the key structures of the poem. Finally he comes to the true purpose of the epic.

"...... assert Eternal Providence

And justify the ways of God to Men."

Milton is not writing to win fame. His aim is nobler than Homer's and Virgil's: he would show how good comes through evil and prove to all who doubt that God is just. (Perhaps it was even more necessary to reassure himself after the Restoration and his own blindness.)

Now Milton moves on to the second invocation. He begs the Heavenly Muse to show him why our first parents fell from Eden. He questions who seduced them. The answer is "the infernal seipent". The reason is envy and guile. Milton gives us the background: Satan and his

followers aspired to Godhead and so\vere cast down by God to Hell. Form line 50, the actual epic begins, in media res.

The opening of Milton's epic is at once daunting and exhilarating. It is a triumph of expressive rhythm and syntax. Some might complain that "Him writ no style but a Babylonish style". Nevertheless this was the only rhythm lofty enough for expounding eternal wisdom and imitating the celestial song. This is the famous Miltonic grand style - latinate diction, stylized syntax, sonorous list of names, catalogues of principal characters (like the magnificent rollcall of the devils as false gods), wide ranging allusions, and imitations of Homer's and Virgil's similes and epithets. He is writing an epic and the language of an epic should be deliberately distant from that of common people in order to fit the grandeur and majesty of the heroic subject-matter. Moreover in the new religio-poetic language Milton finds a way of claiming that the ultimate principle is both aesthetic and moral. The opening is a highly formal set-piece whose inescapable "monotony of ritual" makes us aware of the profound human importance of the theme.

6.7.5 Epic Similies in Paradise Lost

One of the reasons readers *of Paradise Lost* are put off is its language. There is distortion of construction, convoluted syntax, use of foreign idiom, the use of a word in a foreign way or with the meaning of the foreign word from which it was derived, allusions to classical literature. The verse is English heroic pentametre which is blank verse at its grandest. The sentences run on and on, creating large passages which must be read at one breath. This is what is known as Miltonic Style. Since he was writing and epic, Milton wanted a language that would be far removed from ordinary prose and poetry. So he invested his language with solemnity and loftiness beyond the norm. This certainly gives the epic the grandeur it requires, but also makes it difficult. One of the major stylistic devices that Milton uses to create the Grand Style is the use of epic similes. A normal simile is a brief comparison for the sake of illumination. But an epic simile is not a single comparison. Instead it combines many images - one single object can be compared with several other objects one after another. Thus such similes occur in clusters. They are carefully selected to stress a particulars point the author is intent on driving home to his readers. An epic simile is of such length and ramification, that it gains independent existence of its own and operates as a poem-within-a-poem instead of an ornament of the narrative function.

There are several epic similes in Book I *ofParadi.se Lost* which demonstrate how vast the canvas of the epic is. One of the earliest in lines 196-208, where Satan's size is described. Satan is so big that his trunk covers "many a rood," a rood being about a quarter acre. He is as big as the Titans and Giants who rebelled against Jove. Milton furnishes a list of rebel giants with whom to compare Satan. He is also compared with a leviathan-,, the hugest beast in the world. But in neither case is it a simple comparison of size. Like Satan, the Titans and Giants were rebels against authority. As they had warred against the gods, so too Satan had warred against God; as they had been cast down by Jove to hell, so too Satan and his cohorts had

been cast down to hell. In the same manner to story of the leviathan is used to point out an aspect of Satan's character- he is the Father of Lies. The huge leviathan floats on the water; his back appears to be an island in the night and attracts a lost sailor to anchor in his hide. On morning the beast dives down into the sea, dragging down the unfortunate sailor with him. The leviathan was held up as an example of arch-deceiver and was frequently termed the enemy of the Lord. This story would have been well known to Milton's first readers, who had been brought up on "bestiaries," descriptions of animals in terms of the moral lessons they provide for mankind. Just as the leviathan, promising safety deceives, so too Satan promising glory and refuge deceives everyone. Thus the effect of this simile is to emphasize Satan as a rebel and deceiver.

In lines 302-311, we have another famous description - that of the rebel angels. The rebel angels lay cast down as the autumnal leaves in Vallambrosa. This is not a simple comparison describing how they are lying. The significant term is 'autumnal' - in autumn, dead leaves fall off from trees, yellow and withered. This is the condition of the angels - cut off from God, they are spiritually dead and their abject exhausted condition stresses their physical and mental plight. Then they are compared with sedge on the Red Sea which floats tossed by winds and waves. As the vegetation has become rootless, so too are the angels rootless. But the comparison does not stop here - Milton goes on to tell the story of Exodus. Moses freed the Jews from slavery to Egyptians but they pursued the Jews. God made the Red Sea part so that the Jews could cross over. When the army of Pharaoh pursued them the waters closed over them. As the broken chariots and carcasses of Egyptians floated on the waters, so too the abject rebel angels floated on the sea of fire. The identification of rebel angels with the Egyptians carries a heavy load of theological implications. The Egyptians had disbelieved in the true God; the rebel angels had rebelled against God disbelieving Him to be their superior. The Egyptians had persecuted the chosen people of God; the denizens of hell in future would try to destroy mankind, God's latest and most cherished creation. In fact Christian theologians had seen the Pharaoh as a type of the devil. As the Egyptians were destroyed by God, so too the angels led by Satan would at doomsday be entirely destroyed by God. Thus Milton constantly equates the fallen angels with evil and death. He also emphasizes through such comparisons their abject condition - they are completely lost and in future would be completely destroyed.

Still another description of the fallen angels occur in lines 339-355. As they flew they looked like the plague of locusts that Aaron's rod had conjured up to cover Egypt. As the cloud of locusts had darkened the land, so too the angels darkened flaming hell itself and were as- numberless as the insects. Since the locusts are harmful, it is significant that the angels are linked with them. They flew down to the plain like a horde of barbarians. From the snow-covered lands of Northern Europe had come the wild tribes of Vandals and Goths who had poured down south and spread everywhere. Again the comparison is significant. These

barbarians had destroyed the last remnants of civilization of Roman empire thereby beginning the Dark Ages, which ended only with the Renaissance. They were notorious for their cruelty as well. As children of Renaissance, Milton and his readers naturally regarded these barbarians with contempt and abhorrence. This comparison therefore poises the rebel angels with the destruction of civilization and wisdom.

There are other comparisons as well. Satan's shield is like the moon. It is like the moon that Galileo had viewed through his 'glass' and has spied new lands, rivers and mountains on her surface. The simile serves two purposes - it makes us realize the size of the shield and gives the simile a truly epic reach, encompassing another world. His spear was so tall that the tallest tree would be like a slender wand to it. The ruined archangel looked as the glory of the sun does through a haze a mist - a reference to the loss of his brightness due to the fall. Similarly the other angels are compared to stately trees blasted by lightning - only their shell remains.

Thus even in a single short Book, there are sufficient examples of epic similes to judge Milton's style. Milton is not content with simply giving a comparison. He must illustrate what he means in a detailed manner. By doing so, he wants to ensure that the reader does not miss any nuance of the comparison. Also, the key term is 'epic'. An epic by its nature must compass a vast canvas, containing the whole of the world known to the poet and his contemporaries. Therefore, Milton tried to encompass as much as he could in a single comparison. Such similes are both descriptive and argumentative. They point to other places and, perhaps more significantly, other times that subtly comment on the current moment. They become poetic pieces inserted into the narration as something separate. They take on a life of their own.

6.8 ❑ Question

(a) Do you think in Book I *of Paradise Lost* Satan is presented as a hero? What could have motivated Milton to present him in such a way? (See 6.7)

(b) Comment on Satan as a rebel and leader as shown in Book I of *Paradise Lost*. (See 6.7.1)

(c) Critically comment on the Invocation *of Paradise Lost* discussing its pagan roots and Christian theme (See 6.7.4)

(d) How far does Book I of *Paradise Lost* follow the conventions of an epic? (See 6.7.2)

(e) Comment on Book I *of Paradise Lost* as the beginning of a Christian epic. (See 6.7.3)

(f) Discuss some of the epic similes you find in *Paradise Lost Book* I. (See 6.7.5)

(g) *"Paradise Lost is* both a religious and political statement"—discuss this with reference to Book I. (See 6.1, 6.3, 6.5, 6.7.3)

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Unit -1 ☐ London : William Blake

Structure

1.0 ☐ ABOUT BLAKE

William Blake who possesses the distinction of being the first major English Romantic poet, was born on 27 November 1757, the third son of a London shopkeeper who dealt in hosiery goods. The child Blake was never sent to school by his parents, perhaps because he was too high -spirited and reballious, and he was probably educated at home by his mother. Even as a child, the young William displayed a marked artistic talent, and this to gether with his highly imaginative meutal faculty, probably led him to see "visiows" of on allegedly mystical kind. There is a story that when Blake was only four years old, he saw God's face at a window and screamed. On another day, when he was about eight or ten,the boy sow a vision of a tree full of angelsa. Years later, when he was about forty three, Blake had similar visionary experiences which he wrote about in his epical poem Milton (late 21,11.4-8), and in two letters to his friend Thomas Butts on 2 October 1800 and 22 November 1802.

Blake's father encouraged his son's artistic inclinations by sending him to a drawing school. However, since the family was apparently not rich enough to pay the fee that would be demanded by an artist to train the young boy, Blake was instead apprenticed to an engraver when he was fourteen. After completing his apprenticeship, Blake took admission in the Royal Academy Schools for artists, and exhibited his paintings in two of the annual exhibitions held by the schools. Simultaneously with his development as an artist and engraver, Blake began emerging

as a poet. His earliest literary compositions- poems, prose pieces and dramatic fragments which he had written between the ages of twelve to twenty, were printed in a volume entitled **Poetical Sketches** (1783). The Publication of this book was financed by a contemporary clergyman— a Rev. Mathews whose wife seems to have been a patron of die young Blake. However, Blake appears to have been disinterested about this publication, and it is a fact that he never again attempted to publish any of his works by conventional methods of printing. Instead, Blake either invented or adapted a special technique which enabled him to print both text and illustrations in a way that wus less expensive and more flexible than the options afforded by the conversional printing technology of the time.

The exact technique used by Blake is still not entirely clear, but it seems that Blake would take a small flat rectangular piece of copper and write or draw on this plate the words and designs he wanted to print, using a liquid or ink that was impervious to the action of acid. He would then immerse the drawn-on copper plate in an acid bath so that the surface of the plate not covered by the inked lines and words would be corroded. This left the words and the lines of the designs standing up from the surface of the copper plate on a kind of a printer's type face, and Blake could print off these plates by inking them and by pressing down sheets of paper on them. Finally, the line drawings would be touched up by hand, colours applied on and within them, and the different pages (or "plates") thus printed bound by hand to form small books. The whole process had the advantages of being totally under Blake's own control and of being fairly inexpensive. And since Blake could keep the copper master plaits in his own possession, he could print just as many wpies of a paniculate book as there were buyers for. Additionally, and perhaps more importarlly, Blake's technique took on for Win all the weight of symbolic manifestation. As he claimed in his text The Marriage of Heaven & Hell, his method of prinfing was "salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid."

1.1 ❏ SONG OF INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE

The just important look that Blake printed by his own process was a slim volume of (?) entitled the Song of Innocence. A blend of colorful illustrations and words constitute each of the paper of this text, each page on plate featuring poems and pictures representing and indicative of the golden world of child hood innocence. Many of the poems (and illustrations) of the Songs of Innocence depict scenes of cliild in at play, of singing birds and happy animals, and of elders like nurses and mothers benignly looking on. In writing these songs, Blake may have had in mind some of the song books for children that had been published in his own age, but

Blaka's poems are remarkable in that they are not simple moralistic verser but far more Brilliont and complex prices of poetry. Thus, while most of the songs of Innocence apparently embody messages about the goodness of Jesus and about the virtues of generosity, unselfishness and mutual sympathy, modem critics have discerned the presence of deep and disturbing monies beneth the apparently simple surfaces of these poems.

The songs of Innocence were engnved (or reverse-ctehed) by Blake in 1789, but five years later in 1794, Blake produced a sequel in the form of a collection of poems he named the Songs of Experience. The plates of this collection were bound by Blake together with those of the Songs of Innocence, and the two sets of illustrated poems were issued under the title The songs of Innocence and of Experience : Shewing the two Contrary States of the Human Soul. Innocence brings the Contrary State" of Experience, die poems of Blake's Songs of Experience are about human suffering, fears, hopelessness, despair and death. In virtually all the poems of Experience, Blake writes about the darkness in his contemporary society and times. Often using simple stanza forms and rhyming patterns and an unostencations poetic diction, Blake represented Ms vital realizations about the complexities of his civilization in powerful and compelling lines of poetry. Many of the poems of Experience were obviously intended by Blake to be read as the "contrary "pieces of corresponding poems in the Innocence volume, and so "The Lamb" of Innocence is set off by "The Tyger" of Experience, and there is "The little Boy Found" of Innocence against "The Little Boy Lost" of Experience, "Infant Joy" and "Infant Sorrow" and so on. There are also several poems with the same titles but with different, divergnt, meanings and implications in the Innocence and Experience collections for instance, there are two poems entitled "Holy Thursday", two named "Nurse's song", two called "The Chimney Sweeper" etc. Additionally, there are a number of "stand-alone" poems which have pair in Innocence, and of these the lyric titled "London", is a good example to be found in the Songs of Experience.

1.1.1 TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

A short 16-line poem, it is hardly an exaggeration to call "London" one of the greatest short lyrics written hi the English language. The complete text of the poem is as follows :-

> I wonder thro' o eaèh charter'd street,
> Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
> And mark in every face I meet
> Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg 'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney sweeper's cry
Every black'ning Shurch appalls
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new born Infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

Accompanying this verbal text, there are illustrations that cover nearly the whole page in Blake's printed plate. At one side at the right, there is a picture of a boy warming himself at a fire has been lit within in an open space or by a street. But the whole plate is dominated by a picture at the top which shows a similar boy leading an old man with a long beard along a cobblestone paved path, beside a closed door. In the picture, too, the child and the man are illuminated by a beam of strong light that falls on them. The importance of this illustration will be touched upon later, and so this discussion will first cowcentrate on the implications of Blake's verbal text.

1.1.2. TITLE AND THEME

"London", the title of Blake's poem immediately indicates the subject matter of the poem, that is the city of London itself. Towards the end of the eighteenth century. When Blake was writing his poem, London had already become a metropolis and the political and economic capital not only of England but also of the then mighty British Empire which stretched across the glole from America to India and beyond. Ships laden with merchandise sailed from the river Thames in the middle of the city of London to all the four quarters of the world, and came back to London with the wealth of the world. And it is this commercial, trading activity that Blake obliquely refers to in the opening line of his poem :

I wander thro' each charter'd street,

Near where the charter'd thames does flow.....

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Blake's wonderer, the narrator of the poem, is evidently sojourning through the dockyards of the city. But what catches our eye immediately in these two lines is the use of tiie word "charter'd", used twice in succession. E.P. Thompson in a fine essay on Blake's poem, notes that the word "arose in Blake's mind in association with 'cheating', "and that for the radical tllinkers of the time like Thomas Paine, a "charter implied not a freedom but monopoly", In "London", Blake evidently use the word in this sense, for in the next two lines of his poem he goes on to speak of the "marks of weakness, marks of of woe" that his narrator notices in "every face" he comes across in the streets of the city. However, there is also a special edge of irony in Blake's use of the word "chartered" in the context of the city streets and of the river Thasues that flows thorough it This is because both streets and river are so evidently throughfares-spaces or facilities that belong to all that it is almost unimaginable that they can be "charter'd" or leased, or rented out to, or reseried for the exclusive use of a few individrals. And yet this was exactly what was happening in Blake's own age as the rich merchants of the time literally took over the streets of the city of London to store the goods they exproted or imported, and the river thames itself was as full of ships and commercial vesses, that recreational activities on the river became almost impossible.

1.1.3. CONTEMPORARY BACK GROUND : SOCIAL ECONOMIC POLITICALLY

Yet, this is not every thing about the first stanga of Blake's poem. If the first two lines are strongly suggestive of commercial activities and so of an economic nexus the next two evidently reflect upon the human consequences of such economic practices. The buying and selling, the trading with overseas nations in Blake's time, were manifestations of the rampant growth of die economic system of capitalism in the eighteenth country. Fuelled by the Industrial Revolution, the British economy was positioned uniquely to profit from trade and industry. The profit however, did not percolate down to all the levels of society which was instead marked by a shaip opposition between a limited number of rich people-the capitalist factoryowners and traders, for instance-and an increasingly large mass of poor people. Virtually as an outgrowth of capitalism, there emerged in British society a new class of poor people-peasants dispossessed of their ponds due to the so called enclosure movements, labourers employed in the new factory towns, and artisans forced into unemployment by the development of new processes of manufacturing involving machines. And it is evidently about, and of, such people reduced to misery by the workings of capitalism that Blake refers to in the last two lines of the first stanga of "London".

The second stanga of Blake's lyric has a different locus of concern, no longer economic but political. This implication in this stanga is brought out through Blake's

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reference to cries of "fear", to "every ban", and to the "mind-fong'd manade". It is a fact that the 1790s saw in England a wave of governmental repressionary measures directed against all political radicals. Even since the French Revolution of 1789, the British government was mortally afraid that a similar revolutionary movement could sweep overtheir country too, and the king and his Parliament responded by enacfing a Jraconian series of lesislations directed against radical political opinion. Working men's organizations like the London Corresponding Societies were banned, political meting prohibited, and local magistrates arned with the power of arresting any man suspected of plotting revolution against the government. As Blake's contemporary, the well known political radical John Thelwall (who was imprisoned and tried on the charge of High Treason) wrote in 1795 in on essay entitled "Dangerous Tendency of the Attempt to Suppress Political Discussion", "words are constried into treson and men can no longer unbosom themselves to their friends at a tavern, associate together for the diffusin of political information, but at the percl of their lives. "The cries of fear, the bans and the manacles that Blake writes of are clearly feferences to the restrictions placed on the rights of men by the political authorities of the time. Most evocative of all is ofcourse the image of the "mind-forg'd manacles." The "manacles" - chains or handcuffs are suggestive of the restrictions imposed on a free people, but they are "mind forg'd in the sense that they were Acts of Parliament (like the infamous Gagging Acts of 1795) devised and formulated by intelligort men bent on disallowing vast numbers of then fellow men from voicing forth their discontent.

1.2.1 BLAKE'S USE OF SYMBOLS

From large statements made in the first two stanzas about economic exploitation and political repressions, the third stanzas of Blake's "London" provides us with visions of specific examples of suffering humanity. Chimney sweepers in Blake's time were little children, six to twelve years old, who had been forced into the profession by the poverty of their parents. Unlike other in which a child's father had to pay a lump sum fee for his child to be taken on or as anapprentice and taught the trade, chimney sweeper masters would pay the guardians of a child an amount of money for iivtually selling the child to him. This is exactly what Blake writes about in his 'Songs of Innocence Poem, "The chimney Sweeper" :

> When my mother died I was very young,
> And my father sold me while yet my tongue
> Could scarcely cry "weep! ' weep! ' weep!' weep!"
> So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

As these lines of Blake indicate, the lives of the little children sweepers were full of misery. Forced to get up at the crack of dawn, they were made to walk through the streets of the city in hail, or rain or cold, or sun. They were given no opportunities

to play or even to wash, and were deliberately underfed so that they would remain thin and small in size and so could be easily thrust into narrow chimneys to clean them from inside. At night, they would be herded into small and dark rooms and blocked up so that they could not escape. Their heads were shaved to prevent lice, but many if not most of the child sweepers suffered from skin cancer and cuts and bums for which little or no treatment was provided.

The "cry" of the chimney sweeper that Blake writes of in "London" obviously refers to both the anguished cries of the suffering children and to the street cry - "Sweep!"- that these children were made to shout out as they walked through the streets of London. (In Blake's Innocence poem "The chimney Sweeper" this cry itself becomes a site for irony as the small child cannot even fully pronounce the word "Sweep!" and it comes out as "'weep!"- itself an indication of the and the tears of the poor motherless boy sold into a life of virtual slaverey.) The reference to the "church" in "London" however brings in another context of reference in Blake's poem. This is the failure and hence, hypocrisy of the established church in the late eighteenth century to look alter the poor, the neglected and the exploited. Blake in Ms lyric powerfully imagins the cry of the Chimrcy Sweeper, unheard by the church, as covering as with a black pall the churches themselves. But the imaginative Blake is also the literal Blake, and the "appalling" or covering of the churchler also refers perhaps to the physical coating of the white stone churches of London with the soot and smoke released into the air and atmosphere of the city in the years of the Industrial Revolution. And finally, we should note too the irony resident is Blake's use of the word "appalls". For as Blake's lines make clear, while the church as an institution should really be "appallg" with the pliedht of the child sweepers, what is really appalling in that it is indifferent to and unconcerned about the suffering of these little children.

Blake's reference to the "hapless soldier" in the next two lines of the third stanza of his poem indicates another matrix of signification. After the dawn of the French Revolution, the British government had declared war against France and had sent out thousands of soldiers to tight. Many, if not most, of the soldiers were young men farm workers, and labourers, and artisans who had been forcibly conscripted into the army, and many were turned out of the army with little or no compensation if they had the misfortune of losing arms or legs or eyes in battle. Unable to work for a living any longer, these handicapped former soldiers took to begging on the streets of London, and it is to these unfortunates that Blake refers in the lines :

> And the hapless soldier's sigh
> Runs in blood down palace walls.

As in the two earlier lines in the same stanga in which Blake had indicted an

institution-the church-for being unmindful of the suffering of a class, so too in these lines Blake speaks out (allcit obliquely) against the king and Ms government for neglecting to look after other those who had shed blood in the king's interest.. But there is also possible a deeper irony resident in Blake's lines. This is because the soldier's sigh over the blood that he has shed without reward, a sigh that takes the form of blood in terms of Blake's visionary imagination runs, only "down palace walls," that is without affecting the lives and thoughts of those who live inside the encirching walls of the palace.

But it is in the last stanja of "London" that Blake gives vent to his anger and indignation. The central symbol here is the figure of the youthful Harlot the— young girl who has been forced to sell her lady in order to live. The curse of this adolerceat compelled to prostitute herself in a society overrun by rampant economic inequality lights on the "new born Infant" - probably the prostitutes's own, since it represents to her yet another mouth, beside her own, she will have to feed. But the prostitute is to the victius as well as an agent of retilntion. The "players" that has "curse" engurder are a clear reference to the thes incusable venercal diseases prostitutes often spread in contemporary society. And one result of such sexually transmitted tied diceases was that children born to one or boths parents infected with such discuases would often be born dead. Indeed, it is very probably this implication that lies behind Blake's words "marriage hearse" which are themselves an ironic inversion of the term "marriage bed" which itself is symbolic of pocreation and of the coming into existence of new life.

It should be clear from this that Blake's lyric "London" constitutes a scaring indictment of the social, economic, political, religions and moral environment of Blake's own time. As Blake powerfully shows us through his extremely evocative pprase "mind forg'd manacles", the city of London (an acute metonym for the whole British civilization in the post Industrial era) is affectively enclosed by an ideological miasma that bred selfhood, hypocrisy, opression, indifference and an absence of love. All the symbols in the poem both non human and human-chartered sheets, chartered faces marked with weakness and woe, cries of fear, bans, blackening churches, marriage hearse, infants, chimney sweepes, soldiers and harlots— are *examples of* the effect of the repressive dominance of this ideology that fetters, Confirms, restricts and seeks to shut up everything that would open outward into the freedoms of action and perception, love and compassion benevolence and caring.

1.2.2 BLAKE'S POETIC CRAFTSMANSHIP : HIS USE OF IMAGERY

"London" in thus a poem that is about the experience of closure. But it is also important to note that the lyric also enacts, performs, and demonstrates this experience by rhetorical, imagistic and structural devices. There are, first, the many repetitions

of the same words— of "chaslesed" twice, and "mark/Marks" three tines, all in the first stanza. Then again the word "cry" is used in two lines, and "every" no less than five times in three consecutive lines in the second stanza. Several of these words are also used as links between the different stanzas. The word "every", for example, is used first in the opening stanza before being used again and again in the second stanza. Likewise the word "cry" used for the first time in the poem in the second stanza is re-used is the poem's third stanza. Finally, the "charter'd street" of the first stanza rscurs in the past as "midnight steets," and the "Infant" is referred to in the second and the fourth stanzas both.

The consequence of such intricate verbal resonances in the creation of reticulation, itself an image suggestive of enclosure. But the effect does not stop with this, for we have in "London" the presence of a (certainly deliberate) symmetry in image distribution. To put it simply, all the images in the first stonza of the lyric are of a visual kind, while all those in the second stonza are of an auditory type. But the pattern of image distribution gets more complex in the third stanga. Here, instead of the same classes of images (visual and auditory) being spread over two stanzes respectively, we have auditory and visual imagery set in alternative odd and even numbered lines - "cry" and "sigh" black'ning church "and" Runs in blood down palace walls" in the second and fourth lines. The greatest complexity in image patterning is, however, to be noticed in the last stanga. Here, in the first line itself we are given the visual image of the "midnight streets" before we come across "hear". Then, in the second line of this stanga this design is repeated in the phrase "youthful Harlot's curse," in which the visualizable Harlot is conjoined with her audible "curse". But after this we climactically come down to the single word "Blasts" which combines or unifies in the matrix of its implication both the visual sight of a flash of light together with the audible sound of a "Blast" or explosion. In "London", therefore, from the organization of whole stanzes on the basis of an alternation of two kinds of images- those of sight and of sound- we thus gradually come down through a distribution of the same types of images in separate lines, then in single, individual lines, to finally one solitary word. This is an enactment of a rigorous symmetry no less fearsomely and intricately structured than the "mind forg'd manacles" that Blake evokes in his lyric.

What this funnel or inverted pyramid form of image distribution in the poem seems to underscore is the miasma of control that Blake protests against. And the effect is reinforced by the gradual change of pace and tone as the poem progresses or develops. The whole of the first stanza with its long and open vowels in "wander", "charter'd," "flow", "marks", "woe" and so on - is evocative of a slowness of tempo, extremely appropriate in the context of Blake's narrator wandering slowly tlirough the streets of the city. But the pace builds up over the succeeding stonzas till wem

reach the forceful plosives in the last line - "bright", plagues", "Marriage hearse" - which effectively communicate the poet's auger over the economic, social, moral and political degeneracies that had beset and blighted the quality of life of the citizens of the capital of the British empire in the closing years of the eighteenth century.

But if the verbal text of "London" projects the city as a zone of dark, "midnight" experiences, the illustration to the poem carries strangely contrary implication. For the picture at the top of the plate shows the enactment of a kindly deed-a child leading an old man on dutches that is significantly illuminated by a from of strong light that falls upon the man and the child and goes beyond. Many years after he had reverse-etched the "London" plate, Blake returned again to the some figural conception in plate 84 of his epical poem **Jerusalem** :

I see London blind & age bent begging thro' the steets Of Babylon; led by a child, Ms tears run down his beard.

The interfext here is Babylon the city in the Book of Revelation (Chapters 3, v.20 and 4,v.l) in the **New Testament,** from which source Blake probably derived the icon of the doorway that figures so prominently in the "London" illustration :

Behold, I stand at the door and knock : if anyone hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me.......

After tliis I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven........

There seems little enough of heaven in Blake's "London", and yet Blake was a isionary who could dream of building Heaven in Hell's despair, and it seems that the illustration to the lyric looks forward to a world where there will be no exploitation and suffering, no weakness or woe, no terror stricken intants, children, adolescents or adults, no midnight of the anguished soul and body.

1.3 ☐ SAMPLE QUESTIONS

● **A. Long Answer Type :**

1. "London" is a short lyric, but it embraces a wide range and depth of significance. Discuss.

2. Show how Blake's poem "London" Presents an image of contemporai-y English society.

3. Is Blake's "London" a more symbolic poem than a realistic one? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Comment on Blake's vision of the city as expressed in his poem "London"

5. Why do you think did Blake include "London" in his Songs of Experience?

In what way is the poem one of "Experience"?

6. Write a note on the imagery and symbolisn in Blake's "London" and show how these are related to the them of the poem.

● **B. SHORT ANSWER TYPE :**

1. "And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls."

Comment citically on these lines and bring out their full significance in the context of the poem from which they have been taken.

2. Why does Blake describe the sheets of London and the river thaner as "Charter's" ?

1.4 ☐ SELECT RECOMMENDED READING

There are many good editions of Blake's poems, and the standard one is the Oxford University Press edition, **Blake : Complete Writings** edited by Geoffrey Keynes. Another good edition is the Norton critical Edition, **William Blake's Poetry and Designs** edited by Mary Lymi Johnson and John E. Grant. Some helpful works of criticism containing material on the **Songs of Innocence and of Experience** are :

(1) **Twentieth Century Interpretations of 'songs of Innocence and of Experience'**, ed.
Motion D. Paley (Prentice Hall).

(2) **Vision and Disenchantment : Blake's 'Songs' and Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Balladis'** by Heather Glen (Cambridge University Press)

(3) **William Blake** by Edward Larring
(Basil Blackwell, Oxford).

(4) **The Poetry of William Blake** by orichael
Ferber (Penguin)

(5) **Burning Bright : William Blake and the Poetry of Imagination** by subir Dhar
(G.J. Book Society, Kolkata).

Unit -2 ☐ Resolution and Independence : Wordsworth

Structure

2.1 ☐ INTRODUCTION

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) is said to have brought a completely new approach to the writing of English poetry. Along with Coleridge, he made a conscious effort to make literature "adapted to interest mankind permanently", because classical literature, they felt, could never do that. His approach to literature was marked by a choice of humble rustic folk who served as his characters, simple diction and a fresher attitude to nature. Poetry was a record of the emotions of the mind, and as David Daiches says, the value of poetry for him lay in the value of the state of mind which the poem recorded. He reacted sharply against the artificiality of 18th century poetry. Instead of being preoccupied with nymphs and goddesses, he portrayed the emotions of village girls and peasants. He went against the neoclassic view that poetry should both instruct and delight, when he stressed that the function of poetry was to give pleasure, a pleasure of a noble and exalted kind, pleasure which results from increased understanding and sympathy. If at all it teaches, it does so only indirectly, by purifying the emotions, uplifting the soul and bringing it nearer to nature.

Wordsworth was deeply affected by the philosophical, social and political events of his age. The French Revolution; the eighteenth century development of the psychological views implicit in Locke's concept of perception and knowledge, the principles of the Enlightenment and his own cllildhood in the Lake District contributed towards the development of his view of poetry. His early poem **An Evening Walk** (1793) shows the influence of French poets Losset, Rouches and Delille and Saint Lambert's poem on the seasons.

Wordsworth planned his **Lyrical Ballads** with Coleridge in 1797 when he was with his sister Dorothy. His namative poem **Peter Bell** may be contrasted with **Lyrical Ballads**. **Peter Bell** is a retrospective chapter on the darker aspects of his life while **Lyrical Ballads** is a celebration of all that he had acquired in the form of "self-

knowledge". "The ballads represent an important step toward in his literary life. He produced what were for the most part anecdotal poems for his immediate circle of friends while he took stock of the longtenn task of developing the autobiographical theme for his epic 'public poem'. (2) **Tintem Abbey** is said to be "the star of the 1798 volume" whereby Wordsworth developed from the eighteenth century meditative verse a new and unique poetic style. It helped him then to move forword with **The Prelude** which some critics feel is the only successful long autobiographical poem in the English language. This poem explores the experience of a mind torn between love of nature and the demands of political ideologies. **The Prelude** was written for "private consumption" and proposed a reformed body politic for Britiain as the most difficult achievement of all, "peace at home, / And noiseless fortitude." (3) The poem was first published in its final form posthumously in 1850. It had originally been intended as an early section of a preliminary poem, **The Recluse,** "a philosophical poem containing views of Man, Nature, and Society....... having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement".

Wordsworth's criticism consists of **Advertisement to the Lyrical Ballads,** 1798, **Preface to the Lyrical Ballads** 1800, **Preface to the Lyrical Ballads,** 1802, with an **Appendix on Poetic Diction.** The **Preface** was constantly revised for the subsequent editions of the **Lyrical Ballads.** For the 1815 edition, Wordsworth wrote a new Preface and the older one was added as an Appendix. The 1802 **Preface** is generally taken as the staudard text and critics regard it as a landmark in the history of criticism.

2.1 ☐ THE TEXT ; CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Resolution and Independence. The poem was originally named **The Leech Gatherer** The poem is based on an actual meeting of Wordsworth with an old leech gatherer. In a letter written to Sara Hutchinson on June 14, 1802 Wordswarth wrote the following commentary on the poem stating Ms poetic intentions in support of the old man narrated in the poem : "I describe myself as having been exalted to the highest pitch of deight by the joyousness and beauty of Nature and then as depressed, even in the midst of these beautiful objects, to the lowest dejection and despair. A young Poet in die midst of the happiness of Nature is described as overwhelmed by the thought of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men viz Poets-I think of this till I am so deeply impressed by it, that I consider the manner in which I was rescued from my dejection and despair almost as an interposition of Providence....It is in the character of the old man to tell his story in a manner which an impatient reader must necessarily feel as tedious. But Good God! Such a figure, in such a place, a pious self-respecting, miserably infirm old man telling such a tale!

Wordsworth's major task in 1800 had been to oversee the publication of the **Lyrical Ballads.** This challenged him with the mammoth task of "frequently panik stricken letters detailing alterations and errors". (5) The transciptions were prepared by Dorothy aided by others including Coleridge and Sara Hutchinson. Faced with the revision and editorship of this work, some time elapsed before any further significant compoaition. After this he publisheds series of 39 poems from Grasmere. Tliis included **Resolution and Independence** in 1802, along with the first version of the **Ode : Intimations of Immortality.**

Many of the poems of this 1802 period show the tension between the public and private worlds of a modem poet. The subjects are "simple" and encounters take place with daisies, birds, butterflies, children, vagrants and unassumring travellers. In **Resolution and Independence,** we encounter the Leech Gatherer.

In the **Preface** Wordsworth explains his aim behind the choice of such simple and humble characters. His first and foremost altack was on what Derek Roper calls, the "gaudines and inane phraseology "of contemporary poets. Wordsworth said : "Poetry sheds no tears 'such as angels weep', but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor (fliud) that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both."

Wordsworth further goes on to explain his chief aim in die composition of his poems. His aim has been to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate them in a selection of language really used by men, (5) and at the same time to throw over them a colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things would be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. Wordsworth believed that in humble and rustic life, feelings are freely and frankly expressed because the feeiings are simple and so, are expressed more accurately and forcefully. Moreover, since the rustics are not sophisticated, their passions are connected with the grand and noble objects of nature, and so they are more noble and permanent. He proved through suitable illustrations that the real thing in poetry is feelings and not language. Worthy sentiments, he said, ennoble the language.

The poetry of the neo-classical schools was very artificial because it was extremcly limited in its themes. Wordsworth believed that a poet is essentially a man speaking to men. Since hc is a man, and he has to appeal to the heart and mind of man, he must study human nature, and try to understand "the primary laws of our nature". These primary instincts and impulses which govern human conduct can best be understood by studying the simplest and most elementary forms of life. Thus, the village fanners, beech gatherers, even idiots represent human life reduced to its simplest and the poet can proceed to study the "primary laws of our nature".

The passions of the rustics are "incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature". They live in the midst of the grandeur and beauty of nature, and if Plato is to be believed, they must absorb some of that beauty and grandeur. Thus their language is a more philosophical language — it is noble and poetic and is capable of giving the highest poetic pleasure.

Resolution and Independence was composed after Wordsworth read Dorsthy Wordsworth's journal of October 1800 where she had noted an encounter with an old man near their home. The poem was initially called **The Leech Gatherer** and was later given its present name. A. Gardiner in his critical analysis of the poem mantions the fact that Wordsworth made certain omissions in his text, hi Dorothy Wordsworth's journal, the leech gatherer had given up his search, but Wordsworth's aim being to celebrate the fortitude of the man, he made the leech gatherer continue the search.

Both the poet and the leech gatherer live within sight of extinction, the old man because of his age, infirmity and the scarcity of leeches, Wordsworth because of his choice of an unorthodox literary life. (6) John Williams comments that the style of "naked simplicity" adopted for the poetry threatens at the very least his credibility as a poet; the poem suggests that there may be an even higher price to pay." (7) "Like Bums and Chatterton before him, Wordsworth is detennined to go his own way, and the poem recalls their fate, and suggests a similar one for himself."

By Our own spirits are we deified;
We poets in our youth begin in gladness;
But thereof comes in the end despondancy and madness.

(It will be significant to remember here that Chatterton had committed suicide at 18, and Robert Bums met with an untimely death at 37).

In *a* letter to Sara Hutchinson Wordsworth defends Ms own position as a poet. He says that he has deliberately introduced spirituality in the poem. When the leech gatherer answered Wordsworth's queries, there was an inner illumination made visible. In fact, this is present in the introductory lines of the first sight of the leech gatherer.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,

or later,

But now his voice to me was like a stream
scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide :
And the whole body of the Man did seen
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength by apt admonishment.

The leech gatherer, old and crippled, was "the oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs". He seemed "not all alive or dead, nor all asleep in his extreme old". His body was "bent double" by age, sickness and hardship.

John Williams comments on Wordsworth's inability to concentrate on what the leech gatherer actually says. While he gives a solemn albeit mundane account of his circumstances, the poet's mind drifts off into reverie.

"His voice to me was like a stream sarce heard." Any benefit to be had from the "naked simplicity" of the man's account is being blocked by Wordsworths anxieties. There is conflict here between Wordsworth's concern for the world in which he aspires to be publicly recognised as a poet, and the value of this private moment for him". It is important to note here that in making an attempt to listen to the man's wrods, and not pay much heed to his own thoughts, Wordsworth draws his sense of "resolution" which would lead to "independence". Wordsworth was seeking a "redefined permanence" from instability— and the leech gatherer came to his aid at the correct moment. The poem repeatedly insists that what the world in its current mood of getting and spending "condemns as marginal, be it people or things are pointers towards the quality of permanence that, once perceived, will renew our lives with a spiritual and moral wholeness that is otherwise daugerously lacking in society."

2.3 ❑ CONCLUSION

Resolution and Independence has a combination of moral generalisations about life and the nomation of the incident that prompted it. The use of the rhyme royal stanza helped Wordsworth to give a special shape to an otherwise insignificant encounter. The Leech Gatherer's words apparently seem like a rather mundane account of his life like Rob Roy's song **(Rob Roy's Grave)**, but the deepn import of the lines go beyond literal description.

Finally, to quote John Williams, "we should remember that for the purposes of **Lyrical Ballads,** he is the insensitive young observer of Simon Lee; he it is who bullies the child in **Anecdote for Fathers,** he it is who receives 'admonishment' from the Leech Gatherer in **Resolution and Independence,** and who subsequently leaves the work of converting the solitary in **The Excursion** for the most^part to the Warderes. Wordsworth and his absent gentle reader were arguably both victims of a cultural crisis exacerbated by the political crisis experienced after the outbreak of the French Revolution. If the situation reached by 1815 is to be fully understood, it is important to reconsider briefly what the problems were for a young poet attempting to write and publish through the 1790s." (9)

2.4 ❑ NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. John William William Wordsworth : A Literary Life, (Macmllan Press, London, 1996) P - 85
3. ibid P - 128
4. David Daiches, A Critical History of English Literature (Allied Publishes, New Delhi, 1969) P - 882
5. John William William Wordsworth (Macmillan Press, London, 1996) P- 124
6. ibid P - 130
7. ibid P - 130
8. ibid P - 178
9. ibid P - 178

2.5 ❑ RECOMMENDED READING

- 1. Abrams, M.H. Wordsworth
- 2. Abercombic L., The Art of Wordswath
- 3. Dairs, J (ed.) Wordswath
- 4. Arnold, Matthew, Essays Criticism
- 5. Rogers, Pat. History of English Literature

2.6 ❑ QUESTIONS

1. Discusw Resslution Independence as a narrative poem.
2. Resolution and Independence is Wordsworth's study of man in Nature.
3. "Wordsworth wrote no poem more characterstic than   Resolution of Independence" Discus.
4. Discus the title of the poem.
5. What contradictions do you find in the poem?
6. Discus Wordsworth's narrative art with reference to   Resolution and Independence.
7. Annotate and answer with reference to the context.

    (i) "And fears and fancies thick upon me come" What are there fears and fancies?

    (ii) "A more human weight upon his frame had cast." What is the implication of this line?

Unit -3 ☐ Kubla Khan : Coleridge

Structure

3.1 ☐ INTRODUCTION : THE POET

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) poet and critic, is known to general readers mainly for four poems— The Ancient Mariner, Christabel Kubla Khan, Dejection,

an ode and a volume of criticism, Biographia Literaria. Wordsworth and Coleridge published Lyrical Ballads (1798). With this book started the great period of English Romantic poetry. Both the poets had their respective fields of poetry. It was Wordsworth's aim to shed the light of imagination over things real and ordinary; but Coleridge aimed at procuring 'for the shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith.' No poet has succeeded better in rendering the state of entrancemeut.

3.2 ☐ TEXT : KUBLA KHAN ; SOURCES

Born in the 'timeless cell of dreams' Kubla Khan is a source of perennial delight. In it the true spirit of Poetry is everywhere. It is a pity that the poem is a fragment. But as poetry it is perfect even as fragment. That is one of the reasons why Humphry House says : 'If Coleridge had never published his Preface, who would have thought of "Kubla Khan" as a fragment?' Walter Jackson Bate seems to echo similar sentiments : 'Few readers would think that "Kubla Khan" is a fragment'2. Though the poem is composed in a dream, it does not suffer from such irregularity as might mar its poetic beauty. It has the symmetry of a finished work of art.

The poem, inspired by Coleridge's reading of Turchas's Pilgrimage' shows the power of the unconscious. As to the cause of the dream it can be safely said that the unconscious worked in him as a result of homesickness, a term which, Henry Newbolt thinks, is best suited to express the romantic longing of the spirit. Coleridge had in him such a longing and the poem is the reproduction of 'the ecstasy in imaginative fulfihnent'[3]. Graham Hough describes the poem 'as a fragment of psychic life"*.But we would rather take the poem as a psychological release where there is an unconscious revelation of the longing self. In its concentration on the self the poem fulfils an important condition of romanticism.The dream perfectly recaptures the sensational awareness of the poet's longing self and thus also offers scope for the analysis of the dreamer— his instinctive nature. From the dreamer we can make an analysis of the nature of the dream which is selective, never confusing and abrupt. In the concluding paragraph of his essay on 'Kubla Khan', Bate describes the poem as simply a fanciful embroidery of something he had read - in fact a fanciful development of something he had been actually reading at every moment - Purchas : his Pilgrims,^ but the 'fanciful embroidery' to which Bate refers is an' incomplete formula for Coleridge's poem. It cannot be interpreted without any reference to the longing of the spirit or self. It is the romantic poet's personal self that goads and helps the 'fanciful embroidery'. It is the longing spirit that sets the Winged chariot of the poet's fancy roam in the region of romance and causes the 'fanciful development'. So Coleridge's reading of Purchas's Pilgrimage could not by itself cause the dream poem; and it is much more than a 'fanciful embroidery' of something the poet had read.

3.3 ◻ COMPOSITION

The facts about the composition of 'Kubla Khan' offer a fascinating study. While living in a lonely farm house on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire in the summer of 1797, Coleridge took an anodyne to prevent indisposition. The immediate effect of taking an anodyne was that he fell in profound sleep for about three hours. Immediately before his sleep Coleridge, as we know from his own account of the composition of the poem, was reading the following from Purchas's Pilgrimage^ :' Here Kubla Khan commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were enclosed by a wall'". The images that rose up before Mm in Ms dream were reproduced by Mm immediately after waking and without any conscious effort. But me recollection was never completed as he was suddenly interrupted for an hour by a person who came to Mm on business from Porlock. The interruption resulted in a fragmentary reproduction of the dream poem, as Coleridge could not retain the entire vision which, he said, 'passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into wMch a stone has been cast'.[7]

3.4 ◻ CRITICAL ANALYSIS

It is evident that Coleridge, the philosopher, could be an inspired dreamer. It is definitely here that the poet with his dreaming eyes could give to airy nothing a permanent habitation. The poem remains as a recollection of Coleridge's dream-vision, the imaginative experience in wliich his soul delighted in wonder. The poem shows how the poet can reject the external world by completely relying upon the world wliich is private, arbitrary and irrational. The poet's soul's joy lay in the expectation of the revival of the symphony and song of the Abyssinian maid. The lines that suggest this expectation of delight are set in a rising crescendo which, however, coincides with the spirit of mystery of the close :

> Could I revive within me
> Her symphony and song,
> To such a deep delight't would win me,
> That with music loud and long,
> I would build that dome in air.

It would not be too fanciful to search for Miltonic reminiscences in 'Kubla Khan'. The decription of Kubla Khan's walled garden 'bright with sinuous rills' and 'many an incense-bearing tree' recalls to our memory Milton's description of the Garden of Eden, 'that fair field of Enna¹ ('Paradise Lost IV, 268-9). Coleridge's 'Mount Abora' and 'Abyssinian maid' recall Milton's 'Mount Amara' and 'Abassin Kings' (Paradise Lost', IV, 280-3). This is, as Humphry House aptly says, 'Coleridge's Miltonising'.

Yet Humphry House who sees the resemblances between Milton and Coleridge thinks that this approximation to, or parallelism between, Kubla's garden and the Paradise of Eden 'causes a positive distortion of the poem's on the ground that Kubla is not Adam. But it can be stated against Humphry House's contention that Kubla, essentially human, loves architectural splendour and is a dignified Tartar, an imaginative aesthete, a representative lover of pleasure and beauty, and as such has his points of kinship with Adam.

The idea of a demon-lover, which has direct reference to witchcraft, owes its origin to a common theme used in classical mythology and the medieval ballads in which Coleridge was interested. Demons, who come to seduce women in the form of human beings, are found to be favourites of the ballad writers.

It is astonishing, and more so because the poem was composed in a dream, how Coleridge even in dream could collect ingredients, so weird and fantastic, from different sources and could transform them altogether by the rich alchemy of his

imagination. Imaginagion is, as Coleridge himself says, the soul of poetic genius. And in the shaping power of imagination lies one of the central principles of romantic ait. This esemplastic power explains the eclectic nature of his dream. The process which worked behind the amalgamation of these diverse elements in the poem is what Coleridge calls 'the streamy nature of association'. It is evident how Coleridge's imagination ranged over a wide field from Xanadu to Abyssinia, from the medieval ballads and Elizabethan explorations to the history of China and Greek myths Besides, it has been suggested by Livingston Lowes that Coleridge, apart from reading 'Purchas's Pilgrimage', also read James Bruce's Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile and Thomas Maurice's History of Hindostan.

The symbols used in the poem relate it to the Platonic tradition. As a schoolboy Coleridge read the neo-Platonists in translation and later had also read some Greek Philosophers in the original. The images, which can also be related to 'Purchas's Pilgrimage', are more in the Platonic tradition. The sacred river Alph has its prototype in Greek myths. The very word 'Alph' is derived from the Greek word 'Alpheus' which is one of the lergest rivers hi Greece. The mystery round the Alph can be traced back to Greek sources.The 'sunless sea' is a Greek symbol as it reminds one of Odysseus' voyage on the sea. It would be highly relevant to mention here that the sea plays a significant role in romantic poetry and specially in the poetry of Coleridge. The entire theme of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' is based on a sea voyage. The sea is a part and parcel of Coleridge's story. In 'Kubla Khan' Coleridge thrice refers to the sacred river, Alph, and describes with characteristic details its winding :

> And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
> It flung up momently the sacred river.
> Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
> Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
> Then reached the caverns measureless to man.

In the treatment of the supernatural Kubla Khan perfectly illustrates Coleridge's poetic creed : 'That willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith[1].[9] Here, as in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, the moon is largely instrumental in creating the supernatural atmosphere.The world conceived in Kubla Khan is a dim, distant world, far away from our world of meddling intellect. Yet it is not so intangible to Coleridge, the poet sorcerer who knows all the secrets of the enchanted world of Xanadu. The poet, with the help of the 'waning moon', creates an artistic apotheosis to describe a charmed savage Place :

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By a woman waiting for her demon-lover!

Poetic magic has reached here its ultimate limits : it can go no further. Referring to these lines (and to the two lines of Keats on the 'magic casements') Kipling says : "Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five—five little lines— of which one can say : 'These are the pure Magic, These are the clear vision. The rest is only poetry'."[10]

Suggestiveness, which is a feature of all great art, is the poet's forte. He can conjure the vision of the mysterious world of Xanadu with infinite suggestiveness. The shadow of Kubla Khan's 'dome of pleasure', floating midway on the waves, may be taken to suggest the ultimate fragility of the dome. The insubstantial nature of Kubla's dome of pleasure has been forcefully conveyed through the floating image. The Oriental monarch's vanity and his desire for pleasure are not matched with corresponding wisdom. Throughout the poem some mystery is suggested. Mystery is associated with the Alph which, while meandering, reaches caverns measureless to man and finally sinks its tumult in a lifeless ocean. In spite of Coleridge's description of Kubla Khan as an aesthete, the monarch is not totally shorn of his traditional character-the Kubla Khan of history. Kubla's inherent love of war has been finely suggested in these lines :

> And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
> Ancestral voices prophesying war!

It is also through suggestiveness that Coleridge successfully maintained what Humphry House calls 'the factual-visual consistency.

Though Coleridge was supposed to have been in a trance, his mental faculty seems to have been fully alert. Thus Kubla Khan is a conscious outcome of an unconscious creative process. Herbert Read, while commenting on the poem, harmonises these two contradictory attitudes of the mind-the unconscious and the conscious. Read says : 'There is nothing surprising in this. I believe that every sound we hear and every object we see is instantaneously recorded by the brain whether or not we consciously register the experience. Our consciousness is only a tiny aperture opening on to the wide world of the unconscious-a finger in an intimate range of indexes'.[11]

Kubla Khan offers a study in contrasts between the poet's present state and the desired state when the song of the Abyssinian maid would delight his soul and inspire him to create— to build the dome in the air. From joy of music thus came the bold assertion of creation. This reminds me of the great Upanisadic truth that it is out of joy that this universe has been created. The Oriental source of Kubla's dome of pleasure and Kubla himself are in contrast with the Occidental source of the Alph. Contrast between heat and cold is conspicuous in the line :

A sunny pleasure-dome, with caves of ice !

It is in the fusion of the contrasts that the miracle of Kubla Khan's pleasure-dome lies. The pointed contrasts deepen the sense of mystery which runs through the poem.

Besides contrast, the poem depicts a wide variety of feelings and moods-those of delight, surprise, fear, enthusiasm and ecstasy.

The poet is under the bewitching spell of the Abyssinian maid's song which has been experienced only once. The experience had made the poet a captive of the maid's music. He is keen on reviving within him her symphony and song :

> A damsel with a dulcimer
> In a vision once I saw :
> It was an Abyssinian maid,
> And on her dulcimer she played,
> Singing of Mount Abora.
> Could I revive within me
> Her symphony and song,
> To such a deep delight't would win me.

These line superbly illustrate the captivating power of music.

3.5 ☐ CONCLUSION

Kubla Khan is a dream poem without the incoherence of a dream.— Kubla Khan is a marvel of romantic imagination, a miracle of rare device. Here Coleridge seems to set the limits of nineteenth century imaginative verse. The liberation of imagination, of wliich the poem is a fine product, shows how in a romantic poem there can be perfect dissociation of imaginative life from everyday reality. The poem offers an escape from reality. But it does not stop there, It carries us out of our confining existence to that enchanted land of beauty and wonder which lures the imagination of the eternal child in us. Poems like 'Kubla Khan' do not assert but create, not inform, but move. Such poems give a taste of the life of pure sensations unalloyed by thought. For such a life Keats aspired in one of his letters to his friend Bailey. In its evocation of pure sensations, Kubla Khan fulfils the purpose of poetry; for the purpose of poetry, says Herbert Read, 'is the enhancement of the enjoyment of life, either by sensuous celebration of its immediate qualities, as in lyrical poetry, or by communication of its ultimate meaning, as in epic and dramatic myths'[12]. Poetry is the essence of literature and Kubla Khan is the quintessence of poetry. True poetry' says Rebert Lynd, 'begins with the delighted use of the sense. It creates the mermaid, the unicorn and the fiery dragon. It peoples the vague unknown with witches on broomsticks and fairies and beasts that are kings' sons in disguise.

Distance has no terrors for it, and we can travel over impossible spaces either in seven league boots or by the light of the candle' 13. Kuble Khan is indeed a specimen of such poetry.

3.6 ☐ NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Humphry House, Cloeridge, (London, 1953) p. 114

2. Walter Jackson Bate. Coleridge (London. 1969)

3. Maud Bodkin, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, (O.U.P, 1951) P. 95

4. .Graham Hough, The Romantic Poets. (London, 1957), P. 63

5. W. J. Bate, Coleridge, (London, 1969) P. 84.

6. Golden book of Coleridge (Everyman's Library, London, 1945) P. 284.

7. Ibid. P. 285.

8. Humphry House, Coleridge, (London, 1953) P. 120

9. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, (London, 1958) P. 6

10. Quoted by M. R. Ridley in his essay on Coleridge, included in Fifteen poets (Oxford, 1965), P. 257.

11. Herbert Read, Collected Essays in Literary Criticism (London, 1950) P. Ill

12. Ibid, P 110

13. A Methuen, An Anthology of Modem Verse, Introduction by Robert Lynd P.12

3.7 ☐ ANNOTATIONS ;

Alph : 'Scholars agree that Coleridge compounded the first letter of the Greek alphabet, 'Alpha' with mythological speculations that the Garden of Eden, where language began, was in Abyssinia, and with memories of the classical river Alpheus which ran underground'. (O.A. of E.L. vol.11)

Milk of Paradise : Milk from the rivers of a muses' paradise— source of poetic inspiration,

Questions

1. Discuss **Kubla Khan** as a romantic poem.

2. **Kubla Khan** is about magic, music and poetic creation. Elucidate.

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3. Analyse Coleridge's poetic craftsmanship with reference to Kubla Khan

4. Answer briefly

    i) The 'Abyssinian maid' has nothing to do with the subject in Kubla Khan. Do you agree?

    ii) Refer to a few lines to show how magic is reflected in the imagery of the poem.

3.8 ☐ RECOMMENDED READING ;

Bate, W.J., **Coleridge**

Beer, J. B., **Coleridge, the Visionary.**

Lowes, J. L., **The Road to Xanadu.**

Hartmau, G. L (ed), **New Perspectives on Coleridge and Wordsworth,**

Unit -4 ❑ Alastor : Shelley

Structure

4.0 ❑ BRIEF NOTE ABOUT SHELLEY

Bora in 1792, Percy Bysshe Shelley was the only son of an aristocratic family. After his initial schooling at Eton, an exclusive public school, Shelley went to University College, Oxford in 1810, from which he was expelled the following year for having written and circulated an essay entitled **The Necessity of Atheism**. He also went against the wishes of his family by marrying a sixteen year old girl, Harriet Westbrook. This marriage however broke down in 1814, and Shelley eloped to the continent with his new love, Mary Godwin, who was then only seventeen years old. Two years later in 1816, Shelley published his first mature poem, **Alastor**.

4.1 ❑ ABOUT ALASTQR ; COMPOSITION

Alastor, Mary Shelley wrote in a "Note" on the poem, was composed by the poet after she, Shelley, and two of their friends Charles Clairmont and Thomas Love Peacock - had come back from a boating trip up the river. Thames is August-September 1815. The date mentioned in the "Preface" to the poem is December 14, 1815, and this is very probably the date on which Shelley flushed his poem. It was finally published in February 1816 tohether with a number of other poems in a volume entitled **Alastor; or, the Spirit of Solitinde : and older Poems.**

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4.2 ☐ THEME

In her Note on the poem, Mary Shelley observes that **Alastor** was a poem that contained "an individual note only." By this she meant that unlike Shelley's earlier long poem **Queen Mab** which dealt with social issues and embodied Shelley's revolutionary ardowr, Alastor was an essentially psychological poem. Certainly the outline of the poem proves as much, Alastor being a poem about the wanderings of a solitary poet through ancient and fabled cities and lands, bereft of human company. Then, as the story of the poem unfolds, one night the companionless poet has a dream of a beautiful girl who talks and sings to him before embracing him. At this point the vision of the girl vanishes from his eyes, and he awakes to continue with his journeys restless now, till he dies all alone on a mountain top.

Shelley's visualization of his artist protagonist as a figure in isolation, cut off from traditional community bonds was part of a larger realization. Although Wordsworth had claimed that a poet was "a man speaking to men" in his **Preface to the Lyrical Ballads** (1800 edition), many other poets of the time like William Blake in his "Introduction" to the **Songs of Experience** and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in the concluding lines of his poem **Kubla Khan**, represented a poet as a bardic figure estranged from his fellow men. The issues that Plato had raised concerning the source of the poet's creativity in such of his philogophical work as the **Ion, Phaedrus,** and **Timaeus,** were sought to be re-examined by the poets of Shelley's time. In England, philosophers like John Locke, George Berkely and David Hume explored the workings of the human faculty of perception, and in France the thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau gave the self of the perceiver a central place in the individual's pursuit of the understanding of the world. Shelley's **Alastor** in a sense engages with many of these preoccupations.

Shelley himself provided a number of useful clues as to the meaning of **Alastor** in Ms "Preface" to the poem. **Alastor,** says Shelley here' "may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind."

It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge and is still insatiate.... So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous and tranquil and self possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the being whom he loves.....He seeks in vains for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by Ms disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The **Alastor** poet, in other words, is an imaginative idealist. The "magnificence and beauty of the external world" of Nature affects him profoundly, as does his deep education. However, he is a man completely immured in his own self, living in "self-centered seclusion," and delighting in the beautiful idealizations bred in his own mind. However, after some time, "these objects cease to suffice," and his mind desires companionship, "intercourse" or interaction, with a mind or "intelligence" akin to itself. But this appears to be impossible in Shelley's conceptualization, and the consequence is tragic : "The poet's self-centered seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin."

The mind's desire for intercourse with something similar to itself is of course a representation, an allegorization even, of the quest for love. In his "Preface" to **Alastor**, Shelley cues in this signification by providing a short citation from St. Augustine's Confessions :

Nondum amabam, et amare amabum, quaerebam quid amarem, anians amare.

(I was not yet in love, and I loved to be in love,
I sought what I might love, in love with loving.)

In the second paragaph of his "Preface", too, Shelley writes of two classes of people who deny the instinct of love. The first class comprises "selfish, blind, and torpid" people who are concerned with pursuing their own narrow and limited interests. The second class however consists of intellectuals who, though they are capable of love, deliberately remove themselves from the company of their fellow men. Also, if the first type of human beings are afflicted with die "curse" of being "morally dead," the second kind, "the pure and tender-hearted perish," according to Shelley, "through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt." The poet depicted in Alastor is clearly a member of the second group.

4.2.1. SHELLEY'S IDEA OF LOVE

An elaboration of Shelley's idea of love is to be found in his short essay **On Love**. Here he defines love as

> that powerful attraction towards all that we conceive, or fear, or hope beyond ourselves, when we find within our own thoughts the chasm of an insufficient void and seek to awaken in all things that are a community with what we experience within ourselves. If we reason, we would be understood; if we imagine, we would that the airy children of our brains were born anew within another's; if we feel, we would that another's nerves should vibrate to our own.

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Shelley in all probability wrote these words at about the same time that he wrote **Alastor,** and in the poem he indicates the drawback of such a concept of love. The solitary protagonist in the poem evidently projects his self-love, or his own need for love, on to a construction of his mind. All through his life, Shelley was conscious of the possible confusion between one's love for oneself and a love for another person as that individual really is. Thus in his last poem **The triumph of life,** Shelley represents Rousseau (whom he otherwise admired) as being essentially flawed for saying and lecluring in the precept that "I was overcome / By my own heart alone." To escape from this trap of self-love seeking its own image, Shelley postulated the necessity of man's possession of both self-knowledge and of the ability to imaginatively participate in, and even become, another being. As he put it in a key passage in his **Defence of Poetry,**

love....[is] a going out of our own nature and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which existsin thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good [a manifestation of love] must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasure of his ('?) must become his own. The lonely poet of **Alastor** meets his tragic end presumably because he could not identify himself with "thought, action, or person" not his own.

4.2.2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

In so far as the poem itself is concerned, Alastor opens with two long introductory verse-paragraphs which invoke, epic-like, the "Mother of this unfathomable world" who is both Cybele, goddess of the powers of nature, as well as Necessity, which Shelley had described as the "mother of the world" in his **Queen Mab** (vi,198). nver the next hundred lines of Ms poem Shelley goes on to picture his poet-protagonist as a "lovely youth", whose "infancy was nurtured" by the "choicest impulses" sent from "the vast earth and ambient air." Having drunk at the "fountains of divine philosophy", the young man felt and knew "all of great/Or good or lovely, which the sacred poet / In truth or fable consecrates". Having left (like Shelley himself in 1811) his "cold fireside and alienated home," the youth lives in solitude in the midst of nature. Evidently a vegetarian, for the food he eats is "bloodless," die youth communed with birds and animals instead of with human beings. An explorer of both the secrets of nature and those "of the birth of time" or history, he voyaged through landsoapes of ice and volcanoes, bitumen lakes and secret caves, as well as through the ruins of ancient cities like Athens and Memphis and Thebes, Balbec and Jerusalem and Babylon.

All through these sojournings, the young man had spumed human company and had even remained oblivious of the sercet, unspoken love of an Arab maiden who brought him food and tended to his simple needs. But then one day wliile he was in the "loneliest dell" in the vale of Kashmir, he fell asleep and saw in his dream a vision of a "veiled maid" whose "voice was like the voice of Ms own soul/Heard in the calm of thought." He sees her too in all her naked beauty, and finally "yielding to ....irrestitible joy," embraced her and allowed her in turn to fold in turn "his frame in her dissolving arms." But the consequence of their brief union is not pleasant, for the poet awakes shocked and bewildered, despairing over his loss of the vision.

The poet's dream has of course a central significance in **Alastor**. On the one hand, it is clear enough from Shelley's observations in the "Preface" to the poem that the dream represents an ideal of love conjured up in the poet's brain by his disregard of human love. As Shelley clarifies a few lines later,

The spirit of human love has sent
A vision to the sleep of him who spumed
Her chircest gifts.

These lines refer too to the poet's ignoring of the love offered to him by the Arab girl. But it is important to note that the poet's dream is not merely sensual. The girl in the dream had sung of "Knowledge and truth and virtue," of "divine liberty," and of "poesy, Herself a poet," topics "most dear" to the poet himself. She is indeed a reflection of his innermost desires and aspirations, and thus Shelley makes it evident that his love is a false one, for it is not directed towards another person.

Consequent upon the vanishing of the vision, the poet in Shelley's poem begins to look for "a prototype of his conception." But significantly enough for the unfolding logic of the poem, this "psototype" does not mean a real living girl. In fact, many maidens did begin to fall in love with him to the extent of intuiting his woe and sympathizing with him, but he invariably remained unconscious of them :

Youthful maidens, taught
By nature, would interpret half the woe
That wasted him, would call him with false names
Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand
At parting and watch, dim through tears, the path
Of his departure from their father's door.

The poet's total lack of communication with his fellow human beings, indeed so transformed him into something monstrous that

the infant would conceal
His troubled visage in his mother's robe

In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,
To remember their strange light in many a dream of after-times.

Having cut himself off from "the bond and sanction which connects not only man with man, but with everything which exists", as Shelley put it in his essay **Of Love,** the solipsist-poet "become the living sepulchre of himself, and....is the mere husk *of* what he once was."

The word "sepulchre" used by Shelley in the above quotation from **Of Love** is specially appropriate in the context of **Alastor,** for the poet seeks for the girl he had envisioned in sleep through the gateway of death :

> That beautiful shape ! Does the dark gate of death
> Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,
> O Sleep?

Sleep and death had been linked by Shelley earlier in his poem **Queen Mab** ("Death and his brother Sleep" he had written), and now the **Alastor** poet is driven by a death-urge described by Shelley as a "passion" that "led him forth/Into the darkness" :

> As an eagle grasped
> In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast
> Burn with the poison, and precipitates
> Through night and day, tempest and calm, and cloud,
> Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight
> O'er the wide airy wilderness, thus drivern
> By the bright shadow of that lovely dream
> Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
> Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,
> Startling with careless step the moonlight snake,
> He fled. Red morning dawned upon his flight,
> Shedding the mockery of its vital hues
> Upon his cheek of death.

Arriving at length at a melancholy marshy land, he is impelled to move to the seashore where he sees a frail broken down boat in which he embarks to "meet lone death on the chear ocean's waste," He spreads his cloak as a sail on the boat's mast and immediately the boat is caught in the frenzy of the wind and the waves and propelled inexorably into the yawning mouth of a cavern opening in the side of a mountain. Following the "windings of the cavern," the boat moves "slowly" on the river till it is caught up in a whirlpool and diverted by a "wandering stream of wind" into a tranquil and solitary cove where yellow narcissus flowers are "Reflected in the

crystal calm" of the waters therein. Now, the poet gets put of his boat and begins to walk through the dark forest till he comes to a well beside which he senses the presence of a "Spirit" which, upon "his regard.....raised by intense pensiveness", manifests itself to him as "two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of thought." "Obedient to the light/That shone within his soul," the poet however continues in his journey, following the river to where it disappears over a "grey precipice," plunging into an "immeasurable void,/Scattering its waters to the passing wind." Here, the poet comes across "a tranquil spot that seemed to smile/Even in the lap of homor." And hero in the most of loveliness, the poet ultimately dies.

4.2.3 ALLEGORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

That this story has a meaning beyond its appearance as a romantic, albeit tragic, tale of adventure, Shelley made clear in his preface when he wrote that "**Alastor** may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind." This observation indicates that Shelley was clear in his own mind that he had writen a psychological poem. Remembering this, it is easy to see that both the poet's journeys as well as the major events -and objects in the poem are clearly symbolic. The boat which carries the poet, and which has "many a rift" in its "frail sides" probably stands for the human body. The river down which it flofts, now calmly, now driven, perhaps is a symbol of the course of life itself. This reading gains more strength, too when we note that Shelley explicitly indicates that it runs initially "like childhood laughing," before flowing with a "wintry speed" and finally disappears into an "immeasurable void." Likewise, the sea over which the poet travels must be the sea of life and death— an image Shelley was to later use in his **Adonais**. But the fact that the poet initiates his journeys, that he himself puts his cloak to use as a sail, indicates that he is ultimately responsible for his fate. Shelley in fact made this explicit enough in his "Preface" where he wrote of his poet-figure : "He seeks in vain for a prototype of Ms conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely gave." The poet in **Alastor** had fallen in love with his own conception of an object to be loved and consequently had turned away from all that which was external to him and was worthy of his love. In thus failing to manifest the outgoing nature of true love, he had killed the "power of love" within himself and had become (as Shelley puts it in the concluding sentence of his essay **On Love**),

"sepulchre" or tomb or embodiment of death himself.

Two of the earliest commentators on the poem— Shelley's wife Mary and his friend Thomas Love Peacock— have also thrown light on the meaning of **Alastor**. In his **Memoirs of Percy Bysshe Shelley**, Peacock claimed that it was he who had suggested the title of Shelley's poem : **Alastor : or, the Spirit of Solitude**. "The Greek word fAlastor] is an evil genius", wrote Peacock. "The poem treated the spirit

of solitude as a spirit of evil. I mention the true meaning of the word because many have supposed Alastor to be the name of the hero." Shelley must have accepted this title since he felt that the "spirit of solitude" was indeed the moral and evil antithesis of the spirit of love. But that the poem had also a personal genesis is indicated by Mary Shelley in her note on the poem in her edition of the **Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley.** As Mary Shelley indicates, from 1811 onwards, after he had been expelled from Oxford, lost the love of Harriet, and had been driven out from home by his father, Shelley's life had been marked by "the various ills of poverty and [the] loss of friends.... [and] Physical sufferings". The pursuit of love and the thought of death had been ideas present in Shelley's mind a few months before his writing of Alastor, and they do seem to have affected the choice of his theme. Of course it is only too easy to over-stress the autobiographical element in the poem, but even without a knowledge of this it is possible to respond to and be moved by the strange beauties of the poem, by the fantasy landscapes which are representative of a mental mimdscape of obsession and enclosedness.

4.4 ❑ SAMPLE QUESTIONS :

● A. LONG ANSWER TYPE :

1. What is Shelley enquiring into in Alastor? Does he reach a satisfactory conclusion?

2. Describe Shelley's view of the poet as it emerges in Alastor.

3. Write a note on Shelley's use of imagery with special reference to Alastor.

4. Who or what is "Alastor" ? Consider in this context the appropriateness of the title of Shelley's poem Alastor.

5. What typical features of Shelley's poetic art are exemplified in his Alastor? Ilustrate your answer with references to the text of the poem.

● B. SHORT ANSWER TYPE :

1. Discuss the significance of the Poet's dream in Shelley's Alastor.

2. "Red morning dawned upon his flight, Shedding the mockery of its vital hues Upon his cheek of death."
   Comment critically on these lines and bring out their significance in the context of the poem from which they have been quoted.

4.5 ☐ RECOMMENDED READING :

The text of Alastor can be found in many editions of Sheelley's poems. A good one is the Norton **Shelley's Poetey and Prose,** ed. Donald H. Reiman and Sharon B. Powers, New york : Norton, 1977, A good biography of the poet is Richard Holmes' **Shelley : The Pursuit,** London : Weidenbeld and Nicholson, 1974.

CRITICAL STUDIES :

(1) Kenneth Neill Cameron : **Shelley : The Golden Years,** Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1974.

(2) Donald H. Reiman : **Percy Bysshe Shelley,** New York: Twayne, 1969.

(3) Patrick Swinden (ed.) : **Shelley : Shorter Poems and Lyrics,** London : Macrhillaii. 1976.

(4) Earl Wasserman : **Shelley : A Critical Reading,** Baltimore : John Hopkins University Press, 1971.

(5) Timothy Webb : **Shelley : A Voice Not Understood,** Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977.

(6) Stuart M. Sperry : **Shelley's Major verse : The Narrative and Dramatic Poetry,** Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1988.

Unit -5 □ The Major Odes : John Keats

Structure

(Ode To Psyche, Ode to a Nightingale, Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode on Indolence, Ode to Melancholy, To Autumn)

5.0 □ KEATS AND THE TRADITION OF THE ODE IN ENGLISH

Even though Keats had begun to write odes as early as 1815 when he was still an apprentice surgeon-apothecary, it was only in 1819 that in a burst of astonishing creativity he composed over a few months his greatest odes - **Ode to Psyche, Ode to a Nightingale, Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode on Indolence, Ode on Melancholy and To Autumn.** The exact order in which keats composed these odes is largely a matter of conjecture, but scholars generally agree that Psyche which keats wrote out in his Journal-letter to George and Georgiana Keats on 30 April, 1819, is the first that Keats composed, and that this was followed by the **Nightingale, Greiran Urn** and **Indolence** odes all written in the month of May, at the end of which month Keats also wrote the **Ode on Melancholy. To Autumn,** finally, was written on 19 September 1819.

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Before Keats, the ode-form had been "naturalized" in English by a number of poets. The classical models of Pindar (c. 522-442 B.C.) in Greek and Horace (65-8 B.C.) in Latin both contributed in feeling and form to the English ode. The first ode in the English language, Ben Johnson's ode "To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of that Noble Pair, Sir Lucius Gary and Sir H. Morison" (1629), was a deliberate attempt to reproduce in English the complicated stanza forms of the Pindaric ode. The Horation model, which was more personal and refflective, was imitated by Andrew Marvell in his "Horation Ode upon Comwell's Return from Ireland." Later in the same century, Abraham Cowley's collection **Miscellanies** (1656) made popular a kind of "irregular" or free Pindaric Ode which did away with the strict Pindaric form of conforming to a pattern of "strophe" (i.e.the chorus is Greek tragedy moving singing or chanting from right to legs), "antistrophe" (movement from left to right), and "aped" (the charm standing still), and allowed instead the poet to use variable rhyme schemes, numbers of cine and line-lengths. In the Romantic age, poets like Wordsworth and Coleridege, Shelley and keats used the ode form to effect on social, personal and aesthetic themes either meditatively or descisptively, or both. Hence, apart from keats great odes, we have instances of such highly philosophical and emotional odes as Wordsworth's **Ode on Intimation of Immortatity**, Coleridge's **France : an Ode** and **Dejection: an Ode**, and Shelley's **Ode to the West Wind, Ode to Liberty** and **Naples**.

5.1 ❑ ODE TO PSYCHE : CRITICAL ANALYSIS

In so for as Keats odes are concerned, it is difficult to categorize them beyond saying that they are intensely personal, deeply speculative, and extremely ideational or philosophic. The first of the major odes – **Ode to Psyche** – Keats claimed in his letter to George and Georgiana Keats of 30 April 1819, he had taken "moderate pain" over. The legend that Keats drew upon is that of Psyche, the human soul, who so excited the jealousy of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, by her beauty that she (Aphrodite) sent her son Cupid to harm Psyche. However, Cupid fell in love with Psyche and used to visit her by night without disclosing his real identity. Ultimately, Aphrodite forgave Psyche who was subsequently made immortal, though never worshipped as a goddess. Keats has come across the legend of Psyche in Apuleius, **The Golden Asset** in William Adhingtio's translation of 1566, and in his letter to George and Georgiana keats he thus wrote : "You must recollect mat Psyche was not embodied as a goddess before the time of Apuleius the Platonist, who lived after the Augustan age, and consequently the goddess was never worshipped or sacrifice to with any of the ancient forever." In fact, it is because Psyche never received only

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traditional worship, that Keats can make her an icon of the cult of beauty of which he visualizes himself the "priest."

The poem itself begins with a kind of an inversion of a Miltonic inteitexts, Keat lines "O Goddess! Hear these tuneless number, wrung/By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear" both evoking and reversing the tragic undertones of Milton's remembrance of his dead friend Edward King in **Lycidas** : "Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear." Indeed, both like and unlike **Lycidas** which is a poem about death and transceridance, **Ode to Psyche** is one about die Passing away of what had been a "fact" in the classical part and its revival by a modem poet. Ona different key, however, Keats' poem is a love or nuptial ode, presenting Psyche as an erotic goddess-in-love, first in the opening 23 lilies of the poem and again at its conclusion. Yet, these descriptions do not completely exhaust the significant meanings of this ode, for it is also about as its name suggests the creative mind of the poet. In deed, Ode to Psyche celebrated the potency of the artist's imagination to recreate, albeit mentally or conceptionaly, the exact shape of nature, myth and history lost through the erosions of time. This explains too the repetitive or derplicative structure of the poem as Keats moves from the acknowledgment that Psyche had no

virgin choir to make delicious moanr upon the midnight hours;

No voice, no lute,no pipe, no incense sweet.

From chain-swung causer teeming; Noshrine or grove, no oracle, no heat of pale-mouth 'd prophet dreaming,

to the assertion that he will compensate for all these **grecific** lacks through the reparative agency of his function as a poet-priest :

> So let me be thy choir and make a moam
> Upon the midnight hours.
> Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
> From swionged censer teeming.
> Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
> of pale month'd prophet dreaming.

The creative aspects of the Psyche mind are also foregrounded right at the beginning of the poem when Keats writes:

> Surely I chant today or did I see
> The winged Psyche with awakened eyes'?

The dream vision, as in his description of Adam's dream ("he awoke and found it truth- letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817), is Keats way of affirming

the reality of the imagined perspective. The postcoital slumber of the godess to- be and her lover is thus brought to life, the imagined mythological details of calm-breathng, arms embracing lips not touching but not having bade adieu, being a miiToring of the realy of Keats, relationship with Fanny Brawne, then at Wentworth Place near Keats.

But if the past underlines the present, so too does the present constitute the past. In Hypeion, Keats had inersted to evoke the "large utterance of the early Gods" but had failed. In **Ode to Psyche** however, Keats speaks authoritatively of his own present ability to evoke the past :

> Yet even in these days so far retired
> From happy pietie, thy lucent fans,
> Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
> I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.

"So let me be thy choir", writes Keats, and he subsequently asserts: **"I will be thy priest"** [emphasis added]. And so he goes on to create Ms duplication of Psyche's now-lost paradise within the infinite spaces of his "working brain." Here, there are sleeping Dryads or wood-nymphs lying on banks of °moss just as Psyche and Cupid had bedded down on grass, "lull'd to sleep" by the soft music of the wind passing through the "branched thoughts" of the poet, all sited within a "rosy sanctuary dressed "with the wreath'd trellis of a working brain," and adorned "with all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign." This last reference lo "the gardener Fancy" directs our atention to Keats' poem **Fancy** which came immediately after the **Ode to Psyche in** his 1820 volume of poems and in which he wrote of Fancy as capable of bringing togather

> All delights of summer weather;
> All |he buds and bells of May,
> From dewy sward or thorny spray,
> All the heaped Autumn's wealth.

Yet, it is well to remember that the last stanza of **Ode-to Psyche** is not desceiptive of a total restitution of Psyche's lost pst. "Dark-cluster'd trees" for instance have replaced the pine forest, the "brooklet" transformed into "streams", the colourful flowers substituted by mental ones, and most important of all, the immortal lovers are quite absent. The last pictorial tableau in fact represents a mind made alluring for Psyche to inhabit. In this sense, the poem represents not an achievement but an anticipation, Keats forward-looking or futuristic apprehension" of a reality yet to be constituted. Thus does **Ocle to Psycle** span the temporal zones of past (the mythology), the present (Keats' singing >or writing of his poem), and the future ("I will be thy

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priest, and build a fane...."A rosy sanctuary will I dress....")- But beneath all this lies Keats central preoccupolion in the poem— his idealization of Love and Beauty and his conceptualization of himself as a priest-participant in the worship of these immutable values.

Of couse, notice must be taken too of Keats' craftsmanship in this ode. The "sensuous" Keats is very much in evidence in **Ode to Psyche** with a single line like "Mid hush'd cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed" evoking a range of sensations from those of hearing ("hush'd"), touch ("cool"), smell ("fragrant"), and sight ("rooted flowers"). The complexity of the sensory experience provoked is here instanced best by the compound image" fragrant eyed" which not only refers to the olfactory and visual sensations together but images the object seen or contemplated as the physical organ of visual sight. Yet, there is- much more involved here than a superficial sensuousriess. The complete reconciliation of object and perception is symptomatic of Keats idealized fusion of Love (the Body/Flesh) and Beauty (an imaginative or mental construct continuous with Truth, as Keats famous declaration "what the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth", illustrates). Certainly Ode to Psyche may be read "more richly", as Keats asserted in his 30 April letter toGeorge and Georgiana Keats.

5.2 ❑ ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE : CRITICAL ANALYSIS

If Ode to Psyche was "done leisurely," Ode to a Nightingale was' composed, according to Charles Annitage Brown in whose ganden Keats heard the nightingale sing, in a matter of "two or three hours" only. This makes Keats' accomplishnent all the more unique, for as gererations of readers have attested, the poem is a near-perfect work of art.

Poems on nightingales were not unusual in Keats own age; Coleridge, with whom he had. discussed "Nightingales, Poetry" three weeks before writing his ode, had composed a poem on a Nightingale too. But it is important to note that Keats' ode is really not on the bird proper, but on its song, and that when he writes "Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bjrd," he actually refers to the song of the bird which has remained unchanged over the countless generations of human existance. However, nitlier the Nightingale nor its song is the sole focus of Keats' ode, for the poem is also centrally about the poet and his fancy. The ode begins in fact with the sensory and feeluigful locus of the poet's sense of pain and enervation as he contemplates, too happily, the happiness of the bird manifest in its singing "of summer in full-throated ease",

> In some melodious plot
> Of beechen green, and shadows number less.

The poet's identification with the bird is terms of a shamed ecstasy of happiness in however under shadowed by an implicit death-wish. This is what Keats implies when he writes in the very first quatrain of the poem as having drunk hemlock or some ammesiac drug ("opiate") mat makes him sink, as it were, "Ledie-wosds". The some wish of self-annihilation, or at least desire for oblivion, runs through the second stanza in Keats longing or "a draught of vintage." The initial imagined attributes of and associations with, the wine link the second stanza with the first. The detail of the "deep-delved earth" is related to the "melodious plot" and to the poet's sinking lethe-words. The words "country green" refer back to the "bechem green" in the frist stanza, and "Flora....../Dance, and Provencal song, and suubumt mirth" are related to die invocation of summer by the bird's song in the last line of the first stanza. But this is not all, for the wine, a bacchic intoxicant, is also an "opiate", even as Keats forces upon it the attribute of the real drink of inspiration, of Hippocrene which was the sacred fountain of the Muses on Mount Helicon.

The word "fade" next links the third stanza with the second as Keats follows "And with thee fade away into the forest dim" with "Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget....." But significantly enough, their wishes for oblivion dissolution and evanescence reinforce in the poet's mind the stality of suffering existent in the quotidian world. Human beings, Keats suggests, are prey to diseases and afflictions, to pain and worry realities of mortal human existence the bird "among the leaves hast never known." Yet, Keats is not as focussed in his perception as this description may suggest. Perhaps because of the "drowsy numbness" he had admitted to at the opening of his poem, or perhaps because of the wine he imagines he might drink, Keats' listing of the ills the mortal flesh is susceptible to is an amorphous cluster of generatizations and symbolizations or allegorizations. Thus we are offered first a general panorama of "weariness....fever....felt", and a representation of the world as a place "where men sit and he as each other groan," before being given the personified figure of palsy shaking" a few, sad, last grey hairs" and of youth growing "pale, and specte-tliim" and dying. Neither does Keats discriminate between this death and the escapist one he longs for, for even in his acknowledgement that "to think is to be full of sorrow," he forgets mat he has beean thinking of the happiness he may gain upon union with the bird. Thus now, he can only think of die ravages wrought upon Beauty and Love by time :

> Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
> Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

Upto this point in his poem, Keats had been driven by the urge to deny his own

self and his human identity. But in the fourth stanza he implicitly acknowledges his own human condition, admitting even to his possession of a "dull brain", even as he takes on "the wings of Poesy" in his endeavour to join the Nightingale in its shadowy, leafy bower. This in easily, even instantly achieved - "Already with thee!" is Keats joyous exclamation of accompli sliment pleuitude and he enters the pasadisal enclosure of sensory plevitude :

> Already with thee! tender is the night.
> And haply the Queen Moon is on her Throne,
> Cluster'd around by all her stary Fays.
> But here there is no light,
> Save what from heaven is witli the breezes blown
> Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy 'ways.

The operative word here is "heaver" which refers both directly to the night sky lit up by the moon and the stars and indirectly to the darkness covered inner-chamber inside the tree which is described with great particularly is the next (the fifth) stanza. The function of imagination, of thought, continus here as Keats "guesses" the flowers around him and creates in the process a virtual world of verdure and efflorescence continuous in both time and space. The sense of space is, for instance, suggested as Keats speaks of the "flowers.....at my feet" and then goes on to mention the boughs above him, before implying a similar spatial stratification through his references to the "grass" on the ground, to the "furit-tree" reaching up to the sky, and to the "thicket" mid-way between ground and sky. And somewhat similarly is the order of time explicated in this stanza with the "Fast fading violets" of Spring being succeeded by the "coming musk-rose" of Summer. But of course this is not the time, damaging and destructive, that had figured in the third stanza, but one that substitutes one delight with another.

From this bower of sensuous bliss, a world parallel to ours but superior in its possession of a time that is generative and a beauty that replenishes itself, Keats moves in the sixth stanza to himself once again. "Darkling I listen," he writes in reminiscence of it Milton's lines on the nightingale in **Paradise Lost** Book III (11. 39-41):

> ......the wakeful Bird
> Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid
> Tunes her nocturnal note......

But where in the leafy bower in the fifth stanza of his ode Keats had had his sensuous imagination sharpened by the darkness around him, in the sixth stanza of **Ode to a Nightingale** the darkness triggers off in his mind intimations of mortality. "Now more than ever seems it rich to die," reflects Keats,

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul aliroad
In such an ecstasy!

The richness of this death-without-pain at the height of an almost orgasmic pleasurance would seem to be the most perfect of escapes from the miseries of human existance Keats had catalogued in stanza III. But on the brink of surrendering to "easeful death", Keats remember Claudio's convulsive terras at the thought of becoming "a kneaded clod" (**Measure for Measure,** Act III, Sc, 1, 1. 120). Death, he realizes would rob him of his senses— the magic casement of hearing in particulan— and he would become "to thy high requiem....a sod,"

From this anticipation of his own death, Keats moves reflexively to an imagined realization of the deathlessness of the Nightingale. In the bird's song, there is no trace of death and so it overarches above the hungry generations. Through time and change, through social and religious history, the bird-song has remained constant, having had sounded in the ears of both emperors and peasants ("clown") and perhaps had moved Rutes who in the Bible is referred to as gleaning in the field of Buaz. But this is not all, for moving forward from the vistas of history Keats enters in his imagination (as he has "oft-times" done) into a perception of "facric lands forlorn." The song of the Nightingale, in other words, had acted as a stimuler to the opening by the imagination of a window in the mind and the visualization of a scenario not benign but fearful and awesome, and not full of objicts but empty and lonely and deserted— the very antithesis of the thickly populated bower which had been the Nightingale's haunt.

Tin's vision of lack, of solitude and desertion, is summed up by the last word of the seventh stanza "forlorn" — which also begins the eighth and last stanza of Keats' ode. So long, the sound of the Nightingale's song had moved Keats to thought and imagination. Now the sound of the word "forlorn" in his own mind reverberates like a death— knell signalling the death of the imaginative flight of the poet. Hence Keats laments the feeble magic of the Fancy, its inability to sustain the illusion of immortality in the company of the bird. And as if to underscore the termination of the poet's short lived union with the bird, the Nightingale itself leaves its leafy bower for "the next valley-glades." To the disillusioned poet, its song in now only a "plaintive an them" or dirge and the destination it finds for itself has association with death and burial :"and now 'tis buried deep" (emphasis added). And the ode itself conclerdes with two last vewildered questions to which Keats himself has no answers :

Was it a vision, or a waking dream? Fled is
that music :- Do I wake or sleep?

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Perhaps it is not a little due to the magic of Keats' poetic craftsmenship that generations of readers hungry for meaning have not decried this inconclusiveness of Keats at the conclusion of his poem, but have instead shared empathically his indecision and wonder. The perfection of the poem is as much a technical accomplishmen as an emotional one. In **Ode to a Nightingale** Keats used for the first time a new ten-line stanza formed out of a happy union of a Shakespearean sonnet-quatrain, viz. abab, with a Petrarchan sestet : cdecde. There are also a host of literary and cultural intertexts which Keats employs to give additional fibre— intellectual and aesthetic— to his poem. These range from allusions to classical personages (e.g. "hemlock" resonant of Socrates) and myths ("Lethe","Dryad", "Hippocrene"), to Biblical figures ("Ruth") and more purely literary evocations and interpolations like the phrase "the fever, and the fret" which recalls Wordrworth's line in **Tintern Abbey** : "the fretful unprofitable, and the fever of the world," or "Darkling" from Milton's "wakeful Bird/ sings darkling." There are also more submerged references to contexts in Sophocles and Spenser, and Shakespeare, but what is also noticeable is the way in which Keats adapts the "turn" in the classical ode from strophe to antisthophe to his own purpose at the end of Stanza vi and the beginning of stanza vii, as he shifts from a recognition of his own mortal condition to the deathlessness of the "immortal Bird."

What is also mterestibg to note about **Ode to a Nightingale** is that despite being a poem ostensibly about bird, song, it also mediates a visual experience of no mean order. Whether the image of "the blushful Hippocrene,/With beaded bubble winking at the brim,/And purple-stained mouth", or whether the description of the "Queen-Moon.......on her throne/Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays," **Ode to a Nightingale** is full of pictures. There are two reference, too to real paintings that Keat.; had seen, his line about "Bacchus and his Pards" being inspired by Titian's painting **Bacchus and Ariadne** which depicts leopards drawing Bacchu's chariot and the words "Charm'd magic casements" recalling Claude Lorraine's picture **The Enchanted Castle** which Keats had written about in his **Epistle to Reynolds,** In the case of **Ode on a Grecian Urn,** however, Keats in writing this poem did not have any single Greek urn in mind. It in fact seems more probable that Keats fused together in his mind illustrations from two Greco-Roman vases, illustrations of which he had seen in F. and P. Piranesi's book **Les monuments antiqner der Musse Napoleon** (1804), and his memory of the earlier Greek style of sculpture as represented in the Parthenon frieze which Lord Elgin had brought to London and had displayed.

5.3 ☐ ODE ON A GRECIAN URN : CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Written in May 1819, **Ode on a Grecian Urn** was first published in the **Annals of the Fine Arts,** a contemporary journal devoted to the appreciation of Greek

artistic artifacts. The ode indeed is an expression of Romantic Hellenism in both form and style. The stanzas are regular, the title with its inclusion of the preposition "on" pointing to the poem's preoccupation with its subject, and the opening address (an apostrophe, a classical figure of speech) direct. There is also an implicit impersonality in so far as the speaker is concerned, Keats not obtruding his personal feelings and emotions as he had done in **Ode to a Nightingale,** but maintaining through out a kind of, classical poise, objectivity or detachment in his contemplation of and meditation upon, the Urn. Even is imagery in the **Grecian Urn** ode is restrained, there bring few synaesthetic details.

The theme of the poem is a meditation on— and a mediation between— Art, life and Truth which Keats as a poet and thinker was increasingly coming to confront. The famous opening lines of the poem—

> Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
> Thou foster child of silence and show lime,
> sylvan historian......

with the poem on the word "still" (meaning both "as yet" and "motionless") and the stress on the Urn's relationship with both "quietness" and "silence", "slow time" and history, evoke the aura of something inscrutable yet provocative. Not that die Urn is mute, for as Keats goes on to add, it can "express/A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme." yet, Keats makes it clear too that the Urn does not speak out for and by itself. As a historian, it is a recorder of the trsces of the past, an archive or store of ^presentations no longer extant but which excite the viewer to intense speculation:

> What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
> Of deities or mortals, or of both,
> In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
> What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
> What mad pursuit? what struggle to escape?
> What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

What is noticeable about these questions which contain their own answer is that they first define the Urn as a Greek artifact pure and simple. The motif of a fringe or garland of leaves was characteistic of Attic or Greek vases in particular, while Tempe (a valley in thessaly) and Arcady (a district associated with the worship of die Greek god Pan) are locations specific to Greece. But the classical spirit that is evoked here (particularly in the subsequent questions) is one more of a Dionysian energy than an Apollonian restraint. For here there are gods and men and women, "mad persuit" and "struggle to escape," the music of die "pipes and timbrels," and an overall "wild ecstasy." Also, and a more teclmical detail, this, the evocations in

tliis, the first stanza of the ode, lead on to, or introduce, Keats deeper speculations about the music and about the bold lover and his coy mistess in the second stanza of the poem.

It Keats 'attention had been fixed upon the Grecian Urn itself in the frist stanza, in the second his imagination has more free play. The "sensual ear" being limited and deaf to the toneless melodies being played by the piper sculpted on the Urn's side, the "spirit" is the site where the music works its magic. Then, this acknowledgement of a limitation and the perception of a mode or path of transcendance is extended to the trees and human figures depicted on the suiface of the Um. As Keats puts it's the trees can never be bare, the lover will forever love, and the maiden will be forever beautiful and alluring.

This realization of the enduring perfection of aitistic representations leads Keats to apostrophize" the "happy, happy boughs" and the "more happy, happy love" in the third stanza. The word "still" in the line "For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd" reflexively reminds us of the Urn as the "still unravish'd bride," while the uolion of temporality, of eternal permanence even, in the reiterated words "for ever" ("For ever piping...for ever new....For ever warm....For ever panting....for ever young") put us in mind of the Urn as the foster child of "slow time."

. Happiness and permanence however ore qualities that human kind sadly lacks, and this is the thesis that Keats spells out over the naxt few lines of his ode :

> All breathing human passion far above,
> That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
> A burning forehead and a parching tongue.

There is much that is personal in tliis description, the frist two lines perhaps referring to his own love affair with Fanny Browne, and the last line to the symptoms of tuberculosis, disease Keats had seen Ms brother Tom die of.

The shadow of the personal but is nowhere to he found in the fourth and next stanza of the ode. In this stanza Keats gazes upon the third mimetic representation of human activity carved on the Um's side— a scene depicting a religious procession with a priest at its head leading a ceremonially decorated heifer to a ritual sacrifice. As in the previous stanzas, the picture in this one leads Keats to intens thought and speculation, and so he asks questiona about the identity of the people depicted ther destination, the priest, and ever about their original habitation. As in the first stanza where Keats had asked question after question, so too here do the queries point to the fact that ail-works are not purely aesthetic objects cut off from the responses typical of life, but powerful mediators between the accomplishments of the past and the felf emotions of the present. This is why Keats imagination is set off once again

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by the picture of the processionists. In stanzas II and III his imagination, similarly stimulated by the panels on the Urn, had imagined the musicians playing in the present and the future. In stanza IV in a sort of temporal back-flow, he imagines the "little town" of the processionists to be empty forever "and not a soul to tell/ Why thou art desolate".

Like the word "forlorn" in the **Nightingale** ode, the word "desolate" in **Grecian Urn** signals a turn in the poem. In this stanza at the end, it is as if Keats stands lack from his close scrutiny of and imaginative engagement with the pictures on the Urn and looks not at its parts but at the ura as a whole. The disengagement of the earlier empathic imagination is indicated not only by the words used to describe the Um — "shape" and "attitude" — but also by the fact that the men and maidens are no longer seen as human beings possessing passion and energy and commitment, but as "marble" men and maidens. That the "forest branches and the trodden weed "too are not real is suggested by the word "brede" used of theirs, which means "braid" or "ornament" a word suggeitive of human artifice. And suddenly the Um is no longer expressive on its own but a "silent form".

Yet, as Keats stesses, silent or not, the Um has the power to "tease us out of thought/ As doth eterity." Like the quality of eternity— everlastingness the Um too has the power of transcending the ravages of time and the hunguiy generations, even as it holds a paradoxical balance between the coldness of marble and the warmth of the pastoral : "Cold Partoral!" This is only one of the many appellations or inaner or descirptive epithets that Keats had eyed of the Um. A "bride" and a foster-child", 011 "Attic shape", a "Fair attitued" and a "silent form", the Um final ley takes on the avatar of a friend to man." And it is as this humanized entity that it tells all those who contemplate it,

> Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Behind these lines there perhaps lie many of the "speculations" Keats had indulged in while writing to Ms friends. To Benjamin Bailey on 22 November 1917 he had thus written :

> I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of Imagination what the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth— whether it existed before or not........

and to John Hamilton Reyuols on 3 May 1818....

> Axioms in philosophy [truth] are not axioms till they are proved upon our pulses [beauty].

What these contexts indicate is that Keats realized that the imagination is as

order of intellectual activity as likely to apprehend the truth behind human excitence as rational or philosophical discrimination. Works of art like the Um bring both emanations or realized products of imagination as well as encourgers or inciters of imagination in the beholder, are receptacles of truth holding in the perfection of their shapes or forms the answer to restless humanity's perpetual quest for meaning and order, and symmtry.

5.4 ☐ ODE ON INDOLENCE : CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Clearly a lesser acconsplishment in both poesy and philosophy is Keats' **Ode on Indolence** which though probably composed in May 1819, was not published in Keats 1820 volume of poems. The mood which gave birth to this poem is recorded in the journal-letter to George and Georgiana Keats which Keats wrote on 19 march, 1819 :

> This morning I am in a sort of temper indolent and suprenely careless : I long after a stanza or two of Thompson's Castle of Indulence. My passions are all aleep from my having slumbered till nearly eleven..... Neither poetry nor Ambition, nor Love have any alertness of countenance as they pass by me : they seem rather like three figures on a greek vase a Man and two women whom no one but myself could distinguish in their disguisement.

Both the morning indolence and the passing by of the figures representing Poetey, Ambition, and Love without any temparamental arousal as mertioned in Keats letter, recur in **Ode on Indolence** :

> They pass'd, like figures on a marble Urn,
> When shifted round to see the other side;
> They came again; as when the urn once more
> Is shifted round, the first seen shades return;
> And they were strange to me.

Certainly but for a moment only, Keats is aroused from his lassitude :

> A third time passd they by, and passing, tura'd
> Each one the face a moment whiles to me;
> Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd
> And ached for wings......

But what is important to note is that to Keats in his present mood of indolence, neitha Love, nor Ambition, nor "my demon Poesy" has the power or the ability to rouse him— to "raise/My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass."

Not that **Ode on Indolance** is a poem that enacts an absence of motion. As the vase is turned around and around, the figures on it step, pass, sliift, and return, to use Keats own verbs. But the point of the Ode is that such movement amount to a complete "notliingness" (line 20), an implication further underscored by the typification of the three figures themselves as insubstantial "shadows," "ghosts" and "phantoms. Yet, this Ode does not escape its own paradox of being a poem about a reluctance to envision, to create or compose. The epigaph to this Ode which Keats sourced from the Bible— "They toil not , neither do they spin (Mathew, chapter VI, verse 28)— directs our attention to the lilies, God's creations of Beauty which are meaningful because they are beautiful. Like the Biblical lilies, the imagined poet in **Ode on Indolence** is indolent at its beginning and at its end. But like the lilies too, indolence is a thing of beauty in this ode.

5.5 ☐ ODE ON MELANCHOLY : CRITICAL ANALYSIS ;

If the germ of **Ode on Indolence** came from Keats own feeling, **Ode on Melancholy** which was written at the end of Mny 1819, was inspired by his reading of a section in Robert Burton's **Anatomy of Melancholy** entitled "Against Melancholy itseef". Keats first wrote but then cancelled an original opening stanza which had figured Gothic representations like a ghostly bark made of human bones as instances of misguided routes to the apprehension of Melancholy. This omission of the projected first stanza gives the ode its sudden, dramatic, opeming in which neither Melancholy nor the poet is made the subject but rather the reader who is identified as a quester in search of Melancholy:

> No, no, go not to lethe. neither twist
> Wolfs-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
> Nor suffer they pale forehead to be kiss'd
> By nightshade, ruley grape of Proserpcine
> Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
> Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
> Yous mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
> A partner in your sorrow's mysteries.....

The point of all these injunctions is meant to be educative. None of the traditional mythological ("Lethe", "Proserpine", the goddes of the underworld and consort of nightshade or popular ("wolfs-bave", "nightshade", "yew-berries", "beetle", "death-moth") - evocations of mortality are effective enough to enable one to experience to its greatest intensity : "the wakeful anguish of the soul." "Shade to shade will come too drowsily," Keats writes of such a wooing of Melancholy, "And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul." A better way is suggested in the second stanza in which the

quester is advised to turn to naturalized beauty— "a morning rose," "The rainbow of the salt sand-wave", "the wealth of globed peonies", and the "peerless eyes" of a mistress.

The rationale behind this selection and recoinmandation is that beauty is fleeting. This in fact is the realization that the poem moves forward to in its third stanza in a kind of as apotheosis of the logic that had driven it from its beginning.

In the Nightingale's song and in the Attic shape of the Urn, Keats had visualized a beauty that was unfading and permanent, had conceived of a joy that was never ending and had identifed and a pleasure thai was continuous. In Melancholy however Keats as it were looks in the shadows of these presences. Thus here we are introduced to the three allegorized figures of "Beauty that must die," "Joy, whose hand is ever al his lips bidding adieu," and "aching Pleasure". These three are the true companions and associates of Melancholy, according to Keats, and so

> In the very temple of delight
> Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine.

This shrine of Melancholy is similar to that of Moneta, the priestess in Keats' **The Fall of Hyperion,** which more could ascend to "But those to whom the miseries of the world/ Are misery, and will nol let them rest." Somewhat similarly in the lives he wrote in **Melancholy** a few months before composing the ones in **The Fall of Hypenion,** Keats suggests thai only the protagonisl whose "strenuous tongue/ Can burst joy's grape againsl his palate fine" can enter the hmennosl shrine of the goddess Melancholy. On one level, the word "strenuous" with ils implications of forceful, even heroic, exertion categorizes the desireable strength of the epic quester. But on another level, perhaps there is a play on the word "tongue" in an oblique reference lo Keals' articulation of his advice, literally the speaking out of his poem.

5.6 ❑ ODE TO AUTUMN ; CRITICAL ANALYSIS

In a crucial way, Ode on Melancholy looks forward lo Ode to Autuinm which was written on 19 September 1819. Li the former poem, Keats had deviously attempted to rob Melancholy of its string by imagining Melancholy not as a hunter bul as the hunted, not as a pursuer bul as the object of a quest In the Autumn ode he similarly seeks to lay the ghost of his dirquielilade, lo overcome his anxiety and tension at the inexorable onward drift of the tide of death and dissolution by acknowledging transience by embracing change. The poem began in Keats mind during or after a mid-September walk in the comtuyside near Winchester and his sighting of a harvested field in Aulumn. As he wrote lo his friend John Hamilton Reynolds is a letter on 21 September 1819,

How beautiful the season is now. How fine the air. A temperate shaipness about it Really, without joking, chaste weather— Dian skies I never lik'd stubble field as much as now— Aye better than the chilly green of the spring. Somehow a stubble plain looks warm— in the same way that some pictures look warm— this struck me so much in my Sunday's walk that I composed upon it.

Perhaps the clear weather ("Dian skies") and the warmth of the season ("better than the chilly green of the spring") prompted Keats meditation, for Autumn unlike the spring and early summer odes'of 1819 excudes as air of calmness. Where the earlier odes of Keats written in the same year had been full of passion and intensity, **To Autumn** is far more balanced and more objective than personal . Its core instinct is that of maturity in the sense of°Edgar's hard won wisdom is Shakerpear's **King Lear** - "ripenese is all". And so the ode denies neither the songs of spring, nor the plenitude of summer, nor the exharstion of autumn, nor the bleakness of winter, but embraces them all.   . .

It is conventional to characterize the three stanzas of die. poem a£ beving indicative of the three seasons of summer, winter, and autumn respectively, or as signalling the three phases of a single day morning, afternoon and evening. This temporal ordering is also intricately worked out in the organized body of the poem. Right at the beginning of the poem, for instance, we read of the "maturing" sun and later go on to read of warm days apparently never ceasing. These inptfcation of time-in-flow are arrested in the second stanza which effectively grass the essence of a temporal stasis in the •images of Autumn "sitting careless "and" sound asleep." In the third-stanza, time is regressed, as it were in flash back, as Keats asks "where are the songs of Spring?" But this is not all for Keats also plots out his poem in space moving from (in the first stanza) the cottage to the garden outside, to (in the second stanza) the granary, the threshing yard, and the half-reaped field of crops, to (in the third stanza) the sky above and the stubble plains below the river sallows at a distance and the hilly bpwn nearby. The entire effect is one of a palsation— of an enlargement of vision from the thatch-ever to the sky and then its constriction to a .foregrounded field of vision which includes the garden croft and the lower air where the swallows titter. And this special effect is evocative of the flow and ebb of the processes of life itself.

Critics of **To Autumn** have noted, too other complexitres in the poem. The imagery of the first stanza is evidently synaesthetic, for instance, while that in the second is primarily visual, and mainly auditory in the third. Also, fruits and flowers figure promiuantly in the first stanza human forms in the second and insects, birds and animals in the third. All these details apparently enmesh the poem is a texture of naturalism and it seens that in **To Autumn** Keats looked not to mythology as he

had done for the writing of Psyche, nor to a work of art like a **Grecian urn,** and not even to a feeling (**Indalence**) pure and simple, but to the reality of the English landscape he was so intimately familiar with. Yet to say only this would be to ignore the rich and complex intertexturality resident in the poem. In writing **To Autumn** Keats indeed chew upon Ms readings of Shakespeare (**King Lear** and Sonnet No. 12), Spenser's Mutability Cantos, Milton's II Penseroso, Thomson's Seasons (bpecially Autumn) and even Vingil's Georgies. Evidence of Keats extensive reading surfaces in echoed words and phraser the "moss'd cottage trees" and the "thatch-eves" (for instance) recur from Coleridge's **Frost'at Midnight is** which poem Coleridge writes of the"mossy apple tree "and" the aigh thatch.....whether the eve dropsfall", (11.74-5) the reaper with his hook comes from Spenser's allegorized Autumn who holds "in his hand a sickle," and loading and blessing Autumn from Shakespere's "teeming autumn big with rich increase/ Bearing the waston burttes of the prime" (Sonnet 97).

Of course **To Autumn** can be read and enjoyed even by a reader who has no access to the literary "sources" of the poem, but knowledge of these leatl one to appreciate even more deeply the craftsmanship of Keats as a poet. The echoed words, phrases and images have a greater resonance for their having been used before by other great poets. At he some time, Keats leaves his -predecessors behind in forging his own meanings and tropesout of the material of his inheritance. In Autumn particulaly, we have a fusion of poesy .and philosophy, technical skill and accomplishment embodying vision and realization to perfiction. This may be seen particularly in the way in which keats user lexical and syntactic devices. The first stanza for example, is full of infinitives ("bend", "fill", "swell", "plump") which are never given a finite verb. This evokes a sanse of ceaseless maturation of a continuing extension into the future which is also implied at the ode's end where the "lambs lond bleat", the "hedge-crickets sing", the" red-breast whistles" and the "gathering swallows titter," now of these living being are acknowleged to lie within the pale of death in the Autumn ode. Instead Keats states explicitly that it is only the "day" and the "wind" that is subject to death and as we 'all know, these natural processes are undying.

A case may be made out, as indeed it has, for the thesis that Keats' odes enact a sort of development from tlie fear of death and dissolution to a placid and 'quiet acceptance of the flow of life itself. Be that as it may, there can be no dmibt however that is six golden months of creativity in 1819, Keats was possessed by feelings and emotions, thoughts and instructs that 'moved him to create some of the most lovely and moving poetry ever writhen in the English language.

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5.8 ❑ RECOMMENDED READING

Editions :

(1) **The Poems of Johns Keats,** ed. Jack Stillinger, Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1978.

(2) **The Poems of Keats;** ed. Miriam Allott, London: Longgman, 1970.

(3) **The Letters of John Keats,** ed. Hyden E. Rollins, 2 vols, Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1958.

(4) **The Letters of John Keats,** ed. Robnt Gittings, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979.

Bioglaphies :

(1) Walter Jackson Bate, **John Keats.** Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963.

(2) Rubert Gittings, **John Keats.** London : Heinemann, 1968.

(3) Andew Motion, **Keats.** New York : Form, Strans and Giroux, 1997.

REFERENCE BOOKS CRITICAL STNDIES :

(1) John Barnard, **John Keats.** Cambridge, CUP, 1987

(2) Morris Dickstein, **Keats and his Poetry : A Study in Development.** Chicago, UCP, 1971

(3) Stuart M. Sperry, **Keats the poet.** Princeton, PUP, 1973

(4) Helen Vendler, **The Odes of John Keats,** Cambridge : CUP, 1983.

(5) Susan J. Wolf son ed. **The Cambridge Companion to Keats,** Cambridge, CUP, 2001.

(6) Bhabatosh Chatlerjee, **John Keats : His Mind and Art,** New Delhi, OUP.

5.7 ❑ SAMPLE QUESTIONS :

● A. LONG ANSWER TYPE :

1. Can you trace any consistent pattern of development is theme and thought in the major Odes of John Keats? Answer withs textual refernces.

2. " More philosophic than sensuous." How appropriate is this description of Keats' poretic accomplishment in liis great Odes?

3. The Odes of Keats express an exquisite awareness of the co-existence of joy and melancholy, of beauty and mutability." Discuss, with ilunstrative refuences:

4. Write a note on Keats craftemanship with reference to any two of his Odes.

5. Show how Keats explores the problem of transence and permanence in his odes.

● B. SHORT ANSWER TYPE :

1. What are the three figures that appear before the poem in **Ode on Indolence?** Why do you think the poet rejects them?

2. "Beauty is trnth, trnth beauty,"— that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

   Critically comment on these lines and bring out their significance in the context of the poems from which they have been takens.

Unit -6 ❑ In Memoriam ; Tennyson

Structure

IN MEMORIAM

6.1 ❑ OBJECTIVES

The objective of this material is to familiarize the students with this important literary text and to make them appreciate its rich complexity in the following terms.

6.2 ❑ INTRODUCTION :

The poem was first published in March, 1850, entitled *Fragments of an Elegy*. and distributed to a few friends. Tennyson's future wife (at that stage) suggested *In Memoriam* for its title. In the last 120 years, since its publication, *In Memoriam* has evoked varied responses in the reading and critical circles. Like any long, complicated poem, it invites reading and analysis from several points of view. It is an intensely personal, if not autobiographical work of an artist. It is a "concentrated diary of a man confessing himself," as T.S.Eliot has observed, Indeed, through *In Memoriam,* Tennyson had laid himself open to the charge of making public poetic capital out of his private, subjective grief.

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The subject of this elegy is Arthur Henry Hallam, the son of the historian Henry Hallam. Tennyson and Hallam had become friends when they met at Trinity College, Cambridge. They were both members of the 'Apostles', an undergraduate discussion group at Cambridge. Hallam was the central figure in the group. But Hallam's death put an end to all the promises that he was showing. He died in Vienna on September 15, 1833 while traveling with his father. A frequent visitor at the poet's house, Hallam had become engaged to the poet's sister, Emily Tennyson. So the death was in fact a double blow for Tennyson. Which is why, the personal element is greater in *In Memoriam* than it is in any other great English elegy. No wonder, widowed queen Victoria found this poem, next to the Bible, to be her 'comfort' after the death of the Prince Consort.

6.3 ❑ BRIEF NOTE ON AUTHOR AND TEXT :

Tennyson was bom in the rectory of Somersby, Linconshire, in 1809. His boyhood surroundings left sweet impressions on his later career. He was one of the twelve children of the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, a scholarly clergyman, and Ms wife Elizabeth Fytche. It is interesting to note that most of the children were poetically inclined and two of them showed greater promises than did Alfred. In 1828, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he became the centre of a brilliant circle of friends, chief of whom was the young Arthur Hallam.

At the "university Tennyson soon became known for Ms poetical ability. He won the Chancellor's Medal for a poem called *Timbuctoo*. Soon after winning this honour Tennyson published his *Poems Chiefly Lyrical* (1830). In 1831, Tennyson left the University without taking Ms degree. His father died a few months later. Tennyson in these years fought hard and read a lot and cultivated Ms poetic faculty. The first fruit of these endeavours appeared in 1832, in a wonderful little volume of *Poems*. But the critics were unmercifully severe. That was most unfortunate. The sorrow may be read in the exquisite little poem beginning, "Break, break, break, On thy cold grey stones, O sea!" wMch was the first published elegy for Ms friend. For nearly ten years after Hallam's death Tennyson published nothing. But though silent, he continued to write poetry, and it was in these wandering days that he began *In Memoriam.* The year 1850 was a happy one for Tennyson. The success of the poem made Tennyson a star overnight. He was appointed poet laureate, to succeed Wordsworth. He married Emily Sellwood whom he had loved for tMiteen years.

For the last forty years of Ms life, Tennyson lived in the stillness of a great peace. He died very quietly at Aldworth, with Ms family about him in the moonlight, and beside Mm a volume of Shakespeare, open at the dirge in *Cymbeline:*

> "Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
> Nor thy furious winter's rages ;
> Thou thy wordly task had done,
> Home art gone and ta'en thy wages."

The poem should be considered in the light of the poet's own words about its nature.

> "It must be remembered that this is a poem, not an actual biography. It is founded on our friendship, on the engagement of Mr. Hallam to my sister. On his sudden death at Vienna, just before the time fixed for their marriage, and on his burial at Clevdon Church. The poem concludes with the marriage of my youngest sister Cecilia. It was meant to be a kind of *Divina Commedia,* ending with happiness".

One of the most remarkable things about *In Memoriiim* was its popularity with Tennyson's contemporaries. It seemed to be such a satisfactory answer to the problems of existence, especially those raised by the struggle between religion and science, the erosion of faith in God, degeneration in both spiritual and emotional grounds and so on and so forth. One of the reasons for the poem's overwhelming success was its spiritual basis that was not at all circumscribed to any specific creed. It is a religious poem, but not specifically Christian. "It is not religious because of the quality of its faith" as T.S.Eliot saw, "but because of the quality of its doubt... (for) its doubt is a very intense experience".

6.4 ❑ CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF TEXT ;

The social atmosphere was pervaded with the spirit of science and knowledge. Thoughts on the process of 'evolution' were very much in the air. Tennyson himself was much engrossed in studying the various branches of science and also the anticipated evolutionary process. Being well-read in the field, he could not altogether dispense with the essentials of the laws of nature, the geological changes of the earth, in favour of Biblical facts accounting for the creation of earth in six days. Thus the poet says.

> "In tracts of fluenl-heat began,
> And grew to seeming-random forms,
> And seeming prey of cyclic storms,
> Till at the last arose the man; "

But what aggravates the problem is the discrepancy between the empirical fact of the mortality of life and the Christian belief in the immortality of the soul.

Moreover, Tennyson found that certain scientific facts directly challenged and almost invalidated the Christian God. Being at the same time a fine intellectual and a staunch traditionalist, Tennyson could do away with neither of them— science or religion. Despite his unfailing fidelity to religion he could not help being doubtful,

> "An inner trouble I behold,
> A spectral doubt which makes me cold,"

Doubt gives way to despair— an acute psychological problem with most of the great poets. Tennyson was in a great emotional turmoil, being extremely vulnerable at the death of his intimate friend Hallam. At this stage the poet has to undergo a traumatic experience, losing friend and faith, the two events being of course directly related. Faith in the Christian concept of immortality could only be provided Mm with the necessary solace at his friend's death,

> "Thrice blest whose loves are faithful prayers,"

Realizing how indispensable the existence of God was to Ms life, Tennyson started reviving and strengthening Ms faith in Him. It is here that Tennyson deviates from his predecessors who sought God in nature. Knowing the physical laws that guide nature he says,

> "I found Him not in world or sun.
> Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;"

His way of begetting faith was through love of God,

> "Strong son of God, immortal Love,
> Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
> By faith, and faith alone embrace,
> Believing where we cannot prove.

Proceeding beyond the spiritual ground the theme of love seems to concentrate more on the personal sphere. Hence the approach becomes much more emotional than spiritual. The personal note is carried to the extent of Ms associating, almost blasphemously, Hallam with CMist. It is through the idealized figure of Hallam that Tennyson believes he could feel the immense love that would reassure Ms faith,

> "O loved the most, when most I feel
> There is a lower and higher;
>
> ii
>
> Known and unknown, human, divine:
> Sweet human hand and lips and eye:
> Dear heavenly friend that canst not die."

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That the poet prioritizes emotion and feeling over reason and thought, is apparent when he says,

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"If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no more'
And heard an event breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep:

iv

Warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, 'I hope felt'."

This also shows the poet's ultimate negation of the Victorian sense of pessimism resting in atheism and affirming his conviction in the altruistic nature of God.

"Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill"

Of course, this is only a reluctant affirmation. More than spiritual *In Memoriam* seems to become a dispute regarding the issue of the prioritization of one of the two essentials of life—emotion and reason.

Being an educationist, Tennyson could not afford to leave the dispute unresolved. He sought to strike a balance between them. In fact Tennyson, by harmonizing emotion with reason, wanted to synchronize science with religion. Thus he says,

"That mind and soul according well
May make one music..."

Tennyson evolves a philosophical idea by associating evolution o/tlie body with die immortality of the soul, according to'him,

"A soul shall draw from out the vast
And strike his being into bounds.
And moved through life of lower phase
Result in man, he born and think."

Tennyson's philosophy seems to be a modification of the metaphysical concept of the dichotomy of body and soul. But his originality lies in presuming a race superior to mankind as a result of evolution.

> "Betwixt us and the crowning race
>
> For all we thought and loved and did,
> And hoped, and suffered is but seed
> Of what in them is flower and fruit."

In Memoriam could be considered as an autobiography tracing the spiritual journey of the poet - perhaps this is how the poet wanted it to be referred to. We cannot deny its autobiographical elements consisting of Hallam's death, their change of house and his sister's marriage. But it is difficult for us to consent to the fact that *In Memoriam* is no more than a 'spiritual' autobiography. Spirituality is the end, not the means of the poem, where the means are loaded with significance other than spiritual.

From surface analysis the poem consists of the poet's spiritual transformation from doubt and despair to hope and faith. This transformation fully appertains to the Christian concept of the regeneration of the spirit. But what becomes more important than the spiritual factor is the philosophical, emotional, and psychological upheaval through which he had to pass before giving himself up to this over-indulgence of spirituality. One remembers the famous words of T.S.Eliot where he described the 'faith' in *In Memoriam* is 'a poor tiling' whereas its 'doubt' is very 'powerful' indeed.

In no way could Tennyson's *In Memorium* be bounded within the single field of spirituality. It encompasses a whole range of the essentials of life— emotions, reasons, feelings, thoughts, loss and renewal. The poem could be approached from the psychological and religious angles. It, therefore, has a universal appeal. No doubt, *In Memoriam* is the fruit of Tennyson's seventeen years of diligence and patience, which furnishes us with a living picture of the Victorian dilemma.

2.1 □ STRUCTURE AND MEANING :

The most obvious sign of definite structure in *In Memoriam* consists in the internal chronology, and it will be well to begin "by making this clear.

Tennyson himself tells us that, the division of the made by the Christmas-tide sections (28, 78, 104,). That the first of these refers to the first Christmas after the death of his friend, Hallam, in autumn is clear in stanza 30,

> We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
> A merry song we sing with him
> Last year:

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Thus we understand the other Christmas poems that the second refers to the Christmas of the next year, and the third to that of the next again. Thus, when we have reached section 104, we are distant from the death of the friend about two years and a quarter, and there is nothing in the sections after 104, to make us think that they are supposed to cover any length of time. Accordingly, the time imagined to elapse in the poem might be set down as rather less than three years.

These results are confirmed by other facts. Between the Christmas-poems there come occasional sections indicating the progress of time by reference to the seasons and to the anniversaries of the death of the friend; and between two Christmas poems we never find a hint that more than one spring or one summer has passed, or that more than one anniversary has come round. After the third Christmas we have a spring poem (115), but after this no sign of summer or of the return of the anniversary of the friend's death.

The unmistakable uniqueness of the internal chronology can be traced in its structure. The sections start with a reference to early autumn (Sec-11). It continues up to Sec. 15. Sec. 15 corresponds to late autumn. The theme of Christmas-tide comes in the sections 28-30, 78, 104-5. Understandably it is one of the chief features of this poem. The poem repeats the death anniversary of his friend hi Sec.72, and in Sec. 99. Apart from that the seasonal circle dominates the poem's internal chronology. Sec. 38-9, 86-7 and 115-6 correspond to spring, whereas Sec. 89, 95, and 98 to summer and 107 to winter:

Composed under such circumstances, it is a wonder that *In Memoriam* has any unity. Like *Maud* (1855), it is really a series of poems, with each poem expressing a nuance in the changing grief of the poet. The form must have been influenced by sonnet sequences, which are more flexible metrically, but which Tennyson compensates for by having varying numbers of stanzas in the sections. It is written in a single metre, lines of iambic tetrameter rhyming abba. Tennyson's use of this stanza form in this poem has caused it to be known as the *"In Memoriam* stanza"

The exultant proclamation of progress towards the earthly paradise, as prescribed in the poem, results in a nearly complete fusion of Hallam with Christ, the new Hallam-Christ brand serving as the example which aspiring man is to follow and als the symbol by which and through the poet asserts his confident faith. For Christ is the symbol of God's love for mankind; Hallam is identifiable with Christ and thus is himself an embodiment of ideal love, which is immortal. Hallam, as seen, now belongs to everything and to all, he is everywhere— in air, water, sun, star, and flower. And because the poet is now fully cognized of his friend's union with the

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divine, he loses forever the sorrow born on grief and doubt. Now one can see that the apotheosis of Hallam in the poem stems from the poet's desire to prove that God is that Christianity, in spite of certain doubts which it must inevitably present to the mind of the thinking man, is the best faith to hold onto. *In Memoriam* is thus a refusal to say farewell to what one knows he/she has lost. No wonder for some critics *In Memoriam* is not 'a poem', but 'an essay on Man'.

6.6 ☐ LANGUAGE AND STYLE :

Tennyson's *In Memoriam* is a web of complexity and subtlety. Interestingly, the language, used here, is loud and clear. There is no doubt what soever as far as the diction of the poem is concerned. Tennyson lived in a complex age. New things were coming to the surface. Old prejudices were still visible. Amidst all this, a new voice was heard-sweet, lyrical and faithful. That way, Tennyson can justly be placed in the same category to which most of the modem poets belong. "The Twentieth-century poet is always conscious" as Alan Sinfield has observed, "mat any opinion may be his alone; he may well use abrupt contrasts to express his alarm, his frustration, or his sense of fragmentation in society; and he is liable to reject self conscious artifice." Thus rhetorical devices like metre, syntactical inversions and poetic diction are all questioned or abandoned. One remembers Yeats' "Why should not old men be mad? /Some have known a likely lad..." where rhyme, though not always fully, has vestige of a metre, but its diction is completely colloquial and syntax is by and large straightforward. Unusual juxtapositions convey poet's disappointment of the old aristocratic ideals. In Auden's *Musee des Beaux Arts* the same irony is placed in that casual manner. The diction and syntax are yet again those of ordinary language— almost to the point of bravado. Tennyson was the first among others who captured the subject with an unmistakable authority:

> "What hope is here for modern rhyme
> To him who turns a musing eye
> On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
> Foreshorten'd in the tract of time?"

These aspects of Tennyson's approach are not rejected, but are taken up with even greater enthusiasm by .the Symbolist and Imagist movements of the later Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries. Frank Karmode and Marshall McLuhan have already argued impressively for this continuity.

6.7 ☐ ESSENTIAL ANNOTATION

All words and expressions in the extracts are self-explansive.

6.8 ❏ CONCLUSION :

We do not mean to say that the poet is vitally concerned with the public issues of another day than ours. *In Memoriam* necessarily becomes for the modem reader merely a historical piece, a literary artifact which tells us much about the concerns of the Victorian age but little about our own. But some readers still seem surprised to discover that Tennyson's journey through the 19th century wasteland is neither unfamiliar nor as remote from the 20th century experience as they might have supposed. The poem is neither local nor ephemeral, this is universal to the best sensitive and meditative minds of any age.

6.9 ❏ QUESTIONS :

A Long Question:

(1) How far is *In Memoriam* a rhetorical construct?

[Hint: All poems are rhetorical constructs and those arising out of intense personal emotion no less so. Consider the various rhetorical devices - including structural ones— in the poem.J

B Short Question:

(1) Consider the importance of the Christmas sections.

[Hint: Christmas celebrates birth and regeneration. Also the Christmas sections effect structural discussion.]

C Objective Question:

(1) Which work on geology published in the early 1830s influenced Tennyson?

6.10 ❏ REFERENCES :

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Unit -7 ☐ The Scholar Gipsy : Arnold

Structure

7.1 Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Brief notes on author and text

7.4 Critical analysis

7.5 Structure and meaning

7.6 Language / Style

7.? Annotation

7.8 Conclusion

7.9 Questions

7.10 References

7.1 ☐ OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is to familiarize the student with the important literary text that is Arnold's poem 'The Scholar Gipsy' and to make the student appreciate both its permanent and its contemporary relevance.

7.2 ☐ INTRODUCTION

'The Scholar Gipsy' is generally believed to be the finest and the most characteristic poem of Matthew Arnold, reflecting his disappointment at the loss of simple faith, his craving for a spiritual calm and his fondness for the quiet beauties of nature. It was in Joseph GlanviH's **The Vanity of Dogmatising** (1661) that Arnold discovered the story of the young Oxford scholar who forsook Ms studies 'to joyn himself' to a company of Vagabond Gypsies' and who hoped in time to learn from them the secret of their hypnotic powers. Arnold obtained a copy of this work in 1844. But he did not bother to read it till at last the autumn of the following year. Between 1845 and 1849; Arnold decided to write a poem on the scholar gipsy.

7.3 ❑ BRIEF NOTES ON AUTHOR AND TEXT

Matthew Arnold was born to Dr. Thomas Arnold and Mary Arnold on 24 December 1822, at Laleham, on the Thames. Dr. Thomas Arnold was famous as Headmaster of Rugby School for his strict moral uprightness and liberal mindset. Matthew Arnold, his eldest son, inherited both the profound respect for the idea of the State and Board Church liberalism from him. Matthew's taste for travelling and his love of the countryside, particularly the streams and mountains, were also inherited from Ms father to a large extent as well. In spite of all this, however, the tones and personalities of the two men varied significantly.

Educated at Rugby and Oxford, Matthew Arnold was a Balliol scholar. He was opposed to the high Church Movement led by Cardinal Newmaim, though he respected die man. In 1843, has poem 'Cromwell' won him die Newdigate prize. Although Arnold passed from Oxford with a second class in the Classics, he was elected to a fellowship at Oriel.

Matthew Arnold's personality was remarkable in the Victorian Age. His father was warm, genial, optimistic, extrovert, and a little rough, in short, wholly English. About Matthew Arnold in adulthood, however, there was always something distinctly un-English. Matthew was dandyish, refined, impudent, deeply reserved, cool and unenthusiastic. He luxuriated in Parisianism, ever since his great admiration for the French actress Rachel. Under cover of this dandyism, Matthew Arnold whetted his creative and artistic skils through poetry and prose works.

Matthew Arnold was at first a teacher at Rugby and later on private secretary to Lord Landsowne, President of the Council. In 1850, he acquired the post of Inspector of Schools and gradually rose to the position of Chief Inspector. He did not take very much to the job of inspectorship, however, through he made positive contributions to it. In 1857, he was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

Arnold's chief works indued **The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems** (1879), **Empedocles** on Etna and other poems (1852), **Poems by M. Arnold** (1853) which contained 'Sohrab and Rustum', The Scholar - Gipsy', 'Requiesat', 'Memorial Verses'; **Poems of Matthew Arnold.** Second Series (1855); 'Merope' (1858), Thyrsis' (1866); **New Poems** (1867) containing 'Dover Beach', 'Rugby Chapel', 'Obermami Once More'.

In the list he made of the thirteen poems to be composed during 1849, the twelfth item was 'The first mesmerist'. Two years later, in another list, Arnold changed the name to 'the wandering Mesmerist'. The difference between the two

titles points out the direction in which the poem was developing. When the poem was published in 1853, there was 'little in it about mesmerism. Instead, the hero was conspicuously a wanderer.

Arnold's prose works include **Essays in Criticism. Culture and Anarchy Friendship's Garland,. Mixed Essays, and Literature and Dogma.**

Arnold was opposed to the view, promoted by the examples of Keats, Shelley and Tennyson and 'those damned Elizabethan poets generally' that the object of poetry was to produce 'exquisite bits and images'. In 1852, Arnold said that 'modem poetry can only subsist by its contents'. As a poet, Arnold felt the spritual loss and the collapse of traditional faith caused by the assault of Science, 'higher criticism' of the Bible, and utilitarianism. Moreover, Industrialization had dealt a death blow to the older social system. Arnold, in his poetry exhibits Classical balance and pose, despite his obviously romantic temperament.

7.4 ❑ CRITICAL ANALYSIS

4.0 The legend of the Oxford undergraduate clearly captured the poet's fancy in the age of change and spiritual upheaval in which he lived. 'Arnold's poem', says Wilson Knight, 'confronts our western tradition with suggestions of a wisdom, lore, or magic of oriental affinities or origins'. He seems to suggest that Arnold wished to glorify Oriental wisdom and to lament the Victorian way of life. That is unlikely, however, when one considers that the poet here is also the author of **Literature and Dogma** and **God and the Bible.** Arnold's stoic acceptance of reality is generally recognized. In **God and the Bible** Arnold does not hesitate to analogise the gospel miracles to the tale of Cinderella. He says in the work that however painful it may be to let go of certain beliefs; one cannot go on believing hi them merely for emotional comfort, if they are not *true.*

4.1 Perhaps it would be more fitting to say the 'The Scholar Gipsy' considers the joyful illusions of an earlier age from the point of view of the melancholy realism of the nineteenth century, and that it is in this transtemporal viewing that the chief charm of the poem is to be found.

4.2 As an offshoot of the realist in Arnold, we find in him an antithetical coexistence between disbelief in Christianity and a refusal to depend entirely on scientific empiricism. Even while regretting the loss of elements of beauty and joy of the earlier culture, he is a realist. The attitude of the poet towards the gipsy is that of an adult towards a child. The adult may envy the child's state of innocence, but knows it is foolish to wish to regain mat state because time and experience are

irreversible in real life. The earlier age did maintain a certain serene and joyful state in man, but only at the cost of intellectual awareness, the loss of which was unacceptable to the Victorian society. The legend of the scholar-gipsy is, therefore, beautiful to dream of, but impracticable in the truth of present circumstances.

4.3 Arnold wished to fuse the 'sweetness and light' of Hellenism, or knowing, with the wonderful strength of Hebraism, or doing. The figure of the scholar-gipsy is too passive and lethargic for his whole-hearted approval. The scholar-gipsy is an arresting presence everywhere he goes and in the minds of all who have seen him or think of him but ultimately he is unsubstantial. The gipsy is seen 'treating in the cool stream' his fingers, 'hanging on a gate', in "lone alehouses'. He not only does not fit into Oxford society, he does not blend in very well even amongst the inhabitants of the woods. The contrast between energy and lethargy is evident in (stanza 9) of the poem. Even the children are collecting cresses. But the scholar-gipsy turns to watch through the snow the 'line of festal light in Christ Church hall' and retreats into the mountains to find shelter in 'some 'sequestered grange'. The status of the scholar-gipsy is equated with the silent and enduring mountains and the isolated grange. The scholar-gipsy is immortal because he has *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire'. But that immortality is equated with non-existence as far as reality is concerned. The only reality of the gipsy's life is death.

4.4 In stanza 9, there is a sharp contrast between the vitality of the scythes reflecting the sum, the swallows flying over the 'glittering Thames', the 'wide fields of breezy grass' and all the immediacy of hay time on the one hand and 'the river bank o 'ergrown' where the scholar-gipsy sits alone on the other hand.

4.5 The scholar-gipsy then stands for the optimistic but illusory hopes of an earlier age. He waits for the spark from Heaven to 'fall'. But that never happens, as the nineteenth century well knows. Arnold refers to the 'strange disease of modern life' as the inevitable feature of his age. Phrases like 'divided aims', 'sick fatigue', languid doubt show that Arnold was just as much aware of the difficulties of his own age as of the earlier age. Being the realist that he is, however, Arnold must realize the greater truth of the present against the nullity of such a past as the scholar-gipsy's. When writing the poem, therefore, the poet is not merely criticizing his own age, but also exploring the spiritual and emotional losses of his age, and the readjustment that these losses call for.

4.6 The scholar-gipsy, having committed himself to the ancient art of the gipsies, is outside the bounds of Oxford. When he looks down upon the lighted city, he does so as a ghostly presence, not an omniscient power. His exclusion from

Oxford frames a question mark on the peace of mind to be found at Oxford, but it is an even stronger argument against the acceptability of the gipsy at least to the Victorian mind.

4.7 In *Culture and Anarchy*, many years after the composition of 'The Scholar-Gipsy', Arnold writes : "Religion says : *The Kingdom of God is within you,* and culture, in like manner, places, human perfection in an internal conditional." Then again, later on in the same piece he says. "Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated." The two statements, taken together, seem to suggest that there is a framework of perfection; contemplation cannot be wholly dissociated from action, as the scholar-gipsy tries to do. Contemplation without action is not enough, in short. That Arnold himself was not very satisfied with the poem is clear from this extract from a letter to his friend A. H. Clough :

I am glad you like 'The Scholar-Gipsy'— but what does it do for you? Homer *animates* — Shakespeare *animates*— in its own poor way I think 'Sohrab and Rustum' *animates* - 'The Scholar-Gipsy' at best awakens a pleasing melancholy. But this is not what we want.

Therefore Arnold allows'the gipsy to seek cover :

"Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!"

and fancies him later on still 'hanging on a gate'. Unflinchingly, Arnold proceeds to the epic simile introducing the new hero, the Tyrian trader. The similarity of the Tyrian trader to the scholar gipsy is superficial. The 'Tyrian trader' 'snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail, / And day and night held on, indignantly ... corded bales'. These are images of vigorous, even violent action, of anger. It is not through weakness and frustration but in disgust and contempt arising from knowledge and understanding that he sets sail. His angry desertion of the land of his ancestors implies an involvement with, not a relinquishing of, the problems of his time. The 'merry Grecian coaster' is certainly attractive with its 'amber grapes', 'Chian wine', 'green, bursting fig', and 'tunnies steeped in brine', but also stands for a certain over-indulgence which is also the weakness of the scholar-gipsy, even if the indulgences are of different kinds. It is the Grecian coaster which is more akin to the scholar-gipsy in that they are both Hellenistic. The Tyrian trader may be seen one kind of fusion of the Hellenistic and the Hebraistic. He had both the powerful drive for struggle and action which is the mark of Hebraism as well as the solitariness indicative of contemplation which is a mark of Hellenism. The 'dark Iberians' may be interpreted as the gypsies.

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4.8 Arnold sees the past in all its tempting beauty and innocent hopefulness but knows also that it is a fragile dream which would not be able to with stand the harsh glare of reality as perceived by himself and his age.

4.9 Arnold is, in essence, a Victorian. Like the scholar-gipsy, the poet too seeks an escape in retreating to a bower at the beginning of the poem, but the escape is in the manner of a temporary diversion. Arnold, though not as well acknowledged a poet during his lifetime as Browning and Tennyson, reflected the troubled mind of the Victorian era more effectively than them.

7.5 ❑ STRUCTURE AND MEANING

5.0 The structure-of the poem is quite unified. Stanzas 1-3 are addressed to an Oxfordshire shepherd (probably his friend Clough) to join him in Ms quest for the scholar-gipsy who is pictured as an eternally silent waiting recluse for knowledge and intuition. Stanzas 15-23 contrast the simple faith and single-minded course of the scholar-gipsy with the tortured doubts and 'divided aims' of mid-nineteenth century. The poem ends with the epicisimile in stanzas 24-25 where Arnold interprets the true path for modern intellectuals. Just as the ancient Phoenicians let the intruding Greeks seize commercial power in the Eastern Mediterranean and voyaged on to the West, the modem intelligent man should eschew the confusion of social and business triviality and discover new grounds in thought and creativity in peace of mind. Though it is valid as an interpretation, it does not work as an epicsimile, apart from adding a certain grandeur to the poem. This is not the only poem of Arnold to end with such a coda. The device was a favourite with him. 'Tristam and Iseult,' 'Sohrab and,Rustum' and stanzas from the 'Grande Chartreuse' all end in this fashion. His intension was evidently to round off the longer poems with a digression that would draw the mind off the melancholy main theme and simultaneously redirect the attention to the main theme by presenting a symbolic equivalent of it.

5.1 The iambic metrical structure is reminiscent of Keats' great odes. The poem has a dreamlike quality in the direct tradition of Keats' odes. The influence of Keats is not surprising since he presided over the nineteenth century dreamworld. The landscape descriptions are Keatsian as well.

7.6 ❑ LANGUAGE / STYLE

6.0 The poem is generally termed as 'pastoral elegy'. But how far it is justified to call it an elegy is a matter of contention. Arnold is not really lamenting the death of a poet or a shepherd who was known to him. The figure of the scholar-gipsy is

pretty ancient. Secondly, the poet is not lamenting the death of the scholar. He knows the scholar-gipsy would melt away as it were, at the icy touch of Victorian realism.

6.1 As a pastoral, it follows the conventions of the classical pastoral poems of Theocritus, Bion and Moschus. G.C. Macaulay has remarked - "To those who object to the artificiality of pastoral poetry it *may* be replied that in 'The Scholar Gipsy' there is little or nothing of this fault." Throughout its history, the pastoral setting has been a transparent allegory for the life and characters contemporary to the poet. The scenes, described in this poem, however, are real scenes graphically described without much idealization. The purpose of the poem is not celebration of the shepherd's life. It seems that Arnold chose this form because it gave him a suitable framework for the depiction of scenery close to his heart. Moreover, the poem departs from convention by introducing the theme of the problems of Victorian Age, The style hasa classical dignity, gracefulness and polish. As a pastoral, therefore, the poem is original and refreshing.

7.7 ❏ ANNOTATION

7.0 "Preferment's door" (stanza 3, line 35) : When Arnold talks of the scholar being 'tired of knocking at preferment's door', he is of course strongly echoing the famous Hues from Dr. Samuel Johnson's poem The Vanity of Human Wishes' :

> 'Unnumbered suppliants crowd preferment's gate
> A thirst for fame and burning to be great.
> Delusive fortune hears th'incessant call,
> They rise, they shine, evaporate and fall.'

7.8 ❏ CONCLUSION

8.0 R. H. Hutton, in a Victorian review on Matthew Arnold's themes, has remarked that 'in all his poetical success, it is easy to distinguish two strands : first, the clear recognition (with Goethe) of our spiritual unrest, and the manful effort to control it; next, the clear recognition (with Wordsworth) of the balm to be found in sincere commission with Nature.' This observation is relevant, especially in the context of 'The Scholar-Gipsy'. Stanza 19 is evidence of this double awareness. The urgency of the present and the immediacy of its problems is recognized in 'this strange disease of modern life'. Simultaneously, there is a wistfulness about 'days when wits were fresh and clear'. At the same time, however, there is undesirability in 'sick hurry', 'divided anus' and unreality and escapism in the 'bowering wood' where the gipsy is bidden *to* seek shelter. What is obviously desired is a judicious

measure of both - the fusion of Hellenism and Hebraism that has been talked of earlier.

8.1 We may conclude with A.E. Dyson who feels "The gipsy, like child, is the embodiment of a good lost, not of a good temporarily or .... Partly mislaid." The predominant impact is of an exploration of the spiritual and emotional losses and an adjustment with his existence in an age which has

> "... neither joy, nor love, nor light
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain."

Thus The Scholar Gipsy' elucidates the Arnoldian dictum 'Poetry, at bottom, is the criticism of life."

7.9 ☐ QUESTIONS

9.0. A : Long Question:

(1) How far would it be appropriate to call "The Scholar Gipsy' a poem of retreat or escape?

(Hint: Consider Arnold's philosophy in public and personal life as asserted in prose works like Culture and Anarchy, together with Arnold's understanding of the shortcomings of the Victorian Age as apparent from the latter part of the poem. Consider also the symbolism of the figure of the Tyrian trader).

B : Short Question :

(1) How effective is the figure of the Tyrian trader as an epicsimile?

(Hint: Consider the juxtaposition of aggression and seclusion in the figure and its relationship to the scholar-gipsy).

C : Objective Question :

(1) What source is the myth of the poem based on ?

7.10 ☐ REFERENCES:

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Unit -8 ❑ Text of Andrea Del Sarto : Robert Browning

Structure

ROBERT BROWNING

ANDREA DEL SARTO

(CALLED 'THE FAULTLESS PAINTER')

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,

Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow. Love! I
often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if— forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window with your hand in mine
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she curls inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither: you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! Keep looking so —
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!
— How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put a pearl there! oh, so sweet —
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, no less.
You smile? why, there's my picture readymade,
There's what we painters call our harmony!
A common greyness silvers everything,—
All hi a twilight, you and I alike
—You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know), — but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.

There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
The length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;

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The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
The autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh, the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was bora to he and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now, looks the life he makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he lay the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your head —
All that's behind us! You don't understand
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak:
And that cartoon, die second from the door
—It is the thing, Love! So such things should be—
Behold Madonna! -I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep -
Do easily, too - when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of, all their lives,
—Dream? Strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive — you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little tiling like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—
Yet do much less, so much less. Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter)-so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There bums a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt

This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of
mine.
Their works drop ground-ward, but themselves, I
know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there soon enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word—
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well-ordered; what of that'?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-grey
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain,
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
'Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!' No
doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art—for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put — and there again—
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right — that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch—

Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoyed them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you — oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged
God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Angelo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God over-rules.
Beside, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife has Rafael, or has Angelo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too, the
      power—
And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
that I am something underrated here,
poor tills long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis, that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look,—

One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those heart's,—
And, best of all, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward
A good tune, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless ... but I know—
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not grey,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was — to reach and stay there; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hand's frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
'Rafael did this, Andrea painted mat;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife—'
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Angelo, his very self,
To Rafael ... I have known it all these years ...
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it
'Friend, there's a certain sony little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute

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As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!'
To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare ... yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line should
go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
What he? why, who but Michel Angelo?
(Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost,—
Is, whether you're, — not grateful — but more
pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare ... yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line should go!
Ay, but the soul! He's Rafael! Rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
What he? why, who but Michel Angelo?
(Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost, —
Is, whether you're — not grateful — but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now: there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owl's speak the name we call them by.
Come from the window, love, — come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick

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Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,
That gold of his I did cement with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you — you, and not with me? those loans?
More gaining debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit.

ROBERT BROWNING

'CHILD ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME'

(See Edgar's song in Lear)

I

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of Ms lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee, that nursed and scored
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

II

What else should he be set for, with his staff?
What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travellers who might find him posted there,
And ask the road? I guessed what skull-like laugh
Would break, what crutch 'gin write my epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

III

If at his counsel I should turn aside
Into that ominous tract which, all agree
Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquiescingly
I did turn as he pointed : neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
So much as gladness that some end might be.

IV

For, what with my whole world-wide wandering,
What with my search drawn out thro' years, my hope
Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
With that obstreperous joy success would bring,
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
My heart made, finding failure in its scope.

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V

As when a sick man very near to death
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and end
The tears and takes the farewell of each friend,
And hears one bid the other go, draw breath
Freelier outside ('since all is o'er', he saith,
'And the blow fallen no grieving can amend;')

VI

While some discuss if near the other graves
Be room enough for this, and when a day
Suits best for carrying the coipse away,
With care about the banners, scarves and staves:
And still the man hears all, and only craves
He may not shame such tender love and stay.

VII

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been writ
So many times among 'The Band' — to wit,
The knights who to the Dark Tower's search addressed
Their steps - that just to fail as they, seemed best,
And all the doubt was now — should I be fit?

VIII

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hatefu cripple, out of his highway
Into the path he pointed. All the day
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.

IX

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two,
Than, pausing to throw backward a last view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; grey plain all round:
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on; nought else remained to do.

X

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing throve:
For flowers - as well expect a cedar grove!
But cockle, spurge, according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think; a burr had been a treasure-trove.

XI

No! penury, inertness and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's portion. 'See
Or shut your eyes,' said Nature peevishly,
'It nothing skills: I cannot help my case:
Tis the Last Judgement's fire must cure this place,
Calcine its clods and set my prisoners free'.

XII

If there pushed any ragged tliistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped; the bents
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents
In the dock's harsh swarth leaves, bmised as to baulk
All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must walk
Pushing their life out, with a brute's intents.

XIII

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there;
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

XIV

Alive? he might be dead for aught I know,
With that red gaunt and colloped neck a-strain,
And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

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XV

I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart:
As a man calls for wine before he fights,
I asked one drought of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fifty I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards — the soldier's art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

XVI

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's disgrace!
Out went my heart's new fire and left it cold.

XVII

Giles then, the soul of honour — there he stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he durst.
Good — but the scene shifts — faugh! What hangman hands
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own hands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and curst!

XVIII

Better this present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path again!
No sound, no sight as far as eye could strain.
Will the night send a howler or a bat?
I asked: when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train.

XIX

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes.
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms;
This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof— to see the wrath
Of its black eddy bespate with flakes and spumes.

XX

So petty yet so spiteful! All along,
Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
Drenched willows flung them headlong in a fit
Of mute despair, a suicidal throng :
The river which had done them all the wrong,
Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no whit.

XXI

Which, while I forded, — good saints, how I feared
To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
For hollows, tangled hi his hair or beard!
—It may have been a water-rat I speared,
But, ugh! It sounded like a baby' shriek.

XXII

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
Now for a better country. Vain presage!
Who were the strugglers, what war did they wage,
Whose savage trample thus could pad the dank
Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned tank,
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage—

XXIII

The fight must so have seemed in that fell cirque.
What penned diem there, with all the plain to choose?
No foot-print leading to that horrid mews,
None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the Turk
Pits for his pastime, Christians against Jews.

XXIV

And more than dial — a furlong on — why, there!
What bad use was that engine for, that wheel,
Or brake, not wheel — mat harrow fit to reel
Men's bodies out like silk? With all the air
Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware,
Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of steel.

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XXV

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a wood,
Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere earth
Desperate and done with; (so a fool finds mirth,
Makes a tiling and then mars it, till his mood
Changes and off he goes!) within a rood
Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark black dearth.

XXVI

Now blotches rankling, coloured gay and grim,
Now patches where some leanness of the soil's
Broke into moss or substances like boils;
Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in Mm
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
Gaping at death, and dies while it recoils.

XXVII

And just as far as ever from the end!
Nought in the distance but the evening, nought
To point my footstep farther! At the thought,
A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom-friend,
Sailed past, nor beat Ms wide wing dragon-penned
That brushed my cap — perchance the guide I sought.

XXVIII

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
'spite of the dusk, the plain had given place
All round to mountains — with such name to grace
Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen in view.
How thus they had surprised me, — solve it, you!
How to get from them was no clearer case.

XXIX

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
Of mischief happened to me, God knows when —
In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, then,
Progress tliis way. When, in the very nick
Of giving up, one time more, came a click
As when a trap shuts — you're inside the den!

XXX

Burningly it came on me all at once,
This was the place! Those two hills on the right,
Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn in fight;
While to the left, a tall scalped mountain... Dunce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the sight!

XXXI

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
The round squat turret, blind as the fool's heart,
Built of brown stone, without a counterpart
In the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

XXXII

Not see? because of night perhaps? — why, day
Came back again for that! before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,
Chin upon hand to see the game at bay,—
'Now stab and end the creature — to the heft !'

XXXIII

Not hear? When noise was everywhere! It tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears
Of all the lost adventures my peers,—
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of years.

XXXIV

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! In a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew, *'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Come'*.

8.3 ☐ ROBET BROWNIG: TWO POEMS

8.3.1 OBJECTIVES

After you have studied this part or unit you will be in a position to think and write on Browning's poetic art as evident from these two mature and representative poems of Robert Browning. And these two poems are **Andrea del Sarto** and **Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.** Your study of these would enable you to comment on selected excerpts from these two poems.

8.3.2 INTRODUCING BROWNING'S LIFE AND WORK: A BRIEFOVER-VIEW

Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning were two great and kindred spirits or souls.

Robert Browning (1812-84) was privately educated. His first poem, **Pauline,** appeared in 1833. **Paracelsus,** which attracted the friendly notice of Carlyle, Wordsworth and other men of letters, appeared in 1835. He next published Stafford, a tragedy, which was played at Covent Garden in 1837. **Sordello** followed in 1840. In 1842, he published **Dramatic Lyrics.** In 1845 **Dramatic Romances,** as iii and vii of the series of **Bell and Pomegranates.** In 1846, he married Elizabeth Barrett and lived with her mainly in Italy, at Pisa, Florence and Rome, until her death in 1861, after which Browning settled in London, hi 1855, the published **Men and Women,** (the two poems in our discussion are part of it) — and in 1868-69, appeared the long poem, **The Ring and the Book.** His last volume of poems, **Asolando** was published on the day of his death.

When Browning was twenty, his reading of Shelley had determined his ambition — to be a poet and nothing but a poet. Throughout his life he cherished this or did not abandon the adolescent ambition to be a 'seer-poet', a Vates. He dedicated his life to achieve this inordinate desire- to rise to the occasion. From the early days of **Pauline,** when he praised Shelley as a 'Sun-treader'. It is by no means accidental that Andrea del Sarto, the frustrated artist, is the most sensitively and poignantly realized of all Browning's characters.

For a major part of their lives, the Browning's lived in Italy, that is outside England and their poetry seems to be partially aloof from the mainstream of Victorian poetry. To some extent, they stood apart and reacted rather nostalgically in their poems:**Home thoughts from abroad** (the Gk. Word nostos means 'home'). Browning knew his Italy, specially the Italian Renaissance through the eyes of painting,

reading the **Lives of the Italian Artists** (by Vasari); his interest, unlike that of Mrs Browning, lay in the past. His **Andrea del Sarto** is a remarkable instance of this lively interest in men and manners. He was basically a chronicler of life. After **reading** these two remarkable and representative poems, you would have a workable knowledge of his mind and art. These two poems belong to **Men and Women** (1855), an anthology dedicated to Elizabeth Barrett Browning: "Fifty men and women I dedicate to you", (One Word More).

8.3.3 INTRODUCING THE TEXT AND THE SOURCE OF THE TWO POEMS FROM 'MEN AND WOMEN¹ (1855)

These two poems under discussion were first published in Men and Women. They were written in the the early fifties of the nineteenth century. They tend to give us an idea of Browning's mature art at their best. He gives a sympathetic portrait of a second-rate artist with a lofty ideal for perfection. He did not include the great masters. Ivis a fascinating study of failure in the life of an aspiring artist in Andrea del Sarto. Childe Roland takes us to the world of 'dream' and 'fantasy'- of ronfance and perhaps fairy-tale like adventure, with enough sense of uneven surface of everyday life. Andrea's pictures are silver-grey and to Browning, it is no accident; he also believed that only craftsmanship is not enough. 'Out, out of me', cries the faultless painter, remembering the great works of other great masters like Rafael and Michael Angelo. He is aware of the sublime ideal. Without it he knew that he will sink into oblivion:

'Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for !'

Andrea admits that a placid and apparently accomplished art may be a sign of an end too easily achieved. He asserts that beauty must have a mind behind it before it can inspire true art,

8.3.4 BACKGROUND OF THE POEM

Giorgio Vasari, the author of **The lives of Italian Architects, the Painters and Sculptors** claimed that he learnt his art from Andrea del Sarto after his departure from Rome. Clyde de vane comments that here Browning makes a steady and confident use of it . We have already mentioned that Vasari was Andrea's pupil in painting, and his words therefore have 'double-weight'. It is suggested that Browning also consulted Filippo Baldinucci's **Notizie**. He finds that Lucrezia del Fede, the painter's wife, in the first edition of Vasari, is much more 'darkly painted' than in later editions.

8.3.5 ONTHETEXT: BROWNING'S VERSIONINTHE POEM: ANDREA DELSARTO

Baldinucci directed and modified Browning's original conception of Andrea, he gives 'an emphasis to Andrea's story, which tempers' the idea of the Victorian poet.

Let us talk about Browning's presentation of Andrea, following the eminent critic of the poet, Clyede de vane 1*:

Browning imagines on the evening when he (Andrea) conceived the picture of himself and his wife which hangs in the Sala di Giove of the Pitti Palace. It is indeed the autumn of Andrea's life. The account from Vasari is too detailed to be referred, but in all essentials, the facts are as Browning gives them. He was born in 1486; in time, he was apprenticed to a goldsmith, and afterwards to several painters. He first won fame and the title of "Il Pittore senza Errori" a faultless painter by his work of a hat-maker, who served as model for many of his pictures; notably for his Madonna del Sacco, his masterpiece. Yet from the day of his. marriage, Andrea's fortunes were doomed. Concerning Andrea, Michael Angelo said to Rafael,'There is a little man in Florence who if he were employed upon such great works as have been given to you, would make you sweat' 2*. In the poem there is a 'runing comparison' of Andrea with great artists, Leonardo, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

In 1518, Andrea went by invitation to the court of Francis I, king of France, he was summoned to Fontainebleau, which he helped to decorate for his new patron. The urgent appeals of his wife, however, brought him back to Florence, entrusted with money for the purchase of works of art for the king Francis. He was persuaded by Lucrezia to spend the money upon a house for himself and on lavish hospitality. In spite of this disgrace, his 'rare accomplishments' gained for him many commissions and he continued to paint; deserted by his wife and servents during his last illness. He died of the plague on January 22, 1531.

Robert Browning in the poem **Andrea** uses the words of Michael Angelo in a slightly modified way. Vasari's delineation of Andrea's wife, Lucrezia, is drawn from his personal knowledge. Vasari says:

At that time there was a most beautiful girl in the Via di SanGallo, who was married to a cap-maker and who,though born of a poor and vicious father, carried about her as much as pride and haughtiness as beauty and fascination 3*.

About Andrea, the opening words of Vasari's life of Andrea sets the tone and temper of his character and work, (he refers to him as 'truly excellent Andrea del Sarto' in whom 'art and nature combined to show all that may be done in painting').

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Had this master possessed **a somewhat bolder and more elevated mind**...he would beyond all doubt, have been without a equal. His figures are nevertheless well drawn, they are entirely free from errors and perfect in their proportions '...nay, it is truly divine' 4*.

In Browning's poem Andrea is the infatuated husband. He is the unfortunate painter who for his certain 'timidity of mind' and 'want of force' in his nature of 'spiritless temperament' is responsible for his moral and artistic failures.

As Browning represents the painter, Andrea seeks no liberation from these. The sense of pallid, fading beauty of twilight in an autumn evening in Florence, synchronizes with the 'wistful fatalistic' temperament of the man. His pictures lack the soul element (Pater's term used in **Appreciations** in the essay on 'Style'), in them. There is no hint of passionate energy or driving force, (this was also noticed by Vasari, in Ms introduction to the painter's character). His moral and artistic degradation is caused by his wife's influence and his voluntary enslavement to Lucrezia is 'uniformly disastrous' (Young). Browning is successful in working a sense of pity for the faultless painter. Vasari writes in this connection: 'but although Andrea lived in the midst of all that torment, he yet accounted it a high pleasure'.

A spiritual defence of Andrea's nature and art has been made by later critics and scholars who find in him, (with his great craftsmanship and harmonizing skill in colour), a most charming and pleasing painter. And we know for certain that Vasari supplied the raw materials from which Browning reworked his 'Andrea'. And by common consensus **Andrea del Sarto** is one of the greatest monologues Browning ever wrote. And this is no sweeping generalization unsupported by facts.

Browning's **Old Pictures in Florence** gives evidence of the poet's minute acquaintance with the galleries, his discerning eye for idiosyncrasy in technique and inspiration. His **Fra Lippo Lippi** is another study, which reveals his interest in painting and painters. **Pictor Ignotus** yet another example. In these poems, Browning entered into the artist's point of view, showing how the artist feels like and how he works with his medium and material. His painters are always second rate or rather obscure like 'Pictor Ignotus'. None has attained supreme stage of attainment. He is always tolerant and sympathetic to the artist's sense of imperfection. It is part of his creed that is voiced in Andrea's words:

> Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
> Or, what's heaven for? All is silver-grey
> Placid and perfect with my art — the worse!

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Andrea, in this monologue, is speaking to his beautiful wife, Lucrezia. He is prepared to give all the money he earns to her. Her love for him is the greatest encouragement to produce great works of art. Both of them make a remarkable pair and he is going to paint the finest picture depicting their love. Her face has an enchanting quality which attracts everyone. This is the autumn of Ms life, but in her company and under her inspiration, he is going to produce his **magnum opus** now. Everyone, he believes, is under the control of god, though everyone seems outwardly to be free. Lucrezia is ignorant about art, Andrea is not affected or moved either by praise or blame of the people; he believes that man should strive to reach beyond his capacity, because heaven is the highest goal that one can reach:

<div align="center">

All is as God over-rules

Beside, incentives come from the soul's self

The rest avail not.

</div>

If he is not rewarded in this world, he will be richly compensated in the world beyond. He is wedded to truth, he does not care for criticism or condemnation. He is ready to sacrifice: 'All for love of Lucrezia'; earlier great painters like Raphael, Leonardo and Agnolo were alone, but Andrea is blessed with the love of Lucrezia. Browning is true to history. Andrea's wife is his muse, and her face appears in painting after painting; it is a beautiful face and the beauty is perhaps too 'accessible' to the artist. Andrea dreams of a great picture of 'the Virgin's face'; but ironically enough, he is enmeshed and trapped in the fetters of his own world — and he has to accept his prison:

<div align="center">

I am grown peaceful as old age tonight,

I regret little, I would change still less.

</div>

<div align="right">

(II 244-45)

</div>

ANALYSIS

Andrea opens on a note of reconciliation. He had presumably declined to work for his wifes "friends friend" but now his resolve breaks down and he comes before her averted face resignedly submiting to her every whim. It is Andrea who makes the overtime to peace and the unconditional acceptance of her desires. Lucrezia is the stronger personality; she condescends to glance at him when her wishes we fulfilled. Andrea desises that they sit hand in hand by the window, but the words are phrased with alter humiliation. The tone is pleading, earnest and pathetically entreating. His love for lucrezia emerges as nothing but a slairsh and blind devotion; he loves her despite her faults her coldness and her mercenary motives. In his imaginings Andrea envisages himself as the symbol of manliness where her feminene nature solicits protection.

Andrea realizes that Ms life is unhappy while his work is perfect, too prefect, foultily foultless. Browning penetrates deep into the psychology of faiure and the nature of happiness. He is fascinated by lucrezta's beauty — "My serpentining beauty, round on rounds." Lucrezia is not only reminiscent of the serpent who led to the Foil of Man; she is also the embodiment of the moon, whom she resembles in her incoustancy :

> My face, my moon, my everybody's moon .

There is irony in the very perfection of her beauty : Her 'perfect brows 'perfect eyes' and more than 'perfect mouth' are unfortunately uniformed by soul. This has made him a 'perfect' but soulless paints. Andrea thinks in colour, and in lines 35 - 40 he sees his own life in the most subdred of colour:

> A common greynes silvers everything,
> All in a twilight, you and I alike.

The same colour cheracteizes Andreas painting and symbolises its limitations ; "All is silver grey." Andrea lacks the elevation of soul that wonld enable him to aspise greatly. The fact that Lucrezia remanis 'very dear', is due not to magnanimity but to xoriousness. The dull shades with which his own life and art are equated are contrasted with the other painters' works. He feels that although he is the more perfect artist "there burns a fruer light of god in them". The idea of 'soul', 'heaven' and 'light' recers constantly. He grows wistful at the remembrance of king Francis's friendship and trust in him. He hints at Ms grievance against Lucrezia "Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul" "I night have done it for you". With remarkable frankness he confesses "And thus we half-men stsuggle." He remembers Ms golden days at Fortainellean. Called home urgently by Lucrezia, Andrea returns from France. The four walls of Ms house seem to have a claustrophosic effect upon Mm. Later he emriages them as illuminated with Francis's gold. The pooerty of Andrea's cMldhood has made a deep impression upon Ms mind. TMs is brought out in Ms constant allusions to money and payment. He begins the poem with a reference to paying Lucrezials 'cousin' and towards the end of the poem her smiles pay for her cousin's gaming debets. The diction towards the end of the poem reveals Andrea's consciousness of Ms being a half-man. His debility is more acute now :

> I am grown peaceful as old age tonight ....

Finally he meckly to the cousin's wMstle. It seems no woman ruined his soul, he had no soul to ruin.

DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

A dramalic monologue is a type of poem that was perfected by Browning. In its most representative form, as represented in many poems of Browning, the dramatic monologue has the following features : i) A single person who is patently not the poet utter the entire poem in a specific situation at a critical moment 2) this person usually addersses and interacts with one or more people. But we know of the auditor's presence and what he soys and does only from clues in the discourse of the single speaker. 3) The main principle controlling the poets choice and orgarization of what the speaker says is to reveal to the reader, in a way that enhances its intserest, the speaker's temperment and character. A structurally perfect dramatic monologue like **My Last Duchess** or **The Bishop Ordiss his Tomb at St Praxed's** has all the above features.

In Andea del Sarts Lucrezia's presnce in the room, the turn of her head the brings her face but not her hert, the careless sweep of her gown against wet paint, her indiffsence to Andea's reputation are suggested tactfully; but her interactions are not as clear as in other poems of Browning. In a sense Andrea speaks more to himself than directly to Lucrezia; and although we never forget that she is with him, we feel that she too is overhearing. The poem belongs somewhere between dramatic monologue and internal monologue. Andrea is not reasoning, he is reminiscing, justifying, excusing and accepting, lack of Structural formality often creates an impression of a lyric poem rather than a dramatic poem.

8.3.6 ESSENTIAL ANNOTATION

1. But do not let us quarrel anymore — dramatically effective abrupt beginning.

2. My Lucrezia — Lucrezia de Fede, the wife of a hatmaker in Browning's poem, she is beautiful but soulless and sensual. Vasari wrote about this woman's infidelity rather indirectly.

15. Fiesole - A small town near Florence, situated on a hill-top.

26. Serpentining— In his primitive garden he finds Eve. She is at once his virgin and Eve.

30. which everbody looks on, 'which' here stands for the moon; Lucrezia is like the mo'on — beautiful, visible to all but she is rather cold to the individual admirer.

34. harmony — a fitting together of parts as to form a connected whole.

49. we are in God's hand — a sense of surrender to the will of God. Andrea's weak fatalism.

59. Madonna — Virgin Mary

65. The Legate's talk — praise of some dignitary of the church or state.

78. Less is more — cryptic, epigrammatic expression, typical of Browning in its faith and conviction.

79. Light of God — inspiration

82. Sudden blood — it refers to passion; temperamental overflow of feeling; enthusiastic approach to life and art. 'Of these men' refers to other painters like Davinci, Michael Angelo and Raphael.

93. Morello — a spur, seven miles distant from Florence, on the northern side. for?' 'On earth a broken arc, in heaven a perfect round'..similar ideas are to be found in *Rabbi Ben Ezra and A Grammarian's Funeral.*

136. Angelo — Michael Angelo, the great Italian painter and sculptor. Referred to more than once in the poem.

150. Fontainebleau — the scene of King Francis' Court. Great painters like Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto were employed in its decoration.

170. Grange — a large farm house and its out buildings

210. Cueowls — an Italian owl named for its cry

220. Cousin — here, it means 'a lover' Euphemism

250. Scudi — Five shilling price.

Ruff — a frill worn around the neck.

8.3.7 QUESTIONS :

1. Discuss the view that the form of the dramatic monologue is nowhere more brilliantly utilized by Browning than in **Andrea del sarto.**

2. How does Browning represent Vasari's Andrea del Sarto with his fears, hopes, aspirations and frustrations or humiliations and sense of disgrace?

3. '**Andrea del Sarto** is important for the discussion of art and all that it contains'— Discuss.

4. Browning's poem seeks to explain why Andrea, one of the gifted painters of the Renaissance, never attained the level of a Raphael or a Michael Angelo. Discuss.

5. In Brwning's study, Lucrezia is indifferent to Andrea except as a source of money. On the other hand, Andrea's work is technically perfect without an animating soul. How far is this view correct?

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8. (a) Notes

1* W.T Young (ed.) *Browning's Poems* (1929), p.240

1* Clyde de Vane — *A Browning Handbook* (1955)

2* Vasari, *ed.* and translated by Blashfield and Hopkins, New York, 1896, III.p.234

3* Idem III, 251-2, quoted in C. de Vane's *A Browning Handbook.*

4* Vasari, *Lives,* p. 234.

8.(b) Recommended Reading :

1. PMLA 62 (1947) "The Dramatic Monologue" by Ina Beth Sessions

2. B. W. Fuson, **Browning and his Predecessor in the Dramatic Monologue**

3. B. Melcliiori. **The Poetry of Reticence**

4. Roma king, **The Bow and the Lyre**

5. P. Honan, **Browning's Charactes**

"CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME"

To some, (Ms long lyric is a vivid vision, to others this is a late legacy of the chivalric romance. The minimal source of the poem's title is from Edgar's song in *King Lear* (HI,iv, 193); in that sense it is a fantastic expression and expansion of the single line in the play. It is also a romance but with a difference— without any glowing ideal or a 'fantasy'; i.e. connecting *Childe Roland* with the operations of a dream mind. Still it is strewn with many problems and psychological complexity. Browning synthesized (rather unconsciously) it collecting from different sources and psychological associations of early reading or childhood memories. Thus the fusion of diverse elements in his mind was mysterious and poetic. No amount of scholarship could dissociate these without oversimplifying the case in point. The threads of association are too intricate to be disentangled. It existed in Browning's mind prior to the creation of the poem itself — for the link is rather subconscious— the two layers of motif and meaning interact and enrich each other, leaving little scope for the analytical critic. It is based on Browning's 'deepest romances' and represent a 'vivid dream, a fantasy that might be called a nightmare and possibly a reminiscence.]*

3. THE TEXT OF THE POEM

As suggested earlier, the minimal source of the title of the poem is from Edgar's song in *King Lear* (III, iv, 193) consisting of thirty-four stanzas of six iambic pentameter lines each. The poem was first published in the volume called *Men and Women*. (It consisted of two sixty-six lines of blank verse). Since the first publication in 1855, a few word hi the text have been changed; accordingly there have been quite a few changes in the punctuation and the present line 96 has been added later. In 1863, the poem was also included in the **Dramatic Romances**

The stazaic form of the poem is rather unusual. It is abba ba; it begins with a pentameter line, but two lines are tagged 'a' matching with 'a' and 'b' rhymes. The end is curious in its effect, whereby one is impelled to turn back and then to advance. Te strange hesitancy is strictly in keeping with the meaning of the poem.

4. THE OCCASION OF THE POEM

According to the version supplied by the poet, *Childe Roland* was written on January 2, 1852. At that Browning resolved that he would write one poem a day the day before. The three poems were written consecutively — *Women and Roses* was

written the day before. *Love among the Ruins* was written the day after. These three poems, based on his deepest resources; the last one apparently seems to be a dream, a fantasy that might have been a nightmare (had it not ended successfully) a kind feminineness of experiences shared and stored in his mind in a fluid or finite state. This is also corroborated by De Vane, the writer of *A Browning Handbook* (pp. 228-229).

5. THE MEANING OF THE POEM

Browing attached no fixed meaning or suggested hardly any convicing opinion about this long lyric. He gave no clue whether it would serve any moral or allegorical pattern worth mentioning. Broadly speaking, it is aparently the result of a creative response to Edgar's designed 'irrelevancy'. From time to time, some intrepid critics imply that there might he some hidden meaning or lesson in it. Nettleship thought that the poem is an allegory of man's life. The journey to the Tower has its figurative equivalent, including the 'stiff blind horse'—an image of what he may come to 2*

Like Duffin many critics have considered *Childe Roland* a 'Lyric vision', the working's of a poet's mind ; but it has entered the poet's imagination and 'initiated a process of intense feeling', which later transformed into both thought and lyrical verse. It is as mysterious as Galahad's vision in Tennyson's poem. In a way, it may also be taken as a kind of Browning's instinctive reply to the 'Grail', but Browning's approach is different, it is something to be done, of evil to be sought out, attacked and conquered. And the poem also suggests that the Tower is evil itself. One ccritic also compared *Childe Roland* with Tennyson's *Vision of Sin*.

The poem *Childe* came upon Browning, as a kind of dream; Browning told Mrs. Bloomsfield that the poem was only 'a fantasy'. Now these two words 'dream' and 'fantasy' as variously suggested by the poet himself, indicate the plausibility of a meaning pattern. Another critic suggested that the meaning could be expressed in the line : .

'He that endureth to the end shall he saved' 3*

To this Browning's succinct answer was," Yes, just about that" 4*.^ Thus some critics attempted to suggest an allegorical meaning to *Childe Roland.* This dream poet explores 'the innermost pattern of his mind'. Childe Roland moves resolutely and courageously toward an unknown goal, has the recurrent theme of many of his poems, like 'How they brought the Good News' or 'Epilogue to Asolando' or 'Trospice'. In this connection, we should also note the nightmarish, 'the macabre and the brutal imagery', which points to the other side of the poet's psyche. Childe's search and quest is to deliver mankind and to conquer the evil of the Dark Tower.

Mrs. Orr observes that Browning was reluctant to explain what the dream signified here and hence it would be unwise to accept the poet's avowed intention (viz, to read it as a poem). It is at best a record of the introspection of a mid Victorian poet in the middle of his carrer. The knight rides alone in the dusk or a ghastly plain of weeds and stunted grass, where natureseems to bewaiting, possibly ofr the fire of Judgement, he seeks to cheer himself up thinking about his old companions on this mysterious journey or quest, and remembering their disasters. He reaches another plain, even grimmer than the first, where the ground is strangely churned by the marks of the battle.

> Burningly it came on me all at once
> This the place!.......

Dauntless he bows, there stands his Dark Tower.

"Childe, Roland was the youngest brother of Helen. Under the guidance of Merlin he undrtook to bring back his sister from the elfland, whither the faeries had carried her and he succeeded in his perilows exploit. "(Baldade of Burd Helen). Some readers look upon **Childe Roland** as a modem version of the medieval ballad. Others have read it as crypto-autobiography; Browning's worry over his father's affair with Mrs Von Muller contributes something to the pervasive anxiety of the poem. (Maisie Word) Another biographer Betty Miller attributes the anxiety to Brewing's feeling of guilt for having failed to fully express his great poetic gifts. Others again think that Childe Roland is a truth seeker; life destroys the man who will try to understand it. Modern readers have tried to explain the poem as Browning's contribution to an evolving portrait of a spiritual wastealand which found expnession in Tennyson's **Holy Grail** (1869), Thomson's **City of Dreadful Night** (1874) and Eliot's **Waste Land** (stzo 9-14) The poem is best read as a gloomy hieroglyphic, a poem whose symbolic style is in almost complete contrast to the psychological realism of Broaning's dramatic monologues.

6. BROWING'S OPINION ABOUT THE POEM IN 1887

When Browning was asked about any allegorical intent of *Childe Roland,* by a stranger in 1887, He answer thus 5*

"Oh, no, not at all. Understand, I don't repudiate it, either, I only mean I was conscious **of no allegorical intention** in writing it. Twas like. this ; one year in Florence, I had been very lazy, I resolved that I would write something everyday. Well, the first day I wrote about some roses, suggested by a magnificent basket that someone had sent to my wife. **The next day Childe Roland came upon me as a kind of dream.** I had to write then and there, and I finished it the same day, I

believe. But it was simply that I had to do it. I did not know then what I meat beyond that, and I'm sure I don't know now. But I am very fond of it.

The story comes out naturally— out of staccato narrative method. For a knight or a childe to 'come to' a tower, he is perhaps seeking it. Thus Roland is one of a band of trainded knight and sworn to find and attack a certain Dark Tower. But others before him have failed. Childe Roland sets out and enquires the way to the Tower of a crippled and sinister-looking person who directs him off the road, up the valley. He suspects, but he remembers that the. Tower is indeed said to stand somewhere in this valley, he turns as directed, by the cripple guide.

The path is dreary and depressing, leading amidst mountains. He can visualize no way through, but realizes no way through is needed—for the Dark Tower is before him. He sounds his slug-horn and challenges the Tower. Thus Browning ends his poem *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.* Thus far he came,and no futher. And Browning also went no further. Louis Macneice elaborated the theme of the poem into a full-fledged play in *The Dark Tower,* where he has undrelined and developed a band of devotees trained for the quest, (this being made a family affair), with a 'possessive mother' as an additional point.

7. ESSENTIAL ANNOTATION

See Edgar's song in **Lear**—the song in *King Lear* is a cue to the poem and its origin and genesis. But it only enhances the mystery of the text.

'Childe' in the title of the poem refers to youth of rank ; later it was applied to an knight, the final e is a reminder of the old form and its usage in chivalric poetry.

2. That hoary cripple—Refer to Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale,* (II, 710-65) 8. Askance—sidewise, archaic expression

25. As when a sick man—this idea maybe referred to Denne's *Valediction* 'As virtuous men pass mildly away'

48. Estray (Here) — a stray animal

68. The bents—the stiff-flower stalks of grasses

72. Pashing—treading violently upon watery ground

76. One stiff blind horse — 'the figure of a horse in his own drawing room', Mrs. Orr's suggestion in this connection. The tower, the painting and the image of a horse — are all woven together from the poet's earlier memories.

80. Colloped — archaic use, in its participle form, from the expression 'collops of flesh' (Wanley),

85. I shut my eyes — as in 'The Ancient Mariner', part IV, stanzas V and VI

13. Browning's fascination with the morbid, the macabre or the sinister. Compare with scenes of carnage is Sordello.

133. Cirque — any circular arena 136. Brewage — a beverage

143. Tophet's tool — some infernal instrument. Originally Tophet was the name of a part of the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem.

24. The landscape becomes on abomination of desolation.

160. Apollyon's bosom-friend— a character in *Pilgrim's Progress*, Apollyon met a 'hideous monster', clothed with scales like a fish.

27. Allegory of the life of a Christian

29. Roland becomes a hunted animal.

203. Slug-horn — a orruption of 'slogan', a war-cry. Earlier wrongly used to mean a sort of horn by Chatterton, and Browning followed this use.

34. (Three interpretations — i) did the mountains in the blood — red sunset dissove as the walls of Jericho fell to a similar sound? 2) chid the squat tower vanish like a dream phantom? 3) was the sound of the horn the last breath of the hero? the end dses not sound like spiritual failure.)

When the knight summons his courage, the nightmare ends, though, however, the nature of the ordeal or crisis is never hinted at by some vague suggestions.

The stazaic form of the poem is rather unusual. It is abba ba; it begins with a pentameter line, but two lines are tagged 'a' matching with 'a' and 'b' rhymes. The end is curious in its effect, whereby one is impelled to turn back and then to advance. The strange hesitancy is strictly in ke'epmg with the meaning of the poem.

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The gruesome and horrifying details of the journey are fascinating, if read as incidents in a ride. It is populary known that Browning's forte is 'landscape', it is modeled on Gerasrd Lairesse' 'Art of Painting in all its branches mainly chapter XVII of the book In Lairesse' book mentioned earlier, one can find the horrible element in painting. Here the old cripple, the pathless field, the desperate vagetation, the spiteful little river, the killing of the water rat, the enclosing mountains — many of the details of *Childe Roland* may be discerned. Sometimes the imagery resembles to that of the water-colour of A. W. Hunt, painted later in 1866. Browning also suggested this, "My 'marsh' was only made out of my head — with some recollec-

tions of a strange solitary little tower I have come upon more than once in **Massa-Carrere** in the midst of low hills" 6* and the figure of the blind old horse of the poem has been suggested by a figure of a tapestry of Browning's own in Florence (Casa Guidi).

Harold Golder's article on Browning's *Childe Round* (published in 1924) suggests mat "behind Browning's 'Chiled Roland' lies a vast contributory reservoir of chivalric romance". The hero's coming to the Dark Tower is 'patently a chivalric enterprise of a familiar type'. The psychological background is very simple and lucid, representing the consensus of modern opinion. And the critics' recognition of this aspect of the poem, makes it rather too problematic. Like **Kubla Khan, Childe Roland's** dreamlike logic can accommodate a bewildering array of images drown from Browning's reading — from **Jack** and the **Beanstalk** to Dante, and from Dante to the brufal industrial landscape of Elizabeth Barren's **The cry of the Children.**

9. QUESTIONS

2. Discuss the view that in 'Childe Roland' there is no necessity to seek for ony allegorical interpretation : the poem speaks for itself.

3. Is there any available edifice of meaning in **Childe Roland?** Discuss with illustrations.

Notes :

1*C. de Vane, *A Browning Handbook,* 1955, pp.228-29

2* H. C Duffin : *The Amphibian or A Reconsideration of Browning* p. 82

3* Nettleship's *Essays* 1908, in J.W Chadwick (Essays)

4* *The Christian Register* (Jan. 19, 1888)

5* Quoted in de Vane's *A Browing Handbook,* p. 229

6* de Vane, *A Browning Handbook,* P229

RECOMMENDED READING :

1. Colder, H, Browning's Childe Roland (1924)

2. Hardy, Irene, Browning's 'Chiled Roland' in *Poet Lore* 24.56

3. W. Shaw : *The Dialectical Temper*

4. Santayana, G, *The Poetry of Barbarism* (1900)

5. B. Melchiori : *The Paetry of Reticence*

6. P. Hoiian : *Browning's charactrs*

Unit -9 ◻ Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Structure

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

HOW DO I LOVE THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!— and if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death

1 ❑ OBJECTIVES

Alter you have studied this pail, you will he able to have an idea of and write on E.B Browning's poetic art as evident from her sonnet sequence (*Sonnets from the Portuguese)* with special reference to one of her best and most representative sounetsn it. As a result this would enable you to comment on select passages from the poem itself.

2 ❑ E.B. BROWNING (1806-61)

Robert Browning paid a glowing tribute to his beloved in his *Ring and the Books*

> O lyric love, half-angel and half-bird
> And all a wonder and a wild desire (ll. 1390-1)

The lines were addressed to his dead wife Elizabeth. She has been variously described by critics as a spasmodic, a feminist and a reactionary with some subversive elements in her writing. She is a "committed" writer to the cause of liberty, for the cause of women or for working children. She liked George Sand, a French poetess and wrote two poems on her and also admired the great classical Greek poetess Sappho. Apart from liberty, love was the" theme to which she sang her most enduring music. *"How do I love thee? Let me count the ways"*, is one of the forty-three sonnets addressed to Browning, endearingly named by them (both contributed to the naming of it) as *Sonnetss from the Portuguese,* for it is a convenient 'mask' or 'personae' of the writer.

Elizabeth was the oldest of eleven children bom to Edward and Mary Moulton Barrett. Her father owned sugar plantations in Jamaica, though after the abolition of the slave trade in 1834, the income from them decreased dramatically and the family moved from a large country house in Herefordshire to 50, Wimpole Street in London.

Elizabeth, who was a precocious and active child, seems to have suffered from physical or emotional crisis in her teens which left her almost semi-invalid, unable to take on any domestic responsibilities. She lived till the age of forty in her father's house, writing poetry-, seeing few visitors outside the family circle but keeping an eager eye on the world outside. After the death of Ms wife in 1828, Mr. Barrett had become anxious to keep the family together and forbade any children to marry including Elizabeth. She,(whose love for him was profound and complex) suffered his rule for as long as she could. (In this connection F.L Lucas in his essay on

Browning, in *Eight Victorian Poets*, suggested the name of Freud, commenting on die father's command rather unwritten hut understood "them shall not marry" Mr. Barren was the first to encourage her writing and she dedicated her volumes to him). In 1840 she lost one of her brothers whom she loved very much, it was a case of death by drowning at Torquay and she was partly instrumental to the accident. She wrote a few moving poems aner this event: *Grief, The Mask, I Lift My Heavy Heart up Solemnly (Sonnets From the Portuguese no. V)*

In 1844, Elizabeth Barren published her book of *Poems* which was to make her name the literary world, and it would directly affect the course of her life. This the attention of Robert Browning and inspired him to write a letter to its unfamiliar author, which began: 1 love your versus with all my heart, dear Miss Barren ..: and I love you tool*. After certain stages^of denial, submission and ultimate acceptance, recorded so beautifull in their *Courtship* 'Correspondence (edited by various authors including Kintner and D.Karlin), they agreed to marry. And according to Mrs. Browning's version, it was a very 'private marriage'. In September 1846, the couple were married and left England for Italy. They settled in Casa Guidi in Florence. It still bears her name.

The sheltered poet ofWimpole Street found a new life in Casa Guidi where she lived the rest of her life and breathed her last. (After her death, the road bears her name, a rare tribute for an English poet.) In Italy, she trave~d, wrote and *walked* a little and became a keen supporter of the oolitical movement for 'unification'. The Italian years were immensely fruitful* *Poems* (1850) included her *Sonnets from the Portuguese, and her* love sonnets to Browning tor which she is best remembered; from 1853-56 she worked on *Aurora Leigh'* a new kind of novel-poem with the making of a woman-poet's mind with 'the repressed rage and anguish' of the woman writer; thus, the writer claims:

"I will write my story for my better self *(Aurora Leigh.* Bk. I)

It also contains lengthy arguments of social questions including the 'condition of women' in England of her times. Here, she is polemic and debatable. The noble attitude and sublime presentation earned her tremendous contemporary popularity. But she has lost her early image and popularity-ouglihhh modem 'feminist' school of critics 117 'to rehabilitate her' (Bernard Richards: *Victorian Poetry,* 1988, p.287). To them Elizabeth Barren Browning is one of the major women-poets of the nineteenth-century.

Elizabeth Barren thought about forms in *Aurora Leigh:*

"What form is best for poems'? Let me think
Of forms less, and the external. Trust the spirit.
As soveran nature does, to make the form;
For otherwise we only imprison spirit
And not embody. *(Aurora Leish.* Bk. VI, 223-7) :

In a letter to Browning, she also suggested this idea: 'I am inclined to think that we want new forms ... as well as thoughts. The old gods are dethroned. Why should we go back to antique rnoulds?'2 *. But curiously enough in her sonnet sequence, she followed the antique Elizabethan and Miltonic or Italian sonnet mould as a kind of legacy from the ancient writers. Patrick Crutwell 3* calls this literary Ttalomania' of some Victorian sonneteers.

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3 □ LITERARY STYLE :

Confessional and the stress is on 'me' or T: This seems to be a tentative approach to her well-known *Sonnets from the Portuguese* . These sonnets are 'self-indulgently personal' (Margaret Reynolds (ed.) 'Introduction' p.61) It is a kind of poetic version of her love-letters to Robert Browning, very personal and lyrical but based formally on Elizabethan and Renaissance models. She had no defined notion of pre-existent form — the lyrical impulsion genres are overlapping in the sonnet form (i.e. lacking the massive coherence of Italian form).

Robert Browning identified Elizabeth Barren Browning with the Portuguese girl Catarina in his poem *Caterina to Camoens* the beloved of the poet Camoens ; when his wife's sonnets were published, the Browningschiose to call them *Portuguese Sonnets,* (an ambiguous title which was disguisefrom the work-a-day world but full of secret meaning for the Brownings themselves).

This love-sonnet sequence along with the dramatic story of their marriage has given the sonnets something of a fascination of a 'roman a clef; still their (the sonnets) beauty and intent are self-sufficing, independent of their personal reference.

The sonnets begin immediately upon her first acquaintance with Browning and chronicle her emotional reactions to their developing relationship. By and large each sonnet seeks to recapture a moment of reaction and response and the constant and recurrent theme is love. The sequence gradually traces the growth of their love-relation from melancholy and weeping, bereavement and remembrance of grief, through wonder in the strength of joy of love, to assurance and delight in love, for the present and for the future. Thus, Ruth Adam sums up: " The Sonnets tell the story of spirit revivified"4*

The *Sonnets* seems to he a literary disguise for 'the freer music of love-song'; it reveals the spontaneous impulsiveness of the mind — (according to the writer herself, her mind was elusive, erratic, adamant and energetic.) —; critics find 'the impulsive treatment of quatorzains'5* with its 'grace' and 'tender dignity ofstyle'6*

4 □ STRUCTURE AND MEANING; THE BASIC THEME IN 'SONNETES FROM THE PORTUGUESE'

The poet Robert Browning or the lover seems to be the precise subject matter of Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets.* Her tone is highly serious, prophetic and occasionally biblical. In a letter dated 15th August 1846, E.B Browning writes to Browning,

Dearest beloved, to turn away from the whole world to you .. - when I do, do I lose anything ... or rather gain all. 7* Henry Jones wrote about her *Sonnets:* 'Portuguese Sonnets* reveal to us the most ecstatic feeling that changed her life and art. They are equaled only, by her life'. E..C Steadman *(Victorian Poetiy* London 1892,p.137) writes:

Mrs. Browning's love-sonnets are the outpouring of a woman's tender emotions at an epoch *when art was most mature* and her whole nature exalted by a passion that to such a being comes out but once for all. Hence she is absorbed in rapturous utterance, radiant and triumphant with her own joy ... —.'Not death but love (theme) had seized her utterance'.

These sonnets are positively bold and demanding. A certain 'baroque wit' runs through these sonnets; for it is a kind of legacy or literary tradition, partly followed (in form mainly) and partly defied at the same time; the stereotype roles are changed and adapted to the courtly tradition. Margaret Reynolds, a feminist critic, finds in some of her sonnets, 'an energy of desire', and some, she felt to be 'positively inflammatory'. Here Elizabeth Barrett Browning is both the poet and the muse, 'the invisible lover' and 'the visible beloved'. At last she found a voice, which links her with the contemporary world. She calls Browning:

> Most gracious singer of high poems
> ... thou must sing ... alone, aloof. (Sonnet IV)

Mrs. Browning accepts the confessional mode in the *Sonnets,* to her, it is a way of representation of reality, hence, a mimetic art. These sonnets tell of her love for him in many shapes and forms; initially Browning found her ill, almost a neurotic and invalid, but cured her almost miraculously (so, probably, she called him 'Saviour' in both the senses in her sonnets) by the power of love and tender care. And

this stage with a carious spell of over-shadowing death is chronicled in her early connets in the sequence.

Portuguese Sonnets is the epitome of her love—her unbounded (this is clearly suggested in the sonnet under discussion : 'How many ways do I love thee '?') Love for the man. the poet, the Saviour and the beloved — all in one. The influence of their love is felt in all the forty-three sonnets, Essentially over-valued in their age for obvious sentimental reasons, they remain the most profitable part-of her large production ; she was gifted with a poet's vision, a warm heart and moved by noble impulses; there is a luxuriant quality in her work. Here she lifts her heavy heart solemnly' (Sonnet no. IV)

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5 □ HOW DO I LOVE THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS : A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

As you have studied some aspects of E.B. Browning's poetic art and her sense of form, it would be easy to grasp the sonnet under discussion; *How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.* Contrary to the traditional views of love's elusive quality, the writer tends to suggest that love or its ways could be reckoned. Under the circumstances, the lover as much as the poet (Mrs. Browning did not approve the use of the word 'poetess'.

The rhyming pattern of the sonnet is abba abba cd cd ce. It is an Italian or Miltonic sonnet with slight minor modification.

There is a kind of over-lapping, if not free flowing of thought from the octave (first eight lines) to the sestet (next six lines), the idea of love's profundity being the subject of the two parts.

The words 'I love thee' recur like a burden or refrain that seeks to prove or represent the inexpressible. In the sestet (i.e. six lines) she reiterates her point from various angles and establishes her unique love **in more ways than one.**

But the sunnet rises to its crescendo where she transcends this 'level of everyday V, with a fond wish 'I shall but love thee better after death'. This penultimate sonnet specially the concluding lines reminds one of Robert Browning's *Prospice* addressed to 'Ba' : it is a kind of valedictory note :

> O thous soul of soul ! I shall clasp thee again,
> And God be the rest!

Or as in Sonnet no. XXXVIII, she writes

> As who stands in dewless asphodel

Looks backward on the tedious time he has
In the upper life.

6 ❑ ESSENTIAL ANNOTATION

Lines:

1. How do I love thee? — The poet begins with a question.

2. I love thee to ... a kind of tentative and emotional reckoning of it.

4. The ends of Being and ideal Grace — retelling to platonic absolute in the use of terms like 'Being' and 'Grace'.

5. The level of everyday's— Mundane everyday life

9. The passion put to use — A blatant confession of strong feeling, over-sentimental and passionate in nature. E.B Browning's *Diary* records this aspect of her mind even in her salad days.

10. Old Griefs — like her dear brother 'Bro's' death by drowning; she wrote a poem on this subject entitled Grief. Some of these poems and sonnets are like Tennyson's hi memorium, lays of sorrow bom'.

14. Love thee better after death - Compare this with the last line of Browning's Prospice, (which means, look forward to') a valedictory poem, expressing the poet's love for his beloved even after death:

> 'O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again
> And with God be the rest!'.

7 ❑ CONCLUSION

To sum up, she has now the 'new vintage' of the Cliristian love to look forward to (the etymological sense of the word *Prospice).* In this sonnet E.B Browning is both mellifluous or sentimental and straight-forward and bold in her representation of her admiration and hero-worship, And to Browning, these poems came like a revelation.

E.B Browning told him (that day) to read that *(Sonnets)* and tear it, if he did not like it, and 'then she fled to her own room'. (Critical Kit-Kats: Edmund Gosse)

8 ❑ QUESTIONS

1. Why are the sonnets of E.B Browning called *Portuguese Sonnets"?*

2. What is the main theme of 'How do I love thee"?

3. How does she convey her love for Browning ?

4. What is remarkable about *Sonnets from the Portuguese'*?

9 ☐ NOTES & REFERENCES

1.* Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barren, 1845-46, 2 vols., Kintner, 1969, vol. Ip.3

2* *Letters,* ed. Kintner, Cambridge, 1969, I, p.43

3* *The English Sonnet,* Longman, 1969, p.41

4* *"Introduction"* to the Cambridge edition of E.B Browning's *Poetical Works,* 1974, XVII

5* Ruth Adams, *"Introduction",* E.B Browning's *Poetical Works.* XVI.

6* E.B Browning; *'Her Mud and Art* -E. Rliys, p.337

7* *Courtship Correspondence of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning,* cd. David Karlin, O.V.P. 1987, p. 271

10 ☐ RECOMMENDED READING

There is relatively little criticism on E.B Browning's *Sonnets.* Most critics tend to focus on her long verse-novel, *Aurora-Leigh,* for it has got the status of a feminist classic.

1. Hayter, A., *Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1965)

2. Hewlett, D., *Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (1957)

3. Karlin, D., *The Courtsh Corresipondence of Rabert Browning and E.B Browning* (Oxford, 1985)

4. Mennin, Dorothy., E.B Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1981).

5. Reynolds, M and Angela Leighton (eds.) *Victorian Women Poets,* London, 1995

Unit -10 ☐ Emily Jane Bronte

Structure

EMILY JANE BRONTE

NO COWARD SOUL IS MINE

No coward soul is mine
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere,
I see Heaven's glories shine
And faith shines equal arming me from fear

O God within my breast
Almighty ever-present Deity
Life, that in me hast rest
As I undying Life, have power in thee

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably vain,
Worthless as withered weeds
Or idlest froth amid the bo.undless main

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by the infinity
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of Immortality

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates and rears

Though Earth and moon were gone
And suns and universe ceased to be
And thou wert left alone
Every existence would exist in thee

There is not room for death
Nor atom that his might could render void
Since thou art Being and Breath
And what thou art may never be destroyed.

EMILY JANE BRONTE (1818-48)

10.2.1 OBJECTIVES

The story of Emily Bronte ; and that of her brother and sisters with whose names that of her own is always inextricably associated, is a well-known literary legend. It should be our objective to introduce herself, her poetry and her contribution to English Literature; and for that we must have a fair knowledge about her life and personality.

10.2.2 EMILY BRONTE: HER LIFE AND CHARACTER

Emily was the fifth child in the Bronte family. The family came from Ireland. The father of Emily Bronte was Patrick Bronte (1771-1861). He changed the original family surname of Brunty or Pmnty into rather unusual Bronte. In 1812, when he was curate of Hartstead-cum-Clifton in Yorkshire, he married Maria Branwell (1783-1821). She bore Mm six children — Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Brauwell, Emily (b. 20 August,!818) and Anne. The two eldest cMldren died in early childhood. Char-

lotte, the only one of the Brontes, to achieve literary success in her own lifetime, had the longest span of life among the Bronte children; she died at the age of thirty-nine. Emily was two years old when they moved to Haworth and three when Tier mother died. Her mother left the infant family to the care of her sister, Elizabeth Branwell, who gave loyal domestic service to the Brontes and devoted the whole of her life to the cause of this family.

The Bronte children are supposed to have been unhappy because the place was bleak and besides, they were rather delicate. In June 1835, she went to Miss Wooler's establisliment at Roe Head, where Charlotte was working as a teacher. After four months, she was ill and desperately home-sick, so.that Charlotte arranged for her release. 'Liberty was the breath of Emily's nostrils,' Charlotte wrote — 'without it she perished. The change from her own home to school and from her noiseless, secluded but unrestrained and inartificial mode of life, to one of disciplined routine.... was what she failed in enduring'1*

Emily's father was a kind, sympathetic, open-minded instructor. His children loved their home-life and their rambles on the moors. There are three reliable biographies of Emily Bronte viz., i) by Laura Hinkley (1945), another rather early by ii) A.M.F Robinson (1883) and the more recent biography of her by iii) Winfred Gerin (1972). Moreover, an exquisite picture of Emily is given by Charlotte Bronte, her sister in her novel, *Shirley* The Bronte sisters read a lot and their father engaged Ms daughters into the habit of deep reading at an early age of ten. Charlotte and Emily Bronte went to Bmssels to study languages in a boarding school in 1842, but they left their study incomplete and returned home. Their study includes among others, Aesop, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Ossian, Scott and Byron. But according to Charlotte, their 'highest stimulus' came from their enthusiastic 'attempts at literary composition'2*. They had very early cherished the dream of becoming authors. And this dream sustained them till death and it acquired 'strength and consistency' in their writings. Charlotte found in her work 'a deep conviction about the sincerity of purpose', not mere 'common effusions', like poetry generally written by women. T thought them condensed, terse, vigorous and genuine'. Here she wrote her remarkable comment about her sister's character and nature: 'Stronger than a man, simpler than a child, her nature stood alone'. 'They stirred my heart like the sound of a trumpet'.

Both the sisters turned to literature because they sought a kind of refuge or release and to relieve the sense of sadness, arising out of loneliness of their own lot. For, they found their work as governess and teacher rather unendurable.

POEMS OF CURRER, ELLIS AND ACTON BELL : A JOINT VENTURE

In 1846, the three sisters produced a volume of poems under the pseudonyms mentioned above. It however did not turn out to be a literary triumph. Branwell died in September 1848. Emily caught cold at the funeral of her brother and from this she never recovered. The details of her illness were given by Charlotte, these were 'deeply branded' in her memory. She sank rapidly: yet, while 'physically she perished, mentally she grew stronger than we had yet known her'.

In Charlotte's view, Emily was a genius. And it is masculine in character; her muse is a male muse. In her writings about Emily, she stressed the unwomanly side of her character. Actually Charlotte invented or re-created a 'hero' out of her and she (Emily) became the object or subject of a lively myth. In the 1880's and 1890's, there was a revival of their (Brontes) writings and Emily Bronte became 'the very icon of what the woman poet should be' (Reynolds, p. 199); Charlotte Mew (1982) revealed in her edition of *Collected Poems and Prose,* the view of Emily as the stoic heroine in *Elinor.* "He said you were like a queen and should have an empire, but that your people would have killed and canonized you afterwards" 3*.

Emily Bronte's poetry seeks to create 'the image of her fierce independence'. Rejecting human company, she wanted to face alone life's odds and there is a note of strong and independent but mystical belief which nourished her to the end of her life.

10.2.4 THE BACKGROUND OF THE POEM

The poem under discussion reflects and records certain aspects of the Victorian ethos as is evident from Buckley's title *The Victorian Temper :* it was both an age of honest doubt and equally that of firm faith and conviction Whereas most Victorian poets had a tendency to pontificate, to be serious, reflective and melancholic, Emily Bronte, on the other hand, was refreshingly different from these 'elegiac' poets. As a contrast, Emily was 'stronger than a man, simpler than a child, her nature stood alone... Liberty was the breath of Emily's nostrils, without it she perished'. Here Charlotte Bronte was right in more ways than one. She had a 'head for logic' and 'capability of argument' rare indeed in a woman. She had a strong conviction from which emerged a new and bold kind of poetry of belief:

> O God within my breast
> Almighty ever present Deity

Very ofen her poetry seems to suggest 'a kind of dialogue with her muse' (Reynolds *Victorian Women Poets,* p. 197). Her boldness speaks for itself:

Riches I hold in hich esteem

Or in another poem, she writes :

I will not. can not go.

There is a sense of individuality and self-sufficiency in these lines. Charlotte found the truth in her (Emily's) nature and belief: 'The spirit was inexorable to the flesh. In Emily's 'nature ... lay a secret of power and fire; her powers were unadapted to the practical business life. Her will was not very flexible. Her temper (it was not essentially Victorian) was magnanimous but warm and sudden and her spirit (as is evident from her final poems) altogether unbending'.

10.2.5 'NO COWARD SOUL' ; A NOTE ON THE TEXT — A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

As a representative poem of Emily Bronte, one can quite effortlessly talk about *'the last lines'*, another title for *'No Coward Soul of Mine'*

The poem seeks to register a very, simple but profound mystical perception of the writer.

The author is no coward. Amidst the storms and stress of life, she sees the radiant face of God, which fortifies her soul with faith and dispels (her) fear; to her, God is an ever-present Reality. God is undying Life, and she has hold on Him.

The writer distrusts the conventional creeds of men; the various creeds men have propounded or expostulated about God are vain; she has abiding faith in His infinity and this faith is firmly based on conviction and on her hope for immorality. The all-embracing love of God informs and sustains the whole universe. Though the whole universe be annihilated, the seeds of creation will exist in God, who alone will survive or stand the test of time. All things have their origin in God and hence, like Him they remain in Him being indestructible.

10.2.6 BRONTE : OPINIONS ABOUT HER WORK

There is relatively little criticism in Bronte's poetry, for it has been over-shadowed by *Wuthering Heights.* Today Emily Bronte is remembered for her powerful novel *Wuthering Heights* and a few very remarkable poems. Why has Bronte's poetry been neglected by critics? About her Matthew Arnold wrote, that she was one:

whose soul
Knew no fellow for might,
Passion, vehemence and grief,
Daring since Byron died;

Swinburne thought her to be a 'greater genius' than her sister Charlotte. Edmund Gosse finds, .'stanzas' or

'Ofen rebuked, yet always back returning'

to be 'most characteristic utterance' and also finds that the last two stanzas of the poem contain the quintessence, the peculiar doctrine that was her mission to preach 4*.

I'll walk but not in old heroic traces
And not in paths of high morality

*   *   *   *   *

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading
It vexes me to choose another guide.

By 'high morality', the poet here means lofty stoical ideals as expressed in * Old Stoic' ('Riches I hold in high esteem'), she believed and had her trust in God ('O God, within my breast).

The images of 'withered weeds' and 'idlest froth', suggestively records the worthlessness of thousand Victorian 'casual creeds' and religious beliefs. The image of 'steadfast rock' carries conviction for it suggests the firmness other her unflinching faith in God's omnipresence. It shelters her from the fear from 'the storm-troubled spheres' of life. The apostrophe is bold and straight — forward;

Thou - thou art Being and Breath

And what thou art may never be destroyed.

(Emily Bronte will be remembered — apart from her great lyrical novel, **Wuthering Heights** for a few poems having intrinsic importance as well. Her **'Last Lines'** (the poem selected for our discussion) is the poet's or author's 'Last Testament' — the most 'profoundly moving' of them all. Thus her biographer (A.M.F Robinson) records : They found no novel, half finished or begun in the old brown desk which she used to rest on her knees sitting under the thorns. They discovered a poem written at the end of Emily's life ... the fittest monument of her heroic spirit'5*. These words are profound, sincere, vigorous and elevating, as 'befits the last one', a valedictory poem — the last words one has time to speak. She died at Haworth on December 19, 1848.

10.2.7 ESSENTIAL ANNOTATION

Lines

1. No Coward Soul — A rhetorical beginning with firm emphasis using two negative items 'no' and 'coward'.

2. No Trembler — Similar rhetorical line is used here too.

   Storm-troubled — making of compound words like, Keats, suggesting conflict-ridden world.

3. Heaven's glories — the vision of a bright effulgence of heavenly light

4. Arming — guiding, protecting, shielding the writer.

5. God within my breast — an intuitive mystical vision - God dwells in her mind.

8. Undying life — firm conviction in an undying life, sustained by God.

11. Withered weeds — as useless and valueless as decayed and withered leaves, the image is reminiscent of'Shelley's 'Ode to the West-Wind¹.

12. Idlest froth — nautical or marine image suggesting purposelessness.

15. Anchored - fixed firmly.

16. The steadfast rock — referring to the bedrock of faith in God's immorality

18. Animates — gives life to

24. Every existence — partly Pantheistic belief.

25. Not room for death — Death is personified. He (God) is deathless and undying.

10.2.8 QUESTIONS

1. Would you call *"The Last Lines,* a devotional poem?

2. Is there any indication of the writer's attitude to God or any reaction to Victorian people's belief in diverse 'casual creeds'?

3. *'The Last Lines'* or *'No coward soul is mine'* is a valedictory poem i.e. a poem about death and parting — Justify the statement.

10.2.9 NOTES

1. . Winferd Gerin : Emily Bronte : A Biography O.V.P. 1972, p.55.

2. "Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell" in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*

3. Charlotte Mew : *Collected Poems and Prose,* London, 1982 p. 290.

4. Quoted in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (Book Fifth) ed. L. Binyon, p. 157.

5. A.M.F. Robinson : *Emily Bronte,* 1883, p. 232

10.2.10 RECOMENDED READINGS

1. Bronte, Emily (1992) : *The Poems of Emily Bronte,* ed. Barbara Lloyd-Evans, London.

2. Chitham, Edward (1987) *A Life of Emily Bronte,* Oxford.

3. Davis Stevie (1988) *Emily Bronte, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester.*

4. Pykett, Lyn (1989) *Emily Bronte,* Basingstoke, MacMillan.

Introduction:

In this section I would like to suggest:

i) an approach to the study of poetry

ii) to examine the basic difference between the language of poetry and the language of prose and

iii) to show how there might be a convergence between the language of prose and the language of poetry; that is to say can there be a meeting point, a common ground between the two ?

Let us start with poetry. Can we define poetry? To the question "What is poetry?" Robert Frost, the American poet, once said "Poetry is the kind of things poets write". Or, let us consider this definition : "Poetry is a rhythmical composition of words expressing an attitude, designed to surprise and delight and to arouse an emotional response". The first definition may sound vague, but, at least the speaker is trying to suggest that a poet will write according to his own individual, mental and emotional makeup. The second definition takes into account one type of poetry : "to surprise and delight". After all a poem may not surprise and delight. It may leave one with feelings of sadness, loneliness, anger or a combination of both sadness and joy. Thus there can be no objective definition of poetry.

Poetry expresses a "truth" but this truth may be variously interpreted by different people. When a particular poet cannot communicate this truth to the reader, then the poem may be rejected by him as a bad one. We should not dismiss what we do not logically understand. When we read a poem or when we study it responses are generated. Again, my responses may be different from yours. A poem has its own logic which is different from our everyday logic or from the term as we normally understand it to be.

There is a vital difference between verse and poetry. For example "Jack and Jill / went up the hill" is verse but not poetry. Poetry may make statements but makes imaginative statements. G.M. Hopkins once said that poetry (and I quote) is "to be heard for its own sake and interest even over and above its interest of meaning". That is to say, there may be something in a poem or some qualities which we cannot decipher, which we may like instantly. That 'something' may initially be difficult to precisely pin-point.

What is important in a poem is the effect it creates rather than its possessing a message or a meaning. Yet we must study a poem, at least for examination purposes; mustn't we? I will come back to this later.

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Let us look at some different methods of reading a poem, especially a difficult one. On a first attempt read the poem straightaway pushing on despite all obstacles. Ignore initially the difficult words, at least until you have read the poem as a whole. On the second reading some of the knots may be untied. After that underline certain words which consider key-words, in the different stanzas. Also select words, lines and passages which are not clear to you. Look up difficult words in a dictionary, look up references to places, mythology etc. in an encyclopedia.

Now on studying a poem. A poem can be paraphased, that is to say we explain in our own words what a stanza may mean. Thus, we can go on paraphrasing each stanza. The paraphrasing helps us to make a comparison between the language of poetry and the language of prose, or to see the distance bewteen the two. Again from the paraphrasing we may understand the theme/themes of a poem. A poem may statj something but it may imply something else. Do not take the lines of a poem too literally. You may run into difficulties because of this. In his poem *Prayer Before Birth* Louis Macneice pleads for

> trees to talk to me
> sky to sing to me
> birds and a white light in the back of my mind to guide me

So the student who queried: "Sir how can trees talk?" had a point but he was taking the poet too literally. All that the poet asks for in these lines is some kind of a rapport with nature, in the midst of life's sordid happenings.

Have you ever asked yourself this question: why is it that a prose writing creates no problems, while those same words when used in a poem startle a reader? Take the example of the poem *ABOVE THE DOCK* by T. E. Hulme. The poem is deceptively simple and short. It is simple perhaps but it is not simple-mir ded. Let's read it:

> Above the quiet dock in midnight
> Tangled in the tall mast's corded height
> Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away
> Is but a child's balloon, forgetten after play.

At the purely literal level the poet describes the moon viewed from the dock of a ship. So what, you might ask. The poem is merely descriptive you may say. But if we read the poem carefully we will see that the poet is asking us to reject something, or is speaking about something which has already been rejected: "What seemed so far away / is like a child's balloon forgotten after play". Thus theme of rejection is important. This is one way in which the poem may be studied.

Let us look at the poem entitled *Furies* by the Indian poet Nissin Ezekiel:

> What shall I do
> with my furies?
> Shall I be
> driven before them....
> Neither as enemies
> noras friends
> do my furies
> leave me alone

Here, the word "furies" is given special significance. The word as you know denotes anger but in this poem the poet attaches great importance to it. He is hounded by it, brow-beaten and bullied by it just as one is by a human being. So furies here behave like human beings, the poet treats them as such and compares them with "enemies and friends". This is called personification; the poet personifies an abstract thing like fury.

The theme of a poem may be something, but its subject-matter may be something else. For example, the subject matter of *The Brook* is the brook, or a brook but its theme is eternity or endlessness : ".... men may come and men may go / but I go on for ever". The poem conveys ideas of eternity, timelessness and movement:

> I chatter, chatter, as I flow
> To join the brimming river,
> For men may come and men may go,
> But I go on for ever.
>
> I wind about, and in and out,
>   with here a blossom sailing,
> And here and there a lusty trout,
>   And here and there a grayling,
>
> And here and there a foamy flake
>   Upon me as I travel
> With many a silvery waterbreak
>   Above the golden gravel,

Similarly the subject matter of a poem by Blake is London while the themes are oppression, cruelty and injustice.

Poetry has a music of its own. G.M. Hopkin? once said that all good poetry aspires towards the condition of poetry. It is called lyricism derived from the word lyric. A lyric is a short poem which concentrates on the poet's feelings and which has a special musical appeal. The best of poets are lyrical. They sing even when they are sad. A poem may be lyrical when rhymed or even unrhymed. Let us look at these examples. The first poem is *Song* by Dom Moraes the Indian poet. Regular rhymes in this poem make it lyrical:

> I sowed my wild oats
> Before I was twenty
> Drunkards and turncoats
> I knew in plenty.
> Most friends betrayed me.
>
> Each new affair
> Futher delayed me.
> I didn't care.

The next poem is by Lord Tennyson. It is written in what may be termed free verse, that is to say without any rhyme. Yet the poem gives the impression of rhyme through its movement and sweetness:

> Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean
> Tears from the depth of some divine despair
> Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes
> In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
> And thinking of the days that no more.

There is a third type which may use rhyme irregularly and yet may be lyrical. Let us look at these lines from Keats' *Ode To Autumn*.

> Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness
> Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
> Conspiring with him how to load and bless
> With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
> To bend with apples the moss'd cottage trees;
> And fill all fruits with ripeness to the core,
> To swell the gourd and plump the hazel shells

Another way of studying poetry is by comparison. You may compare two poems by the same poet or two poems written by different persons. When reading Shelley's *To a Skylark*

you may compare it with his *Ode To The West Wind* or when you study Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier* you may compare it with another poem of his called *the Great Lover.* You may contrast *The Soldier* with Siegfried Sassoon's *Dreamers;* both the poems speak of the soldier but the treatment of the subject differs radically in tone and meaning.

I said earlier that poetry makes imaginative statements. The basic difference between poetry and prose is that prose makes explicit or direct statements while poetry makes imaginative statements. It suggests. Yet sometimes prose can be poetic. This is how the two-prose and poetry-meet. Hemingway in his *The Old Man and The Sea* uses simple, commonplace words yet these words in the context of the old man's struggle with the fish are stripped of their ordinariness. The language is heightened to the language and tensions of poetry.

Unit -1 ❑ G. M. Hopkins

Structure

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Text of Poem : Analysis

1.0 ❑ Introduction

Although Gerard Manley Hopkins lived from 1844 to 1899, he is considered to be a modern, because he took massive leaps in his poetry by his ingenuity and virtuosity in technical skills. At the same time his craftsmanship as a poet is upheld by his inner vision of things which he described as 'inscape' and 'instress'. He was conscious of his poetic craft and although he experimented with rhyme, his intense spirituality also helped in shaping the poet. In fact, the epithet 'poet-priest' has often been used to describe his poetry written- under the influence of his Jesuit priesthood. However, there are two distinct phases in his poetry : poetry which is an expression of his religioius beliefs and that which is not directly so.

1.1 ❑ Text of Poem : Analysis

The poem prescribed for your study is The Windhover which significantly is subtitled To Christ our Lord'. But you would wonder what connection the bird has with God? The stanzas of the poem describe the swift movements of the bird, fleeting moments of 'Brute beauty...valour...pride', the description apeals to our senses with the kind of dash and elan which characterizes Hopkins' poetry.

The poem begins with the line. "I caught this morning morning's minion" which explains that he witnessed the act "of daylight's dauphin, dapple dawn-drawn Falcon". The poet then goes on to describe the sweep of the bird, its movements to the "achieve of the mastery of the thing".

The bird is a mix of 'brute'- 'beauty', there is an anthropomorphic touch throughout the poem as when the poet compares the windhover to a dauphin i.e. a prince or to a chevalier which is a knight. The enthralling part of the poem is the playing around with words which are common place if not outdated, communicating at the same time powerful poetry.

"No wonder of it...
Fall, gall themselves and gash gold-vermilion"

Note the internal rhyme in the verse, 'fall/gall. The poem is also marked by a repetitive use of alliteration. Read the poem carefully to find out examples of this literary device. You will also notice that the stanzas are arranged asymmetrically that is not in proper order. Do you think this is a weakness of the poem and makes it disjointed? You may ponder over this. However, there is a rhythm in the poem, because of the alliteration perhaps and this beat likens it to that of music. This is Hopkins' lyricism and all lyrical poetry as you must be knowing has a music of its own. The best of verse at times is typified by marked lyrical qualities.

Now we come to the point whether there is the religious or the spiritual streak in this poem as has been mentioned in the introductory paragraph. Apart from the sub-title there is no overt reference to God as there is in poems such as "Pied Beauty" or "God's Grandeur". Yet the poem is one of celebration capturing an ambience of action which is evocative and joyful to the witness. This celebration is a moment of triumph and the poet could well have exclaimed "Praise him". It is because of His spirit (note the expression 'bow-bend') that we are able to taste a sampling of God's gifts to our universe. The bird is an apotheosis, it is flesh and blood but it is described by its own originality and uniqueness. This Hopkins called 'inscape' and the power of God. God brings about a cohesion to this world of ours and though the bird is wayward at times. it is precisely these contrasting elements which resolve the antithesis into a synthesis. The shades of contrast complement each other to cohere into an organic truth.

"High there...off forth on swing"

The splendour of movement and grace is described in the poem vivified by the poet's power of description. Yet it is not a descriptive poem merely, it is meant to catch a vision of things in fleeting moments. This the poet translates into ait.

That also explains why the subtitle is "To Christ our Lord". The poem is a celebration and the poet dedicates such triumph or celebration to God. It is also a self revelation to the poet as he marvels not only at God's creation but also at the prowess of His creation. The irony here is that it is not human. T'ie celebratory note of the poem is the poet's dedication to God, perhaps.

There is ambiguity here. The poem may not be interpreted as an expression of religious beliefs. It is upto you to decide based on your reading of the poem. The 'sprung rhythm' of the poem as critics would call it matches the descriptive mode of the poem,

the springing, dashing Windhover as it were encompassing contrasting qualities yet coalescing them.

It is the combination of vowels, consonants and alliterative devices which make up the technical structure of the poem. Try to read up more on what sprung rhythm is in Hopkins' poetry, it is a rhythm which is irregular abetted by alliterative devices. Such an extended use of alliteration is also a point to note.

I will conclude with Hopkins' own definition of his poetry. "No doubt my poetry errs on the side of oddness...But as air, melody is what strikes me most of all in the music and design in painting so design pattern, or what I call inscape is what I above all aim in poetry". Hopkins' poetry thus has a strange oddity or queerness. It is also the extension of the poet's sense of reality.

Unit -2 ❑ W.B. Yeats : Sailing to Byzantium

Structure

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Text of Poem : Analysis

2.0 ❑ Introduction

Sailing To Byzantium is one of W.B. Yeats' later poems. Yeats lived from 1865 to 1939. It was written after a severe illness. He was born in Dublin but spent his childhood largely in London where he was associated with literature and politics, joining the famed Rhymers' club. His poetry is steeped in the occult and politics. His poetry is steeped in the occult and spiritualism perhaps because of his attending seances as a youth. His poems are hermetic where the symbols are not easy to unravel. There is a marked hysteria in some of his poems as in "The Second Coming". His poetry is one of prognosis rather than analysis, yet he is intellectually gifted and his poetic stamina emanates from this trait.

2.1 ❑ Text of Poem : Analysis

Sailing to Byzantium is taken from Yeats' collection entitled The Tower which was published in 1928.

The speaker is an old man who rejects his condition and the transience of life. Byzantium is an imaginary unexploited, unexplored world where the old man wishes to go. It is a wish fulfilment, hence "Sailing To Byzantium". Art here "arrests change", as a critics comments. Byzantium is the world of sensual gifts, the world of an unexplored vision where the mythic imagination captures "Monuments of unageing intellect". The Poem is a dialectic or a debate between youth and old age as the first two stanzas signify. The world of Byzattium is represented by "fish flesh or fowl", aspects of the sensual or the elemental world to which the speaker escapes or endeavours to do so-" The young in one another's arms, birds in the trees".

Such escapism however devolves dramatically to present realities.

"An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick"...

The speaker castigates his present condition and decides to travel "To the holy city oi Byzantium". The city endowed with "fish, flesh or fowl" is ironically and paradoxically holy, sanctified by 'God's holy fire'. We find at this stage that the poet is creating a symbol of hope typified by Byzantium, which is perhaps art's refuge. The contrast between youth and old age in the first two stanzas vivifies morality and life. It would perhaps be simplistic to state that the poet or the speaker ia a mere escapist but he creates his aesthetics of hope and permanence in the fa^e of old age and despair. His arrival there seals the fate of ephernerality and natural cycles. "I have sailed the seas and come".

Byzantium is thus a symbol and shows Yeats' mythmaking capacity.

In the third stanza the speaker wishes to be unencumbered by "the artifice of eternity". This is Byzantium, the singing master of his soul. There is thus a yearning desire to be consumed by the passion of the ascetic "sick with desire". What is real and what is imagined is also another internal debate of the poem. The poet compels us to see his reality, mythic and bardic. He sings the song of his soul. "O sages standing in God's holy fire" sanctifies the ideal of the temple of art represented by Byzantium. The speaker desires to be subsumed by this overhelming truth.

<p style="text-align:center">"Consume my heart away"</p>

The fourth stanza envisages his soul and body rooted in the very soil and springs of this mythicized and emotional world. Byzantium encaosulates past, present and future.

<p style="text-align:center">"Of what is past, or passing or to come"</p>

Yeats demythicizes human transitoriness.

> "Once out of nature
> I shall never take
> My bodily form...."

When he will "set upon a golden bough to sing". The poem ends on such an optimistic if not gleeful note. Byzantium also suggests a mad world where others can go mad. Such is the hocus pocus world of Yeats' Byzantium.

"Nor is there singing school but studying" (stanza 2)

Such a paradoxical element runs throughout the finer moments of the poem where there is an inverted understanding of "God's holy fire" where it "is no country for old men". There is a strong intellectualism in the poem at the same time as the poet presents and typifies Byzantium with a sensuous style, which perhaps is inherited from Keats' poetry.

To sum up, the first two stanzas contrast youth with old age and its rejection. The last two stanzas encompass the distinctive worldliness or other worldliness of Byzantium. There is ambiguity here and you may be able to detect the paradoxical elements of the poem. This generates a tension within the poem, nothing is superfluous and form and content blend harmoniously. Or do you think so? It is up to the student to decide. Perhaps we have constructed our own Byzantiums where we would like to sail away in moments of crisis or despair or even joy. Yeat's symbolism is summed up by the fish, flesh, fowl, salmon or the mackerel yet it is a symbnolism of hope and creative passion.

Unit -3 ❏ T. S. Eliot: Waste Land

Structure

- **3.0 Introduction**
- **3.1 Text of Poem : Analysis**

3.0 ❏ Introduction

The Waste Land is considered to be written as marked departure in his style. It belongs ,to the 'middle phase' of Eliot's poetry : in between the individualism *of Love Song* and the rhetorical rhapsodies of poems such as *Ash Wednesday* and *A Song For Simeon*. If in *Prufrock* Eliot is trying to establish the dilemma of the individual, his doubts and uncertainties, then in *The Waste Landihc* crisis of civilization is made to be evident. It was his friend, mentor and fellow-poet Ezra Pound who edited and pruned the poem leaving out parts which he thought were not necessary. While writing the poem Eliot experienced two things, a nervous breakdown and a not too successful marriage. The nervous breakdown resulted in severe physical problems which however led to remarkable creative insight. Eliot himself acknowledged the fact that forms of illness sometimes lead to inspired literary composition.

3.1 ❏ Text of Poem : Analysis

T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* can be considered as one long poem but the very fact that the poem is divided into sections finds the reader reading it also in fragments. Each section can then be taken to be complete in itself. The poem was published in 1922 and in 1919 Eliot wrote to his mother stating that his objective was 'to write a long poem I had on my mind for a long time...' The point of dispute then is whether *The Waste Land is* one long poem possessing as aesthetic coherence or a series of short poems. The title itself, taken from the burial service of the Church of England suggests a symbol. What or 'why' is it a *waste land.* A waste land would signify a barrenness or emptiness and if we are to take a look at Eliot's grappling with spiritual truths, then the metaphor is that of 20th century spiritual isolationism against the backdrop of the war.

The Waste Land was first published in the *Criterion* in October 1922. Pound's efforts as Eliot himself admitted were to curtail the poem, so as to make it a broad cultural statement on the condition of humanity ['sickness of a suffering soul']. Perhaps

Pound's editing gave greater strenght, unity and coherence to the poem. Eliot passionately argues in favour of the long poem, because "a variety of moods can be expressed." Thus while studying the poem we have to critically examine form/content dichotomies.

Critical Analysis Section I : "The Burial of the Dead" begins with the biblical allusion to Chirist's crucifixion. "April is the cruellest month..." ending with "shantih shantih shanlih" in Section V ["What The Thunder Said"]. This lends to the poem a thematic if not organic unity. "The Burial of the Dead" is filled with images of death, barrenness and infertility.

> "And the dead tree gives no shelter,
>
> ...And the dry stone no sound of water"
>
> There is the cruellest r~ongh breeding
>
> Lilacs out of the dead land, missing
>
> Memory and desire...."

The biblical imagery of lines 19-30 may be traced to the Books of Job, Ezekiel and Isaiah in the Old Testament. Jn lines 43-50 Eliot satirizes social dabbling in the occult in his reference to the clarivoyant Madame Sosostris and 'her wicked pack of cards'. Incidentally, the original use of the Tarot pack was to foretell fertility to the land. Lines 60-76 express feelings of insecurity and death (reference to "that corpse") to the extent that London is the "Unreal City". The metamorphosis of London into its wraith-like appearance projects the fears of humanity :

> "That corpse you planted last year in your garden
>
> has it begun to sprout?
>
> Will it bloom this year"

What's vision of diaspora is found in the lines. A crowd flowed over London Bridge.

The entire section of "The Burial of the Dead" makes death a condition of life, a life in death as it were inducing the paradox : 'burial of the dead'. If we do not bury the dead they may rise and sprout again. Death echoes morbidly in this peom as a motif:

I do not find the hanged/man. Fear death by water. "The Burial of the Dead" shows an apathy towards life and living :

"... I was neither

Living nor dead..." The poem is overest by apparitions and shadows.

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"And I will show you somthing different from either

Your shadow at morning striding behind you

Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you..."

This wraith like quality of Eliot's observations on life is its central logic in this section. We are indeed "the hollow men" as he was to-state in one of his later peoms, "The Hollow Men ". The conversations in bits and pieces in Russian or German seem to be attempts at cosmopolitanism and cross-culturalism.

However, look once again at the title "The Burial of the Dead". The dead may be resurrected not in the manner of a Christ into life but in the manner of a bewildering and stifling civilization into inanity. This marks Eliot's extreme apathy towards life and civilization. His optimism however echoes faintly at the end of Section V of "The Waste Land"- 'shantih shantih shantih'. Is peace a mere illusion? The Waste Land is an epitome of human civilization, socially, politically and economically : truncated by a War, especially World War I.

Conslusion : To recapitulate then, we are looking at an essential metaphor of Eliot. What who or why is there a waste land ? Why i" there a tone of morbidity and fear ? Eliot's realism is that of 20th century life and the crisis of civilization. Civilization is mired in memory, in past and present. This is the genesis of the poem as it works through the flux of the 'stream of consciousness' from 260 B.C. to the red rock in the Book of Isaish to Saint Mary Woolnoth (a Church) keeping the strands in Eliot's contemporary London.

Unit -4 □ W. H. Auden : The Unknown Citizen

Structure

4.0 Introduction

4.1 Text of Poem : Analysis

4.2 Conclusion

4.0 □ Introduction

The unknown citizen is set in the 2nd world war period that is 1939-1945 and extends to post war conditions. Auden (1907-1974) studied biology at school and that is why perhaps there is a reference to eugenics. But the question posed is man's growth biological or moral and spiritual, something which a novelist like William Golding has attempted to answer.

4.1 □ Text of Poem : Analysis

The Unknown Citizen is a satire. It is an analysis of a contemporary situation of a 'modern'man ironically 'unknown'. The irony is further heightened by the fact that not only is the citizen unknown but his identity is recollected by leters and numbers. This shows that society is afflicted with a disorder, in its rush towards aggrandizement and consumerism.

> "And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
> A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigid..."

Modern man has become incognito, a cog in a machine, subsumed as it were in a materialistic ethos. There is trenchant irony in these lines as in many other lines of the poem. Such inversion of values points not only to the satirical undertones of the poem but also to the compassion of the poet. Satire without feeling or compassion can have only a retarding effect in a poem. It is such duality which makes this satire poignant and bathetic.

> "Was he free? Was he happy?
> The question was absurd.
> Had anything been wrong, we should
> certainly have heard."

The double tone employed throughout the poem layers it with irony and ambiguity. Try to look for more such instances in the poem. The man we are told possessed everything related to the necessities of life, his job, his medical insurance which are the conditions or pre-requisites for a happy living. Or are they? This is the telling irony in the poem. You will have to discover such ironical nuances throughout the poem, remembering that irony is a technique to communicate the satirical message which is the thematic perception of the poem.

Such **contemporaneity** infuses the poem with a 'modem' sensibility where the poet is telling the story of modern man or modern civilization. It raises questions as to what a civilized society is. The word 'saint' we are told is 'old-fashioned' in the vocabulary of the modernist. So the 'unknown citizen' is a modem saint. Serving "the greater community" is not only a mission, it is a compulsion, a necessity. Attitudes towards life are reflected in a casual, conventional manner. It is standardisation which earns accolades. What then are the traits of such **traditionality** or traditional morality, supposedly high points of one's character? It is in this case conforming to a strict and codified pattern of life.

> "Except for the War till the day he retired
> He worked in a factory and never got fired,
> But satisfied his employers...
> ...he was popular with his mates
> and liked a drink."

The archetypal 'good' man has been portrayed in the poem but his outward condition may not and perhaps connotbe a serious reflection of his state of mind.

"Had anything been wrong we should certainly have heard". The attempt at some kind of a psychological probing is left incomplete in the poem, an aspect of its open-endedness. "Was he free? Was he happy?" are rhetorical questions but are also layered with irony. It is "the Bureau of statistics "which unearthed the facts about this citizen. Such compliance with statistics, figures and numbers invests the poem with a mock-tone. Has man been reduced to anonymity and the status of mere figures? If so, then society is disfigured and has reached a moral and spiritual crisis. The poem then is a statement of the times. Do you think such a poem has a relevance even today transcending its mere topicality, that of say a social, political or economic crisis of those times?

Let us now analyze the poem at two or three distinct levels. It is a funny, clever and witty poem as it digs at the shortsightedness of society : happiness is measured in terms of rigid patterns, of falling into an order.

"When there was peace,
he was for peace, when there
was war he went
He was married..."

And soon, the poem goes on to speak dusultorily of the 'achievements' of the common man. Everything about him was 'normal'. Why prioritise such hollow certainties or certitudes in an uncertain world? The poet has no answer. This is the ethical question of the poem. Perhaps we are all 'unknown' citizens as opposed to the Great or the Famous.

Secondly it is a self questioning poem because the man here is a generalized concept of men or human beings. This is the metaphorical truth underlying the poem.

Thirdly the poem is an inversion of the real into the ridiculous. This is the pathetic fallacy or introversion in the poem. The self becomes the other self, that which is becomes the other self, that which is 'unknown'. This explains the title of the poem, "The Unknown Citizen". He is not ony the anonymous citizen, he could well be the uncared for and unloved citizen. What a travesty! Satire then is not only an effective story telling device in this poem but it is also underlined with a streak of compassion. Such humanistic gesture gives to the poem a typical Audenesque quality, his concern for the individual. It could be caricature of sorts but it also points to the indiference or insensitivity of society, society burtalized, where feelings or hurts do not matter.

I sm sure you will be able to identify with such concerns in todsy's society. Can you? How? It is the dogma which the poet recapitulates where poeple live by a set of rules. The immeasurable is measure.

4.2 ❏ Conclusion

In conslusion attempt to comprehend the satirical nuances in the poem which give it a built-in complexity. The rhyme scheme is irregular yet it is this form that determines the content or 'message' of the poem. Also note that the poem is written in a conversational or monologic style, as if the speaker is conversing with someone. But the themes it builds up are dialogic in nature.

Unit -5 ❑ Dylan Thomas: This Bread I Break and Fern Hill

Structure

5.0 ❑ Introduction

Dylan Thomas (1914-53) is an innovative Welsh, who began his career as a reporter. His first poems were printed in the *Sunday Referee*. His first volume of poetry *Eighteen Poems* (1934) attracted critical attention. His reputation increased with *Twenty-five Poems* (1934) and the *Map of Love* (1939). His later works are *Portrait of the Artist as a young Dog* (1940), *Death* and *Entrances* (1946). *In Country Sleep,* (1952) -and a radio play *Under Milk Wood* were published after his death. The critic Elder Olson has called him, 'a Keats, a Byron, a Yeats, an Eliot.

5.1 ❑ Text of Poem : Critical Analysis

The poem **This Bread I Break** is written in what we may call free verse. A technical understanding of Thomas' poems is required to examine his virtuosity. Though Thomas did not entirely abandon the metrical form of English poetry, he used it with less frequency in his later poems, the category to which *This Bread I Break* belongs.

The first aspect which strikes us about this poem is its recondite nature. The poem has to be studied at the metaphoric or symbolic level. The literal composition may not make any "sense" to you. How for example do we 'break break"? However, one notes the clarity of the poetic images : bread, blood, vine and wine; which also appear to be biblical allusions. The poem is saturated with such symbolism and the obsession is with the flesh:

> "Knocked in the flesh....
> Born of the sensual root"

The poem revolves round the Eucharist, the Christian sacrament commemorating the

Last Supper in which bread and wine are consecrated and consumed. The tension between the soul and the flesh generates poetic tension. The recurring motifs of wine, grape, vine, fruit etc suggest a sensuality beyond redemption. The preoccupation with the flesh is a poetic obsession, the kind of obsession which stifles spiritual growth. Yet the point that I am making is that the biblical symbols and allusiveness that one can discover in this condensed poem under-score the quest of the spirit tormented by the world of flesh. The spirit / flesh dichotomy is central to the poem. The breaking of the bread signifies the Christian element of reprieve and Christ-likeness. We must bear fruit as Christ says, yield results from the vineyard. The undercurrent prevalent in the poem is also one of self - mockery if not of self - castigation.

In the manner of a John Donne, Dylan Thomas uses metaphysical conceits : bread likened to oat and wine. Finally bread is metamorphosed into "flesh" as in the Catholic mass. The poem moves from : "This bread I break" to "This flesh you break". Such contrast between the 'bread' and the 'flesh' is the dialectic of this poem. The cadence is swift and in this short lyrical poem Dylan Thomas has blended the best of tradition with modernity. The use of a Christian metaphor by contrast also gives us the modern sense of inertia, barrenness and lack of wisdom. Though written in free verse the poem through its cadences gives the impression of rhyme. Form and content move at tandem in the poem. They are inseparable in a Dylan Thomas poem as he is conscious of style, clarity and of course thematic content. What is free verse is a question we ask in Thomas' poetry. Is it poetry without a set pattern? Yet this freeness' has its own metricality, investing the poems with song-like lyricism, characteristic of much of Dylan Thomas' poetry. The influence of Hopkins has been mentioned by critics; yet it is not necessarily the 'spung rythym' which he uses but *rhythym.*

To read a Dylan Thomas poem is to be astonished if not subjugated by the world of dreams and reveries. From the mundane to the spiritual is the 'poetic leap' that he takes through unusual metaphors.

5.2 ❑ Fern Hill: Critical Analysis

The poem is a recollection of the poet's childhood; it is a poem dominated by memory, episodic and lyrical. Like Gerard Manley Hopkins, Dylan Thomas's poems too aspire towards the condition of spirituality and music. Unlike *This Bread I Break* the poem is not surrealistic though there is a dream like strain, marked by a note of reverie. It is the tone that is impelling in Dylan Thomas's poems : dream-like enmeshed in a strange world of fantasy.

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However the poem is marked predominantly by a voice of pleasant remembrances when the sky was blue and the grass green metaphorically speaking.

> "Now as I was young and easy ....
> Time let me hail and climb
> Golden in the heydays of his eyes
> And hounoured among wagons I was
> Prince of the apple towns
> And once below a time I loudly
> had the trees and leaves ....
> Down the rivers of the windfall light."

It is evident then that the mood is one of pleasant if not joyful remembrance. There is no dislocation of the self as there is in *This Bread I Break*. The poem continues in this narrative mode, it is the poet's personal story or history conveyed by the sensuous, stark and vivid imagery:

> And as I was green and carefree ....
> In the sun that is young....
> Time let me play ai.d be ....
> And green and golden I was hunstman and heardsman."

The mood is characterized by colour and a Keatsian sensuousness. The poem is essentially romantic in nature notwithstanding Dylan Thomas's slight mystical and precocious style. There.is however, as I mentioned earlier, a clarity in this poem with the smells, sights and sounds of the natural world. The focal point is "Fern Hill"- the world of the poet's boyhood or childhood memories. Yet there are these twists and turns so redolent of a Dylan Thomas poem:

> "And the sabbath rang slowly
> In the pebbles of the holy streams".

Why should streams be "holy"? You may wonder. The devices used in the poem arc close to being onomatopoetic. There is of course the dream like image: '....the horses....

Flashing into the dark". The language in the ooem is oblique and symbolic. We had mentioned earlier that Dylan Thomas's poetry uses similes and metaphors in the manner of metaphysical conceits similar to the poetry of John Donne:

> As I rode to sleep
> The owls were bearing the form away"

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One wonders why the word 'tearing', has not been used, instead of bearing'.

'Rode to sleep' has an innocence and an air or simplicity about it but the expression is by no means simple.

The preceding lines are even more vague

> "All the sun long it was running,
> it was lovely, the hay
> Fields high as the house,
> the tunes from the chimneys...
> And fire green as grass".

The obscurity of "tunes from the chimneys" and "fire green as grass" are examples of 'metaphysical conceits or comparisons which are disparate and are disconcerting because of the incongruities.

Notice also how the poet compares and contrasts the sleeping state with the waking state :

> "And then to awake, and the farm, like
> a wanderer white".

The poem continues in this manner with its haunting images of a riot of colours linked inextricably with a memory - sense if one might call this :

> "Shining it was Adam and maiden,
> The sky gathered again
> And the sun grew round that very day...
> On to the fields of praise".
> You mightquestion "why fields"?

The entire poem is a poem of movement and internal if irregular rhyme. This however makes the poem lyrical.

> "And honoured among foxes and pheasants..
> Under the new made clouds....
> I ran my heedless ways ....
> Before the children green and golden"

This splash of colours is a beauty of the poem; its hallmark as it were. These days we are told in the following stanza were "lamb white". The poet recapitulates beautiful memories:

<center>"the lamb white days" replete
with "morning songs".</center>

The last two lines of the poem again have an element of surprise :

<center>"Time held me green and dying
Though I sang in my chains like the sea"</center>

Do we "sing in chains"? Ponder over this. Nevertheless form and content blend in harmony in this episodic poem, where the internalization of 'feelings' is the leitmotif. You may also try reading this poem aloud to experiment its lyrical beauty and song - like utterance.

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Unit -6 ❑ Philip Larkin : The Whitsun Weddings

Structure

  6.0   Introduction

  6.1   Philip Larkin

  6.2   The Text : Englishness

  6.3   Conclusion

6.0 ❑ Introduction

The poetry written in the immediate post-war years in Britain has been labelled 'Necromantic'. It was an hortatory poetry - wordly, ornamental, florid. The young poets of those years concentrated on being textually sensuous and gaudy and there are a few older poets to this day, Peter Redgrove among them, who continue this line. Most of those immediate post-war poets, alas, lapsed into a ludicrous grandeur* if not incoherence. Simply, they were not as gifted as their older models, Dylan Thomas and George Barker, nor as musical. By 1953, the year Dylan Thomas died, a violent reaction to Neo-romanticism was plainly evident and a new generation of young poets began to claim attention. These poets came to be known as The Movement and eventually Robert Conquest published their work in his interesting dynamic anthology *New Lines* (1956). They favoured a poetry which nurtured rationality, that was inhospitable to myth, that avoided poetic diction, that was conversationally-pitched and in opposition to Neo-romanticism. It was deliberately formal and lucid and small-gestured, regarding itself as being in the mainstream of the tactful English tradition.[3] One of their number, Kingsley Amis, wrote:

Let us make at least visions that we need

Let mine be pallid, so that it cannot
                    Force a single glance from a single word...
                    Let there be a path leading out of sight
          And at its other end a temperate zone:
                    Woods devoid of beasts, roads that please the foot.

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[3] In Acumen, April 1988, Michael Hulse remarked, 'the poets we think of as having their place in a central English line - Cowper. Hardy, Edward Thomas, Sir John Betjeman, Philip Larkin'. Other critics would add other names - not least, surely, Wordsworth.

These peoms of a temperate zone, of a slower metabolism, became popular because they reflected the attitude of a new post-war intellectural generation of writers who, sometimes nationalistically English, liked to think of themselves as tough, cynical and 'anti-wet'-a literary critical term used then and one which latterly has assumed, without difficulty, political connotations. Nationalistic or not, the Movement ould count among its numbers poets genuinely talented, not least Philip Larkin. Others are Elizabeth Jennings, Donald Davie, D. J. Enright, Thorn Gunn and John Wain.

While the Movement poetry was ubiquitous during the 1950s other poets, less hostile to romantic modes, unashamed of rhetorical energy, were also at work, among them mavericks such as Thomas Blackburn, David Wright and Jon Silkin; and these soon after were joined by Ted Hughes, a poet also writing a differently ordered poetry from that of the Movement poets. His work, first published in 1957, received immediate acclaim. Ted Hughes', wrote Edwin Muir in the New Statesman, 'seems to be quite outside the currents of his time,' Kingsley Amis had called for 'woods devoid of beasts'. Ted Hughes offered beasts without woods.

Nevertheless the pitch, strategy, bias of the Movement poets has predominated, with modifications, to the present day. The majority of poets whose first books were published after 1960, various as they are, would, it seeems, subscribe to the main themes of the Movement aesthetic for they have appropriated the concern for propriety in the use of language. Was Samuel Johnson right when he wrote in his Preface to Shakespeare : 'If fthere be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a cerain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language as to remain settled and unaltered, this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood.' ? Be that as it may, even poets addicted to a temperate zpne do, on occasions, need to speak with a greater precipitation and elegance.

6.1 ❑ Philip Larkin

Philip Larkin identifies himself with the crossorads of change. Time, place and space are moving and changing realities. It is the gift of Larkin's poetic voice to be authentic to his outermost and innermost feelings. He is not perhaps a cerebral poet but a poet rooted in his social and cultural realities. Such moorings give to his poetry a colour and verve,

sensuousness, the love of contemporary, English life. Larkin's poetry has often been described as melancholic, but in *The Whitsun Weddings* although there is a brooding element the poet grapples with the sensitivities of life-where the young and the old jostle with one another to taste life symbolized by a series of marriages. Such witness is the poet's witness to Ifie in its myriad hues. The metaphor of marriage has been appositely used to synthesize inward and outward feelings, moods and thought processes. The poem encapsulates changing moods, changing landcapes and perhaps the changing times. The scenes in the city of London are goint to be different.

6.2 ☐ The Text: Englishness

The Whitsun Weddings may be described as anarrative poem with a penchant for detail. It is a kind of reportage of the contemporary life in England. The narrative has a wry and detached tone. There is a distancing between the subject matter and the poet yet there is an eye for detail which situates the poem with what is happening around him, as he is journeying in the train :

"That Whitsun, I was late getting away :
Not till about
One - twenty on the sunlit Saturday
Did my three-quarters-empty train pull out,
All windows down, all cushions hot, all sense
Of being in a hurry gone. We ran
Behind the backs of houses crossed a street
Of blinding windscreens, smelt
The fish-dock .thence
The river's level drifting breath began,
Where sky and Lincolnshire
and water meet."

The first critical aspect tht strikes us about these lines is that not only is there a flair for sensuous detail, but also a vivification of realities. The speeding of the train, that life is a journey is evidenced in "We ran...crossed a street" Notice also Larkin's grasp of natural verities "Where sky ... and water meet". This is the poet's universe when on a "Sunlit Saturday" he embarks on a journey during which he contemplates with his inner

eye. Though the focus of the poem is on externals with a verve for physical detail (see stanza two) it is the mind which shapes realities:

> "And as the tightened brakes took hold,
> there swelled
> A sense of falling, like an arrow-shower
> Sent out of sight, somewhere becoming rain."

These last lines of the poem are in striking contrast with the earlier descriptive lull of activity, noise and perhaps merry making slows the movement.

> "... The women shared
> The secret like a happy funeral;
> ... A dozen marriages got

under way". Read these lines repeatedly and you may notice Larkin's contemplation of the English countryside ("Now fields were building-plots, and poplars cast").

The poem sometimes echoes the mood of the Romantics : sensuoussness imbued with melancholy. But the poet is concerned with contemporary England; where laughter or joy is stifled, "children frowned/At something dull.". The series of weddings are a witness to social life but there is a grim irony as well:

> "At first I didn't notice what a noise
> the weddings made
> Each station that we stopped at: sun destroys
> The interest of what's happening in the shade."

As platforms hold common and vulgar weddings crowds the poet or the speaker can only read or go "on reading". The at once detached and involved tone which the poet employs heightens his ironic perspective. He is impervious to certain sights, yet they cannot escape his notice as they belong clearly and concretely to the sights, sounds and smells of rural England. The train is speeding towards London we are told: anticipating change.

"and what it held stood ready to be loosed with all the power/That being changed can give."

6.3 ❑ Conclusion

Try to comprehend the poem at such levels of meanings, but also try reading it aloud so as to understand its lyrical nuances, which do away with much of the prosiness which characterizes and at times stifles modern poetry.

Notice that a typical Larkin poem like this begins with a precise description of a scene from contemporary life and concludes with philosphical significance of what has been described. The poet adopts a colloquial or conversational style.

Unit -7 ☐ Ted Hughes : Hawk Roosting

Structure

7.0 ☐ Introduction

Hughes' poems are located in his Yorkshire rural background, in the place by the name of Mexborough where he studied in school. His brother was a gamekeeper and his father took part in the 1st Wrold War. Perhaps both these facts gave poetic insights to him, hence his fascination for violence and the animal world. These two experiences determined Hughes' poetic references, his poetic mythos if one may so call it.

One of his first 'animal' poems was "The Thought Fox" where the fox symbolizes a creative spirit and energy. In Hawk Roosting, the hawk is a symbol of lustful destruction and deceit so much so that at the end of the poem one finds the speaker despicable and obnoxious. Or is this your reaction? Read the poem carefully to make your own inferences. The world of animality is communicated through violence and killing. To that extent there is a drama involved, the drama of life. In fact the poem becomes a metaphor of life albeit negatively. Such an attitudinal problem typifies his poems with a vigour or 'mainliness'. Again this is a paradox or an irony.

7.1 ☐ Text of poem : Critical Analysis

The poem 'Hawk Roosting' is a soliloquy. It has been described by a critic as "a dramatic monologue" Although it can be described as a monoogue taking the form of soliloquizing one wonders as to its dramatic effect. However there is a brutality involved.

> "Or fly up and revolve it all slowly-
> I kill where I please because it is all mine
> There is no sophistry in my body,
> My manners are tearing, off heads"

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Hughes cannot perhaps be described as an animal poet in the Laurentian sense. His animal imagery is used to highlight a philosophical or metaphorical truth.

"The allotment of death
For the one flight of my path is direct
Through the bones of the living
No arguments assert my right"

There is a kind of strubbornness here, a stoical refusal to accept any wrongdoing. The animal image here is used to describe an amoral if not immoral world.

The descriptive nature of the poem comes alive in vivid and evocative imagery. Read carefully the fist three stanzas of the poem where the poet depicts himself positioned to enjoy his "hawkroosting".

"Between my hooded head and hooked feet..
My feet are locked upon the rough bark...
It took the whole of creation...
Now I hold creation in my foot"

There is a tone of mockery, self righteousencess and defiance. Who is the bird defying? Is it trying to prove something? It is a complex that the poet demonstrates, Yet, the first line of the poem begins on a cautious note and has a sobering effect.

"I sit on the top of the wood,
my eyes closed"

One would expect that in such a quiescent setting a romantic aura would prevail. But the poem cleverly and neatly inverts such a mood when the hawk triumphantly exclaims:

"The convenience of the high trees!
The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray
Are of advantage to me;
And the earth's face upward for my inspection".

The tone is exciting and predatory lust dominates the poem. "I kill when I please because it is all mine". Sufffering to someone or something is a gain to the bird. Such brutaity makes the poem bizarre in the thematic context. We discover that it is the bird or the beast which is soliloquizing.

Notice the language of the poem which is colloouial and conversational. It is as if the speaker is talking to someone. The hawk may be a marvel of Creation but ironically it is all set to destroy works of Creation. The natural imagery or the world of nature in the poem does evoke fine sensibilities but certainly not in any Wordsworthian sense.

7.2 ◻ Conclusion

In the final analysis "death" is an "allotment" (last stanza). The poem depicts waste, violence and death existing outside the purview of morality, as something that is natural and primal. In fact the speaker is fighting a battle and narrating gleefully to us his triumph in it. The metaphorical significance of the poem cannot be missed out, given especially the background of the poet's life.

Unit 1 ❏ What is Language ? History of Language

Sturcture

1.1.   What is Language ?

It is Language that distinguishes a man from the rest of the animal world. Earlier it was common to define man as a thinking animal but, can we imagine thought without any language ?

Again man has often been described as a tool-making animal, but Language itself is the most remarkable tool that man has invented, and is one that makes all others possible. The most primitive tools, perhaps have come earlier than language. The higher apes are seen to use a stick for digging. They are also seen to break sticks. But sophisticated tools certainly demand human cooperation and division of labour and division of labour is not possible without language. Language, in fact is the great machine tool which makes human culture possible.

Animals communicate with one another by means of cries. Many birds utter a warning call at the approach of dangers. Some animals utter different cries expressing anger, fear, pleasure etc. These various means of communication differ in important ways from human language. Animal cries are not articulate and they lack structure. They are general in meaning and the number of calls is limited, whereas in human language, the number of human utterances is infinite.

A human language is a signalling system as it uses vocal sounds. We must remember that basically a language is something which is spoken. The written language is secondary and is derivative because speech is learned before writing. There are some primitive communities that have speech without writing, but we can not think of a human society which has a written language without a spoken one. The sign language of the hearing impaired are not exceptions to this rule.

1.2.   A World without Language

When the world was first created no one knew how to talk. Human beings had to learn to speak, just as little babies must learn to speak. How would it be if mankind were still speechless ? The world would be a different world then, wouldn't it ? The world we live in now is what it is, only because people can talk and write. In a world where no one can talk or write,

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there would be no knowledge, and without knowledge there would be no civilization. Men might live in groups for protection from wild animals, but there would be no cities, no tall buildings, no buildings at all whatsoever except very simple ones. People would travel only short distances because they would be afraid to, having no one to tell them what lay beyond their sight, or they would have no means of transportation–no cars, no trains, no aeroplanes, no ships.

You might grow food for your own needs, but you would have to eat only what would grow in the climate of the place where you live in – the list of foods you would not have, would be a very long list. Your clothes would be made of bark and leaves or the skins of animals, and a skin would be your blanket. There would be no industry, so whatever you would use, would have to be made by yourself. So man would be living almost as an animal. But man is a man and not an animal, because he walks upright. He has a human brain, and what is most important, he can talk. Language is the greatest achievement of the human race.

What would you do about your emotions if you could not talk about them ? Not much. Your curiosity could be satisfied only by looking and remembering, because no one could tell you, for instance, what makes it rain. In a speechless world you can not even make up a reason in your head, because words are needed for reasoning.

No, it wouldn't be fun at all not to be able to talk. There would still be love in the world, but there would also be deep fear and bewilderment and worry that originate from ignorance. There would still be hunting and fishing and games, but there would be no singing or story-telling or reading. In a way life would be a perpetual holiday, beause you wouldn't have to go to school. But you would have so many unanswered questions in your mind.

Activity–A

1. In what way is human language different from animal language ?
2. Give reasons to establish the superiority of Man's communicating ability to that of animal.

Discussion :

You are in a country where people communicate in whistles and gestures. How would you communicate in such a society ? Would it be possible ?

1.3. The Beginning of Language

Let us imagine that we are living in a world where no one can talk. We are living in a cave with our parents and relatives. Our bed of skins is at the side of the cave where the roof is very low to meet the floor. The roof then is close above you. At night you crawl into your bed very

carefully so that you don't hit your head. In the morning when you wake up, full of energy, you quickly sit up–with a bang ! because you have forgotten how low the roof is and have hit your head on it hard. A second before you hit, but too late, your father made a sharp sound of warning–let us say it was 'dhop'. The next morning, just as you wake up and you're about to sit up, your father says, 'Dhop' ! again. You remember the day before, you remember hitting your head, you feel the bump with your fingers, so you crawl out slowly to where the roof of the cave is higher before you sit up. After that you always remember about the low roof, and your father does not need to say 'Dhop!' to you any more for that.

Again, after a couple of days, let's say you are walking with your father. He is ahead of you and suddenly he makes the same sound, 'Dhop!' but this time in a low voice. The sound isn't exactly a word yet, but it does have a meaning to you. You remember the other times your father said it–those times it meant, 'Don't keep on moving or you will get hurt.' When he gave the warning in the cave it was loud. But here it is in a soft voice because he doesn't want anyone else to hear the sound excepting you. You do not think all this in words, because so far you have no real words, but you feel it. Anyway, you stop and hold still. And then you see a huge, hairy rhinoceros with a dangerous-looking tusk. You stand there behind your father, perfectly still, almost holding your breath. Finally you watch the animal, grub around for some roots, eats them, and slowly goes away. Only then you move.

Now your father has come to realize that his warning exclamation can be very useful. If you and the whole family will always stop moving when he says 'dhop', he can keep you out of danger and trouble which is common in the primitive world. When he first said 'dhop!' it was a cry. Now after making the same sound in different situations and seeing the same reaction, he resolves to teach it to the whole family, and so it has become a word.

That may have been the way the first word was invented. Then when other words had been invented and proved to be useful too, more and more words began to be invented by the people. We can guess that necessary words came first, eg. warnings, commands, names of things and actions–and later on abstract words–names for ideas and emotions.

It may be possible that Language was invented according to need. But it is also possible that language was invented for fun. Imagine once again that you are living in the time when no one could talk. There are all sorts of sounds in the world all around you, but there are no words. The wind in the trees goes 'whoosh'. The thunder goes 'boom'. The rain on the tight skin of a tent goes 'pitter-patter'. The wild geese say 'honk'. The half-wild dogs that live with your family make an abrupt and harsh sound like 'bow wow'. For fun, you begin imitating these sounds. You pretend to be the storm and say 'Whoosh ! Woo-oosh !' Then you see the lightning and you shout 'Boom ! Boom !' pretending to be thunder. After the thunder and lightning the rain comes and you whisper 'pitter-patter, pitter-patter' like the rain. When the rain stops you pretend to be the wild geese flying in the sky and you say 'Honk ! Honk !'. This is a loud, funny noise, so you say it again. Your brother hears the sound and he also joins you and makes the same sound. Both of you make such a noise that the dog starts barking and you both bark back. The game of

imitating natural sounds is fun and after some time you realize that you have invented some words. These are words that represent the sounds and similar sounds under all circumstances.

Hundreds of other such sounds may have been invented in this way, such as 'squeak', 'clatter', 'bang', and so on.

All this is guessing and people have been trying to guess for centuries how speech began. Plato, a Greek philosopher who lived about 400 years before Christ, thought that everything in the world had a natural name – and that it was man's job to discover these natural names. It seemed that Plato thought that there was a perfect language given to man by God, the Creator of the Universe. The ancient Hebrews had almost the same idea. In the Bible, after God created the heaven and the earth, He said, 'Let there be light' and there was light. Next He arranged the earth just as He wanted. He made oceans and rivers, forests and gardens, fish and birds, and animals. At last he made Adam. He brought all the animals to Adam and Adam gave names to all the creatures and to every beast of the field.

The ancient Hebrews thought that the Language that God and Adam spoke was Hebrew, and for centuries many people believed this to be true. Sir Thomas Browne, an English poet and writer born in 1605 had a theory that any child brought up away from human beings, would naturally speak Hebrew. But this proved to be wrong. A child brought up in the midst of animals learnt only the animal sounds. Only after the child lived with people, did he learn to speak as people.

Therefore it seems clear that man invented speech, just as he invented so many other things like the wheel, the steam-engine, the jet plane etc. When and how he invented it we may never find out. Somewhere, long ago, someone said the first word, but we don't know what the word was or who the someone was, or where he lived. So we can only say, as in a fairy tale, 'Once upon a time man learned to talk'.

Activity–B

1. What are the problems that man can face without any language ? State at least <u>five</u> examples.

2. In what way can Language help in the progress of a society ? You may refer to the following fields :

   (i) educational ii) industrial

   (iii) social iv) occupational etc.

Discussion :

The ancient Hebrews thought that a child naturally would learn to speak Hebrew – the language of the Gods. Do you believe in this theory ? What do you believe could be the origin of language ? After all, it is just guess work.

1.4. Theories on the Origin of Language (Some Speculative Evidences)

We are profoundly ignorant about the origin of Language. Therefore, we have to satisfy ourselves with plausible speculations.

There are many theories on how language arose. For instance, the language of children, the language of primitive societies, the kinds of changes that have taken place in course of time and recorded history, the behaviour of higher animals like the chimpanzees, and the behaviour of people suffering from speech defects. These types of evidence might suggest a few pointers, but they all have their own limitations.

If we consider the language of children, we must remember that their situation was quite different to ours. Our children grow up in an environment where there is a fully developed language. For instance, we see that the earliest words used by children are mainly the names of things and people (Doll, Cup, Mummy, Daddy). But this does not prove that the earliest men also used the names of things and people. One thing we can perhaps learn is that the first articulate word pronounced by a child is most commonly something like 'da', 'ma', 'na', 'ba', 'ga', 'wa'. The vowel sound is often a short 'ah'. Nearly always, these early words consist of a constant sound followed by a vowel sound, (da-da-da etc.). Such words may also have been the first utterances of primitive man, though hardly with any meaning.

It is noticeable among primitive people how closely their languages are adapted to their material needs. In Eskimo, there is no single word for 'snow', but a whole series of words for 'new fallen snow', 'hard snow', and so on. In general primitive people seem to have words for the specific things that are important to them e.g. words for particular birds and plants that it eats and also words for birds and plants that it does not eat. This study can be done by experimenting with some ancient primitive words. Some writers have argued that the words of command like 'Give !' 'Strike !' are very archaic, since in the earliest known forms of many languages these imperative forms are almost identical with the simple stem of the verb, without any special ending added. For instance, the Latin word 'dic' (say !), 'dicit' (he says), 'dicunt' (they say) and 'dicere' (to say). The form used for giving a command is the shortest.

A study of the higher animals can help us by suggesting what man was like in the pre-linguistic stage, just before he became man. The noises, the signals and gestures made by higher apes show us what man started from in his creation of language but they can not show us how he created language. Man alone has broken through to the use of symbols but apes always remained on the other side of language. Apes, of course, have smaller brains than men have and it is because of this that men could break through to the use of Language.

Next we come to the study of the behaviour of people suffering from speech defects, which is perhaps the least helpful. The condition which has been referred to is 'aphasia' in which the power of speech is totally or partially lost, often due to some brain injury. While recovering from

'aphasia' the patient to some extent repeats the process gone through by a child in learning to speak for the first time. It is difficult, however, to see the grounds for this belief, because evidence such as this can not be convincing.

Emphasis on one type of evidence or another has led to different theories of the origin of language.

1.4.1. The Bow-Wow Theory

Primitive language was an imitation of natural sounds, such as the cries of animals. This is what is called the bow-wow theory. Supporters of this theory believe that a large number of words in any language are imitations of natural sounds—words like '*quack*', '*cuckoo*', '*peewit*'. They also add that many other words show a kind of 'sound symbolism'. Such words in English would be '*splash*', '*sludge*', '*slush*', '*grumble*', '*grunt*', '*bump*', and '*sneeze*'. Perhaps a primitive hunter wishing to tell his companion what kind of animal he had killed, may have imitated the call of that particular animal, and this may well have played a part in the development of vocal symbols.

This theory does not explain how language obtained its articulated structure. Imitation of natural sounds may explain part of the primitive vocabulary, and it may have played a part in the transition from expressive cry to vocal symbol, but it can not be a satisfactory explanation for the rise of language.

Some groups of sounds really are appropriate to certain meanings, and this can be seen by their occurrence in a number of words of similar meaning. For instance, in English we find initial fl—in a number of words connected with fire and light (e.g. flame, flare, flash) and in words connected with a flying or waving motion (e.g. flail, flap, flaunt, flay, flicker, flag, fluctuate, flurry, flutter). And once a group of words like this exists in the language, new words were coined in the same model which had nothing to do with flames or flickering.

1.4.2. The Pooh-Pooh Theory

The second theory of the origins of language is called the Pooh-pooh theory. According to this theory language arose from instinctive emotional cries, expressive of pain or joy. According to this view, the earliest linguistic utterances were interjections exclamations expressive of some emotional state. This theory does not explain the articulated nature of language, and it does not bridge the gap between the expressive cry and signal. We can imagine how, by association, an emotional cry may have become a signal : a cry of fear or pain, for instance, could easily become a signal which warned the group of danger ; but this level has already been reached by the higher animals which react to signals of this kind. The theory does not suggest any motivation of this development. The task of creating language would surely have been undertaken only under the pressure of man's needs.

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1.4.3. The Ding-Dong Theory

The third theory begins from a fact we have already noticed, namely that there is an apparently mysterious harmony between sound and sense in a language. The theory argues that primitive man had a peculiar instinctive faculty, by which every external expression was given vocal expression. Every sensory impression was like the sound of a bell, producing a corresponding utterance. The problem about this theory is that it does not explain anything.

1.4.4. The Yo-He-Ho Theory

The fourth theory–the Yo-He-Ho theory was put forward by Noiré a nineteenth century scholar. This theory argues that language arises from the noises made by a group of men engaged in a joint effort to do something like moving a tree-trunk or lifting a rock. We all know that, while engaging in such joint efforts, people usually make involuntary vocal noises–like grunting or groaning noises in the process. Vocal noises of this kind might then have developed into words, meaning such things as 'heave', 'rest!', 'lift!'. This theory has two great virtues : it gives a plausible explanation of the origin of language, and it envisages the origin of language in a situation involving human co-operation. It also envisages speech utterances like commands and other imperative forms. Arguments against this theory say that language would have been necessary <u>before</u> men could perform the kind of complex communal labour that the theory demands. However, we must surely expect language and co-operative human labour arising simultaneously, each making the other possible.

A variant of this theory has been recently put forward by A. S. Diamond. He agrees that the first articulatory words were commands, uttered simultaneously with the execution of violent arm movements. He envisages the rise of language in requests for assistance from one man to another in danger or in tool-making, or breaking off of tree branches and the killing of animals during hunting. Such things might have occurred at a more primitive stage of human society than the communal heaving suggested by Noiré.

1.4.5. The Gesture Theory

The fifth theory of the origins of language is of the view that gesture language preceded speech. Supporters of this theory point to the extensive use of gestures by animals of many different kinds, and the highly developed systems of gesture used by some primitive peoples. One of the popular examples is the sign language used by the Red Indians of North America, which was an elaborate system of gestures. It is true that speech and gesture are closely intertwined; the part of the brain that controls the hand movements are closely linked with those that control the vocal organs, and it seems that speech and gesture grew up together. This does not prove that gesture came first. While it is true that animals use gestures, it is also true that animals use cries. Perhaps this may have been true in case of early man.

Gesture Language, however highly developed, has great disadvantages compared with the spoken language. To use a gesture language you have to have your hands free ; but as soon as

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man becomes a tool-maker and a craftsman his hands cease to be free; and when primitive man needed to communicate most urgently must have been precisely when he had a tool or a weapon in his hand, and it must have been during the time that led to the increased importance of vocal language. This would support the view that spoken language goes right back to the beginning of man's career as tool maker. Another disadvantage of the use of gesture is that it can not be used in the dark, or when the users are separated by obstructions like trees. Nor can a gesture be used to attract the attention of a man who is looking in another direction. None of these disadvantages of gesture can *prove* that early man had a spoken language, but they do suggest that he had very powerful motives for creating one.

Another variant of the theory is the *Mouth Gesture Theory* which was strongly argued by Sir Richard Paget and has recently been supported by an Icelandic professor, Alexander Johannesson. Paget argues that primitive man at first communicated by gestures and as his technique and intelligence developed he needed more exact gestures, but at the same time found that his eyes and hands were more occupied by his arts and crafts. When man was unable to go on gesturing because of their other uses, the mouth gestures were used, and when man realized that if air was blown through the mouth or nose the gesture became audible as whispered speech.

Language was thus produced by a sort of pantomime, the tongue and lips mimicking the movements of the hands in a gesture. Paget goes on to analyse large numbers of words in terms of mouth gestures, and this work in terms of mouth gestures, and this work continued by Johannesson, who made a list of same basic words of the earliest known language.

1.4.6. The Musical Theory

The sixth theory sees the origin of language in songs and sees speech and music as emerging from something earlier that included both. This theory was argued by the great Danish linguist Otto Jesperson. He argued that all the other theories could explain the origins of parts of language, but none of them could explain the whole of it. His own method was to trace the history of language backwards and study the trends that existed since the beginning of language. In this way, he arrived at the view that primitive language consisted of very long words, full of difficult jaw-breaking sounds and that it was more passionate and more musical than later languages. Earlier still, language was a kind of song without words which was not communicative, but merely expressive, the earliest language was not matter-of-fact or practical, but poetic and emotional, and love in particular was the most powerful emotion for outbursts of music and song. He says that "language, was born in the courting days of mankind".

1.4.7. The Contact Theory

The last of the theories—The Contact Theory, was forwarded by G. Révész, a former professor of psychology at Amsterdam. He argues that language arises through man's instinctive need for contact with his fellows, and he works out a series of stages by which language may have

developed. First comes the contact sound, which is not communicative, but merely expresses the individual's need for contact with his fellows ; for instance, the noises made by gregarious animals. Next comes the cry, which is communicative, but which is directed to the environment generally, not to an individual. Examples are mating calls and the cries of young nestlings in danger. Then there is the call for the satisfaction of some desire, which is found in domestic animals begging for something and speechless infants crying for their mother. The call is seen as the starting point for both music and language. Finally comes the word, which has symbolic function and is found only in man. According to Révész, the earliest speech was an 'imperative language', consisting only of commands, which later developed into mature human language. Révész's stages of language development seems to be more plausible. He does not, however, explain how language came to be articulated, and he places undue emphasis on the instinctive need for contact as a motive for the origin of language, while he neglects the urgent practical motives in co-operative labour which must have certainly impelled early man to use language.

With all the theories on the origin on language put forward by linguists and the more or less plausible speculations, they dealt with a period which has left us no record of its language. Once we reach periods in which writing was practised, we would be on much firmer ground.

Activity–C

The origin of language is an unsolved problem. A number of linguists have made plausible speculations trying to solve this problem, and as a result, several theories have been put forward by them. Complete the following table with necessary information :

Name of Theory	What it suggests	Arguments in favour and arguments against
Yo-He-Ho-Theory		
Gesture Theory		
Contact Theory		

Discussion :

According to your view, which theory do you think is more plausible ?

1.5.   The Beginning of English

How did English Language come to be ? It is difficult to say, so most of what we say would be guesswork. We have to deduce our knowledge from all sorts of clues that we can find.

The explanation which follows of how the scholars found out about the beginnings of English will be simpler compared to the process they adopted, but it will give us some idea of it. The first thing what the scholars did was to compare all the Languages of Europe and Asia. Some languages such as Chinese were completely different from European languages. But some had similarities– for example, the modern languages of India which came from Sanskrit. Most of the Languages of Europe seemed to be quite a bit alike, too. By comparing the same words in many different languages, the scholars became quite sure of the likeness. The words *mother* and *night*, for instance, are similar in modern languages. You will see this in the following list.

English	→	night	mother
German	→	nacht	mutter
Spanish	→	noche	madre
Portuguese	→	noite	mae
Italian	→	notte	madre
French	→	nuit	mere
Russian	→	nochy	maty
Swedish	→	natt	moder
Danish	→	nat	moder

These two words are also seen to be similar in languages that are no longer spoken–the ancestors of modern languages.

For example :

Middle English	→	nyht	moder
Old English	→	niht	modor
Old Saxon	→	naht	modar
Old Irish	→	nocht	mathir
Latin	→	nox	mater
Greek	→	nyx	meter
Old Slavic	→	noshti	mati
Sanskrit	→	nakta	matar

The dead languages in the above list were spoken in places as far apart as India and Ireland, but the words for *mother* and *night* are similar in all of them. The scholars found that these and many, many other words were similar. In their study they worked back till the time when there was no writing in existence for the languages, back so far that no one knew anything about them. And then they started to deduce.

Let us take a simple example of this kind of comparable study used by the scholars. You have seen the dogs of different kinds of breed e.g. the bull dog, the poodles, the spaniel, the pomeranian, and so on. These dogs are white, black, brown, red, or of mixed colours. Some are short coated, others are long coated, curly-haired or straight-haired. They can weigh from one pound to more than two hundred pounds. Their ears can be short and pointed or long and floppy. They seem very different in many ways, but they also have some things in common. They are all four-legged, they are easily domesticated, they have sharp teeth, they have a keen sense of smell and hearing. But other animals also have the same characteristics, too. So how can we find out that dogs are dogs, all belonging to one family no matter how different they look, and they are descendants of the wolf? This has been possible because the scientists have studied the bones and teeth of dogs. Their bones and teeth are similar, and different from the bones and teeth of other animals that look much like them. Scientists have been able to prove this because they have studied the skeletons of domesticated dogs belonging to thousands of years back which were found along with skeletons of early man. Besides that, the animal who has bones and teeth like a dog is the wolf. Therefore, the scientists have come to a conclusion that all dogs are related, and their common ancestor is the wolf.

It is from the 'bone structure'—the basic part of the word—of the various European and Asiatic languages that the scholars have deduced their common ancestor, a language called Indo-European language. If you refer back to the list of words for *night* and *mother* you will find the bone structure the scientists studied showing the differences. The Sanskrit *nakta* does not seem much like the Latin *nox*, but there is another form of the Latin word, '*nocte*', which shows they are quite a bit similar.

There is no written word of Indo-European origin, and perhaps that was not probably written at all, but only spoken. However we can be fairly sure that it is the parent langauge of English, and that French, Spanish, German and Greek and many other languages are also descendants and thus are the cousins of English.

Through the study it has been possible to find out about what the Indo-European people were like. Scientists have deduced that they came from a temperate climate because they had words for *snow, winter,* for *spring*, for *bear,* and *wolf,* (but not for *camel,* or *elephant* or *tiger*). They had words for *oak tree* and *pine tree* but they did not have words for *palm tree*. Tracing the various langauges back to the place from which they must have spread, we can deduce that the Indo-Europeans lived in east central Europe, perhaps in the region in which Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia meet. They lived in families with words for 'mother', 'father', 'brother' and 'sister' coming from Indo-European. Some of them (not all) lived in tribes, with chiefs. They had domesticated cattle, and dogs to help them. They drank cow's milk and most probably used the skins for clothing. They learned to use simple hand tools made mostly from stone and wood, though they may have used some kind of metal too. They learned to cultivate the land using some of the hand tools as there are references of words for *corn* and *grain* in the Indo-European languages. But the Indo-Europeans were not farmers. They probably lived mostly tending flocks, and thus had to move frequently from place to place to provide food

for their animals. This ability to move and live at the same time became useful to them when they began to spread, as they did, through most of Europe and down into Asia. They could not read or write, or do much arithmetic, though they could count upto ten using their fingers and they knew that ten times ten is one hundred.

Thousands of years ago the Indo-Europeans began to spread far and wide, perhaps because they found metals new to them, especially copper and iron, which gave them better weapons and tools. One branch of the people moved south-east, and they must have named the rivers Danube and Don, and others in what is now south Russia, and by 1200 B.C they had come as far as India. Some Indo-Europeans went south of the Grecian, Italian and Spanish peninsulas. Some went to the west coast of Europe and all this took thousands of years. But eventually there was a tribe of Indo-Europeans called Celts who came to what is now the island of Britain. They crossed the channel between Europe and Britain in canoes made of log and skin. They came over with their families, with all their belongings, their cattle, and their language came along with them.

There were people in Britain before the Celts came, but no one knows what their language was. These people, who were the earlier inhabitants of the island were a far more primitive people than the Celts, because by the time Celts came, they were far advanced. They knew the use of iron for making tools instead of bronze or stone. They also knew how to make the *wheel*, one of the great inventions of man. The Celts probably could not settle on the island peacefully. There are still myths that tell how the Celts fought terrible magical enemies, the Firbolgs, and these Firbolgs may have been these earlier inhabitants of the British Isles. But eventually the Celts settled, perhaps driven to the North of the island. Other invaders of the Indo-European descendants came to the island and fought with them.

The new invaders were the Romans. They came from Italy in 55 BC. At that time Julius Ceasar who was the Great Roman General had conquered what is now called France and had decided to cross the channel and conquer Britain as well. The Romans needed metal and food to support their advanced civilization and they knew they would find that in Britain, as they had already been trading with the island for nearly a century. It took them a long time before they could finally become masters of Britain. They built roads and towns, remnants of which can still be found as you can drive on some of these Roman roads in Britain. The important people in Britain, and of course all the Roman settlers, spoke Latin which, like Celtic, was an Indo-European Language.

As far as we know, two languages had been spoken in Britain–Celtic and Latin–but the strange thing is that although both of these languages were Indo-European, neither is the base of English. Though there are some Celtic words in English now, only a very few date from the days when the Celts were the masters of England. Latin also went through the same fate. There are thousands of Latin words in the English Dictionary today, but the Romans who conquered England did not learn many of them. The Latin language left England along with the Romans, as most of Latin words used in England came long after the Romans were gone, through trade and exchange of culture with the continent of Europe.

1.6. The Anglo-Saxons

The Romans could not stay in Britain for long as they were facing a lot of trouble in Britain and there was also trouble going on in Rome—their homeland. Barbarians were harassing civilized people all over Europe. They fought with the Romans in Italy and also in Britain. The Romans saw that they could not handle so much trouble all around and so they decided to withdraw from the island. The British Celts were then left on their own without the strong Roman armies to protect them, and they needed protection. Scets and Piots, the other Celtic tribes came south from the north of the island and plundered and killed the Celts in Britain. New invaders came across the English channel and descended on the British Celts. These new invaders were the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes, and unlike the Romans these people stayed on. They took up farming when they were not at war, and they settled down and took over all the good farmlands in the country. The Celts lived on the hill tops or became the slaves of the new invaders. Some left the part of Britain that is now England and went to Wales or Ireland. Thus the Celtic language died in England and the language that the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes spoke, became the native language. This language was called Anglo-Saxon, or Old English.

The Old English language was spoken differently in different places. The Angles spoke one kind of English, the Saxons spoke another kind and the Juted spoke another version, but all these versions were a form of Germanic. Germanic is not German as we now know it. Germanic was one of the original four western languages that came from Indo-European when the Indo-Europeans went roaming around to settle down in new places. Germanic was a cousin of Celtic, but by the time these people who spoke the Germanic language came to Britain it was quite a different tongue.

So you will find that the history of the English language is a history full of roaming and settling, invasions and wars. The next invasion came from the Danes, often called the Vikings, who had been raiding the coasts of England for a long time. After the Anglo-Saxons stayed in

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England for a while, the Danes came again and this time they decided to stay. They fought with the people, they burnt and ruined the important towns and the monastaries which had been the centres of education. But finally a treaty was drawn up and they were given land (a part of England) to settle down, called the Danelaw. Here they lived and became Englishmen too. Slowly words from their language were added to the English language. And since they spoke a kind of Germanic, it was difficult for them to communicate with the Anglo-Saxons.

From these early centuries no original manuscript in English has been left to us, though there were some very beautiful ones that were written in Latin. A few early tomb stones of the Anglo. Saxons are still to be found. The earliest manuscript dates from about 1000 AD (Manuscript is from Latin 'Manu' means 'by hand', and 'scriptus' means 'written by hand', and all books at that time were written by hand in England before the middle of the fifteenth century).

Manuscripts in the English language were written in Britain before 1000 AD. We come to know about this because great libraries, like the British Museum in London and some in the United States, have copies of original manuscripts written long before the year 1000. If these were not written down, they would never have reached us. However most manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxons were lost. Perhaps they were destroyed when the Danes burned the Monasteries where they were kept. Others may have been lost because they were scratched on the bark or wood of the beech tree, which does not last very long.

In about 1000 AD, probably a monk made a copy of the manuscript called 'Far Traveller'. The lost original of that copy, which was composed in about 675 Ad, is said to be the earliest example of written English. 'Far Traveller' is a poem of travel. The English in that poem would sound like a foreign language because English has changed so greatly since the seventh century. However, in a small group of islands in the North Sea, there are people who speak a language called 'Frisian' which is similar to the seventh century English and because of the isolation of the islands, the language there has not changed so much as the main body of English. We will not be able to read 'Far Traveller' unless we know Old English, but a modern Frisian could perhaps easily read the book. Similarly, a modern Frisian would not be perhaps able to read the books we read today unless he has studied modern English.

There is an example of another famous manuscript which, like 'Far Traveller', was copied around 1000 AD, and the original was later lost. The manuscript is 'Beowulf', a great English poem. No one knows who wrote it nor when it was written, but it is a blood- and-thunder story about a monster called Grendel who lived at the bottom of a lake in what is now Denmark. Grendel had been coming every night to the hall of King Hrothgar to murder and eat up the people of the court. Beowulf, who is the hero of the story, planned to kill Grendel and thus save the King and his courtiers. He waits for the monster Grendel to appear and soon it does :

- **Come on wanre niht scrinda sceadugenga.**

- **Came through the wan night slithering the shadow thing.**

The first line is Old English and the second line is a literal translation. But in modern English it would be :

The shadow-thing came slithering through the wan night.

The Old English language was mainly made up of words from Indo-European language. For several centuries, both before and after the Anglo-Saxons came to England, the language went through very little change. In the eleventh century, for the next three hundred years, Old English as an official language disappeared from England. It would have disappeared altogether like Latin and Celtic, but it did not. The Vikings or Danes had settled along the coast of Europe and spread over to England. Some of them settled in France where they stayed for a long time to be called Normans and to have adopted French as their language, an Indo-European tongue. In 1066 AD the Normans came to England with an army led by William, the Duke of Normandy, who wanted to be King of England. Harold the Saxon who was ruling England in those unsettled times, was busy fighting in the north of England. But very soon he came to the south to fight off William and his army. The two armies fought at Hastings, and William won the battle. So now the Normans who spoke the Indo-European tongue, came to settle in England.

The Normans now took over all the important positions and properties in England. The Anglo-Saxons were still living in England, but the Normans were the government officials, the lawyers, the wealthy, traders, the big land-owners. On the other hand the Anglo-Saxons were the small farmers and merchants, the servants and so on. The Normans had no desire to learn old English. They considered the language to be crude. So all business had to be done in French, all writing was in French, the courts were administered in French. Latin was the language of the Church in England and everywhere else. Latin was the language of the schools. Schools were not meant for all as it is now, it was only for the upper classes. For three hundred years the official languages of England were French and Latin and Old English was used only for talking.

The court, when it opened said in French, 'Oyez ! Oyez ! 'Oyez' which means 'Hear' 'Hear' Hear' ; but mothers did not say 'Ouez !' to their children when they wanted them to listen. Perhaps they said 'Hwact'. But whatever they said, it was Old English for the word 'listen', not the French ('Oyez !'. The Normans called meat 'beef' (Old French 'boef'), veal (Old French 'veel'), mutton (Old French 'moton'), venison (Old French 'veneson'), but the Anglo-Saxons who tended or hunted animals used the word cow (Old English 'cu'), calf (Old English 'cealf'), sheep (Old English 'sceap'), and deer (Old English 'deor').

The common people of England continued to speak in Old English for three centuries. Their language lived inspite of the fact that it was hardly written or ever spoken by the upper classes. In the seventeenth century, when the French speaking Huguenots went to America, they were powerful enough to abolish English, and from then till now French had been the official language of the United States. However, whatever the official language had been, if the people of America continued to speak in English, the language would have lived because a language continues to live when it is spoken and dies when it is not spoken.

Activity–E

1. Why were the Romans forced to leave Britain ?

2. Who were the new invaders who came to settle in Britain ?

3. How did Old English become the native language of the people ?

4. Who were the Normans ? Why couldn't they communicate with the Anglo-Saxons ?

5. Why was it so difficult to read and understand some early examples of written English ?

Discussion :

A language dies when it is not spoken. – Discuss.

1.7. Chaucer, Shakespeare and Modern English

Norman invasion was the last invasion of the British Isles. When the Normans were in England, they intermingled with the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes, and eventually they all became Englishmen and eventually English came back as a written language. Important writers such as Geoffrey Chaucer wrote in English, and it became a tradition to use the native tongue, which by Chaucer's time had become very much like modern English. The Canterbury Tales, which is a humorous and beautiful poem by Chaucer would be difficult to read without some amount of help, but it is closer to modern English than it is to Old English.

The poem begins with a celebration of the coming of spring in England after the long, dark winter. Following are the first two lines :

Whanne that April with his shoures swote

The droughte of March hath perced to the rote.

At first these lines might puzzle you, particularly the word 'swote'. But if you know that the word means 'sweet', then you can perhaps figure out what the lines could be in modern English, e.g.

When April with his sweet showers

Has pierced the drought of March to the root.

The poem is about a group of people riding on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas á Backet in Canterbury Cathedral. Some of the people who are in the group are a priest, a woman from just outside the town of Bath, a miller, two nuns, a knight, a sea captain, a doctor, and a

lawyer. On their way these pilgrims, they tell stories to each other for entertainment, and it is these stories that make up the Canterbury Tales.

One of the story tellers is a nun. She was extremely polite. Here is Chaucer's description of how dainty she was when she ate :

> Wel coude she carie a morsel and wel kepe
> That no drope ne fille up–on hir brest.
> In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest.
> Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
> That in hir coppe was no ferthing sene
> Of grece, when she drouken hadde hir draughte.

In modern English, these lines would read as :

> "Well could she carry a morsel and well keep
> So that no drop fell upon her breast.
> On courtesy was set full much her wish.
> Her upper lip she wiped so clean,
> That in her cup was no speck seen
> Of grease, when she had drunk her draught.

This nun not only had good manners, but she was very kind hearted.

> She was so charitable and so pitous
> She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous,
> Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.

In modern English the lines will read as :

> She was so charitable and so full of pity.
> She would weep if she saw a mouse
> Caught in a trap, if it were dead or bleeding.

The above examples show that Middle English as Chaucer's English was called, is not so difficult to understand when it is written in Modern English spelling.

After the Norman conquest there were no other invasions in England by foreign peoples, but there was another kind of invasion– an invasion of European culture. The English people continued trading with the continent of Europe, so, along with European goods they imported European ideas of art and writing and architecture, and also a number of European words. It is strange that inspite of the hundreds of years the Latin speaking Romans were in England, and the

hundreds of years that French was used as a language by the Norman conquerors, English had very few foreign words. But when England was peacefully trading with Europe, a lot of French and Latin words began to come into the language. The English language in this way developed and became a rich language. By around 1600 it was the language of Shakespeare, and now you can read his plays without any help, though you can understand better if you know the meanings of some of the words which have changed since then.

The following is a stanza from one of Shakespeare's songs in 'Love's Labour's Lost'.

> When icicles hang by the wall,
>> And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
> And Tom bears logs into the hall,
>> And milk comes frozen home in pail,
> When blood is nipped and ways be foul,
> Then nightly sings the staring owl ;
>> Tu-who ;
> Tu-whit, tu-who—a merry note,
> While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Some words in the above song might seem strange. When Dick 'blows his nail' he blows on his hands to warm them, and when Joan 'doth kill the pot', she skims the grease off whatever is in the pot, probably soup. Otherwise Shakespeare's poem is easy to read and it gives a vivid picture of an English winter.

A living language keeps changing from time to time. New words are added in the language— some of the new words are penicillin, television, brain-wash, etc. Words also disappear from the language. Some of the words that have disappeared from English from the time of Shakespeare are : vare (eager or ready), compt (neat), and weal (wealth). Again, some words have taken new meanings eg. in English 'quick' used to mean 'alive' ; 'gripe' used to mean 'grip', or 'hold' ; and 'nice' used to mean 'foolish'. But otherwise the language has not changed greatly since the time of Shakespeare.

It took three hundred years for Old English to become Middle English, and another three hundred years for Middle English to change to Modern English. In the first three hundred years, English went through a vast change. It would not be possible for Chaucer to read and understand *Beowulf.* In the second three-hundred-year-phase, English again went through so much change that, Shakespeare could not have read and understood Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' without finding it strange. In the three hundred-year period since the beginning of Modern English, which brings up to the present period, English has gone through very little change.

The following lines from the Bible will show the different stages of the change :

Old English — (10th century) : Da wearð micel styrung geworden on pære, swapæt. pæt scip wearð ofergoten mid ypum ; witodlice he slep.

Middle English—(14th century) : And loo ! a grete steryng was maad in the see, so that the litil ship was hilid with wawis ; but he slepte.

Modern English—(17th century) : And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves : but he was asleep.

This was just a brief history of the English language. To sum up : The Celts came to England, but their language disappeared. Then came the Romans and their language also disappeared. The Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes came to England, and their language became the base of modern English. The French-speaking Normans came with the Anglo-Saxon language. Old English became submerged, but after three hundred years it became once again alive and French declined. The English people traded with Europe and brought back with them European culture and French and Latin languages adding thousands of new words into the English language.

In the mean time, many Greek words were included into English. Some came directly as scientists coined many new words from Greek. For example, the recent study camparing human brains with mechanical brains is called *cybernetics,* from the Greek work *'Kybernetes'*, which means 'helmsman', and the suffix *-ics* means *'the study of'*. Some words of Greek origin have come indirectly. An example of this is *'helicopter'*, from French 'helicoptère', from the Greek 'helix'. English has also borrowed a few words from other languages as well. For instance, 'kimono' from the Japanese ; 'tomato' is from 'Nahuati, a language spoken by the Indians in Mexico; the word 'camel' is from 'Hebrew, 'algebra' is an Arabic word, 'typhoon' is a Chinese word, 'yam' is Senegalese–an African language; 'Zebra' is from Amharic–another African language; 'mohogony' is from a West Indian language, and 'ketchup' is Malayan.

It is surprising and really amazing that English language which has borrowed so widely, has borrowed from other Indo-European languages and it is this borrowing that has made English so flexible and so colourful and has helped in making it one of the great languages of the world.

Activity–F

1. How did English come back as a written language ?

2. What is Chaucer's English called ?

3. How did English language become a rich language in the 17th century and later one of the great languages of the world ?

Discussion :

'A living language keeps changing from time to time.' – Discuss.

1.8. The Making of an Alphabet

The Greatest invention was the spoken language, but the spoken word does not last. Once it is spoken, it is gone. It is gone because it is just the vibration of our vocal chords -- the kind of vibration that is made when the string of the 'Sitar' is pulled. It is gone because it is just air. You can not catch a spoken word with your hands; you cannot see it; nor can you read it. You cannot even hear it an instant after it has been spoken.

To make the spoken language last, the only answer is to write it down–that's easy. It is easy because you know how to read and write, and because you learned to do so with a ready-made alphabet. But suppose there were no written language and you wanted to write a letter. Supposing you are a boy staying on a farm in the countryside for the summer and you want to let your family members who are living in the town know what you are doing. The only way you can think of is to draw a picture. You want to tell them, 'I went for a walk among the trees in the country while the sun was shining.'
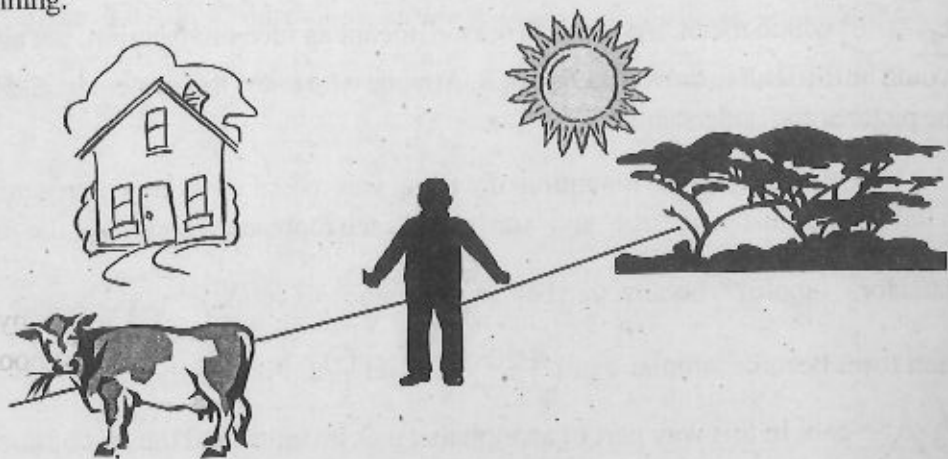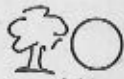
Then after that you draw this :
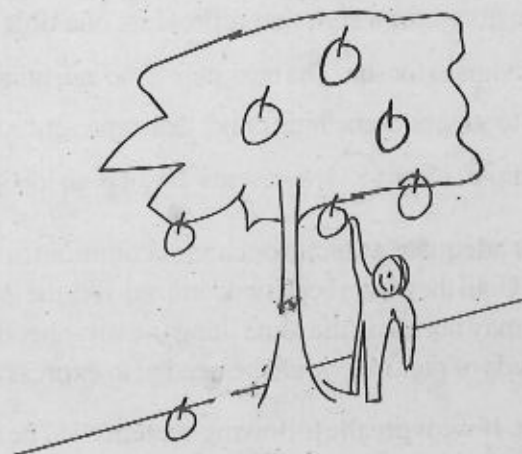
which means, 'I picked an apple from the apple tree'.

After drawing pictures for each event, everyone knew that ⌬ meant 'tree'; ⌬ meant 'boy'; ⌬ meant 'sun', and ⌬ meant apple.

The people became used to pictures that served as writing. But it became tiresome to draw them. They simplified the pictures to make writing easier and gave them more meaning. So, 'a boy walking' became ⋀ or walk. ◯ came to mean daytime because the sun shines during the day. They merged the trees ⌬ and that meant country because the country is where most trees grow.

The next stage of the invention of writing was that the word could stand for a word represented by the sound made while saying the word. For instance, tree ⌬ and sun ◯ together → ⌬◯ which mean *treason*. 'Treason' meant an idea or an action, not an object, and it would be difficult to draw a picture of it. Anyone who knew this system would be able to read the pictures and understand them.

One more step in the invention of writing was to make pictures represent the sounds of syllables. For instance, 'tree' and 'sun' could each represent a sound eg. the first sound they stand for — apple ⌬ became '*a*'; boy ⌬ became '*b*'; country ⌬ became '*c*'. Gradually each form became simpler e.g. ⌬ a, ⋀ b, and ⌬ c. Put together a word was formed ⌬ ⌬⋀ = cab. In this way part of an alphabet was invented and the rest of the alphabet also arrived.

'Pictrogram' is the name given for a sign that represents one object only rather than a complete picture. ◯ is the pictogram for sun. The next step of the invention is rather difficult i.e. the idea of allowing the picture to suggest something rather than represent something. This kind is called an 'ideogram'. For example, when ◯ represents day, it is an ideogram.

But picture writing is not adequate as pictures cannot communicate all kinds of ideas, particularly complicated ideas. Until they have been standardized, like the arrow → which means 'Go in this direction'. Pictures may not mean the same thing to everyone. Besides, pictures take a long time to draw and hundreds of pictures would be needed to express a thought or an idea.

Let's make an experiment. If we write the following sentence : 'The dog is barking at the cat', we will find that we can do that in a few seconds. But if we were to draw it, then we would take much more time :

pic.

Again, perhaps somebody might interpret the dog to be a wolf or the cat to be a tiger; or a person might consider the dog to be yawning instead of barking or the cat to be a frightful creature with a humped back and the dog to be frightened of it.

There was another problem, too—the question of time eg. when did this happen ? There was no way to tell whether 'the dog is barking' or 'the dog was barking' or 'the dog always barked at the cat'.

Next, how could a person draw 'my conscious bothers me'. That was really impossible. The invention of alphabet would have solved the above problems, but some great civilization have lived and died without such an alphabet. For instance, no North American Indian tribe developed any form of writing except picture writing. One Indian tribal developed a way of writing imitating what he called the white man's 'talking leaves'. This was Sequoia, a very intelligent Cherokee, who invented a way to write his native language by using variations of the English letters to stand for Chirokee syllables.

The Chinese, who have a very ancient civilization, used a very complicated system of signs based on pictures even today. They have devised a number of signs to represent ideas, feelings, qualities and so on—about 40,000 signs. These signs can be recognized by anyone who knows the system. But, to be able to learn these 40,000 signs was a difficult task. A part of these 40,000 Chinese characters, only 4,000 are used in everyday life. Yet, to learn these 4,000 characters is a difficult job for a child.

The first great jump that was made in this direction from pictures to writing was when pictures came to represent a sound instead of a thing or an idea. The second great jump was when each sign represented a single sound. In a big dictionary, there may be 500,000 words, all made from twentysix letters. With English alphabet we can make an infinite number of words with the help of only a few letters.

But English alphabet is not scientifically perfect. It would have been better if each sound was represented by a letter in order to get our pronunciation correct. That is not so. The letter 'a' in the word 'same' is not the same as in the word 'cat' or 'charm' and so on. This would, of course, increase the number of letters and about 40–50 letters would be enough for English, and this would help us to pronounce the word by looking at it even if the person did not know English. There is, in fact, such an alphabet, called the International Phonetic Alphabet, which students of Language use. In that alphabet, 'rough' is spelt |r f|, 'through' is spelt | ru| 'though' is spelt |ðau|; 'bough' is spelt |bau| ; and 'cough' is spelt |kaf| . Anyone who knows the IPA, whether he

spoke French or Spanish or even Arabic, will know how to pronounce those confusing English words.

May be some day people will be using the IPA but that will take a long time, because, it takes a long time to make changes in spoken language and even longer to make changes in written language.

How long it took to make English alphabet, no one knows for sure. English alphabet came from the Phoenician by way of Greek and Latin, we are not sure whether the Phoenicians invented their own alphabet. Phoenicia was an ancient country on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea. There, almost 3,000 years ago, the alphabet consisted of 22 pictures of common objects. 'Aleph' for example, meant 'ox', and 'aleph' was the name for the first letter of the alphabet. In English it is 'A'. The picture of 'aleph' was the head of an 'ox' with its horns. 'Beth' was the second letter, the English 'B'. 'Beth' meant 'house', and the pictures for 'beth' was a picture of a house with a peaked roof. These pictures representing sounds were care – fully drawn when the Phoenicians first started writing, but people got used to them as sounds rather than as pictures. Besides, they wanted to write faster. For these reasons they simplified the pictures, and now you may not be able to recognise them for what they were if you did not know the history.

The Greeks borrowed the Phoenician alphabet, but as they did not know that the letters were also pictures, they changed them. They turned the ox's head upside down and distorted the house—so much that it did not look like a house at all. When the Romans borrowed the alphabet from the Greeks, they also changed the shapes of the letters, by using curved lines on straight lines and angles. The Roman alphabet, the one we use to-day in English, is two-thousand years old. The following picture will give us a clear idea of the changes that took place :

How the alphabet was made

		ox	house
Phoenician 1800 to 1000 BC	Early form	⩖	⌂
	Later form	⋈	⌂
	Meaning	ox	house
	Name	Aleph	Beta
Greek 700 to 500 BC	Early form	A	ᗺ
	Later form	A	B
	Name	Alpha	Beta
Roman 50 BC	Form	A	B
	Sound	ah	bay

It took several centuries, we are not sure how long, for mankind to develop the English alphabet into the form that we find today. The invention of writing is the most important and most useful achievement of the human mind.

We can still imagine a world without writing, because in the world there are people who have no writing even today. They have no history except their folk tales, because their history was never written down. They have no books, no libraries for the vast collection of knowledge. They have no literature, except for more folk tales, handed down orally from parents to children. They have no science. Their knowledge is very simple mainly about animals that live around them.

Knowledge is the accumulation of many generations, each one advancing on the previous one. We can not have preserved knowledge without books. Knowledge can not be the wealth of one country. Wise men all over the world trade their knowledge and this cannot be done without books. People without writing is a backward people. Progress of a nation goes hand in hand with writing and knowledge.

Activity–G

1. What were the problems of using 'pictograms' and 'ideograms' for writing ?

2. How was the English alphabet made ?

3. Why is English alphabet not scientifically perfect ? What would be perfect alphabet ?

Discussion :

'People without writing is a backward nation' – Discuss.

1.9. Early Modern English

The late middle ages had seen the triumph of the English Language in England, and also once again the setting up of a standard form of Literary English. Inspite of this English language was not without any rival. Latin was still treated with great prestige as the language of international learning, and it took time for English to replace Latin in all fields. Even the natural scientists, the proponents of the New Philosophy, often wrote in Latin. Francis Bacon, the philosopher of the new science, wrote his 'Advancement of Learning' in English, but the book that he intended as his major contribution to scientific method, the 'Novum Organum', was in Latin. Even the three greatest scientific works published by Englishmen between 1600 and 1700 were all in Latin – Gilber's book on magnetism (1600), Harvey's book on the circulation of the blood (1628), and Newton's 'Principia' (1689), which forwarded the theory of gravitation and the laws of motion, for

consideration. But, by 1700, Latin had fallen into disuse as the Language of learning in England, and Newton's 'Opticks', published in 1704, was in English.

English *Versus* Latin

With the defeat of Latin, and the ultimate establishment of English as the only literary medium in England, quite an important part was played by the religious disputes that raged from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. During the Reformation, controversialists wanted books and pamphlets to be read by as large a public as possible. Besides, since many of the people who were attracted by Protestantism were of humble origins, and they lacked classical education, *ie.* they did not know Latin. As a result, controversial books and pamphlets tended to be written in English. Sir Thomas More, when he wrote for the entertainment of the learned men of Europe, as in 'Utopia', he wrote in Latin, but when he was drawn into the domestic religious controversy against the Reformers he wrote the books and pamphlets in English. In the same way, more than a century later, Milton wrote defences of the English people and the English republic which were meant for the learned people of Europe, so these were written in Latin. But most of his controversial prose (on episcopacy, divorce, the freedom of the press, and so on) was intended to have an immediate impact on English politics, and hence these were written in English.

Another factor that worked in favour of English, was the rise of social and occupational groups who knew very little or no Latin, who nevertheless had something to say – which they said in English. Most of the practical men of the sixteenth and seventeenth century England were skilled craftsmen, instrument makers, explorers, and navigators. A scientist like Gilbert wrote in Latin, but there were many Elizabethan treatises on practical subjects like navigational instruments, warfare, and so on, which were written in English for the common man. An important part was played by the invention of printing and the spread of literacy which followed it.

Again, another factor in favour of English was the increase in national feeling which accompanied the rise of the modern nation-state in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There was a change in the feeling of man. Mediaeval man believed that he was a part of Christendom but later this feeling was replaced by the modern feeling that a man is an Englishman or a Frenchman or an Italian. This change of feeling was the result of changes in economic and political organization. This increase in national feeling lead to a greater interest and pride in the national language, while the language of international Christendom, Latin slowly fell into the background. The new nationalistic feeling lead to conscious attempts to create a vernacular literature to compete with that of Greece or Rome, and both Spenser's 'Faery Queen' (1590) and Milton's 'Paradise Lost' (1667) were attempts to do for English what Homer and Virgil had done for Greek and Latin.

But while English was, in this way, establishing its supremacy over Latin, it was at the same time greatly influenced by Latin than any other time in its history. The Renaissance was the period when the classics were rediscovered in Europe. In England there was the revival of Greek

scholarship, a symbol of which was the foundation of St. Paul's School by Dean Colet in 1509. But the importance of Latin continued, and we see the constant influence of Latin literature, Latin rhetorical theories, and the Latin Language.

1.10. Loan Words from Latin

The result of Latin influence on English during the Renaissance period was the introduction of a large number of Latin words into the language. Besides, the influx of French words in the Middle English period had predisposed English speakers to borrow words from abroad. During the Renaissance, this predisposition was given full scope, as a result, there was a flood of Latin words. The peak period was between about 1550 and 1650.

These were not the first loan words to be borrowed from Latin. Words like 'street', 'mint' and 'wine' were borrowed while the English were still on the continent, and words like 'bishop' and 'minster' were borrowed during the Old English period. Quite a few Latin words were borrowed as well, during the Middle English period. These include religious words like 'requiem' and 'gloria'; also words from the law courts like 'client', 'executor', 'conviction', and 'memorandum'. Medical and scientific words were borrowed, too, for instance, words like 'recipe', 'dissolve', 'concrete', 'distillation', 'comet', and 'equator', and besides these, a number of abstract words were borrowed, like 'adoption', 'conflict', 'dissent', 'imaginary', 'implication'.

In early Modern English a great number of Latin words came into the language, and by 1600 there was the unending stream of Latin words that were introduced. Some of the words were taken over bodily in their Latin form, with their Latin spelling, for instance, 'genious' (1513); 'species' (1551); 'cerebellum' (1565); 'militia' (1590); 'radius' (1597); 'torpor' (1607); 'specimen' (1610); 'lens' (1693); and 'antenna' (1698). Of course they were not often taken with their original meaning. The reshaping of the words were influenced by the forms of French words derived from Latin. And, in fact it is often difficult to make out whether a word has come into English direct from Latin or *via* French. The Latin borrowed words are learned words, many of which are scientific terms, for instance, 'pollen', 'vacuum', 'equilibrium', 'momentum'. Some are mathematical words, like 'area', 'radius', 'series', and 'calculus'. Some others are legal terms, like 'alias', 'caveat', and 'affidavit'. Again there are words for everyday use, like 'album', 'miser', 'circus'. But if we look at the words in general, we find that most of them are the kind of words that are introduced into a language through the medium of writing rather than in speech.

None of these words have come into the language without any opposition and we find there were numerous attacks in the sixteenth century on the 'inkhorn terms', as they were called. For example, in Thomas Wilson's influential book 'The Art of Rhetoric' (1553) there is a well-known attack on them. Such attacks were to a certain extent provoked by the absurdities of the

extremists who were also ridiculed in plays. Such ridiculous extremists of Latinisms are, for instance, Holofernes in Shakespeare's 'Love's Labour Lost' and Crispinus in Ben Jonson's 'Poetaster'. But attacks and ridicules could not stop the flow of Latin loan words into the language. Words that were ridiculed are often the ones that have become fully accepted. For instance, the ridiculous words used by Crispinus in 'Poetaster' include words like 'lubrical', 'turgidons', 'oblatrat', and 'furibund', but they also include such words as 'retrograde', 'reciprocal', 'defunct', 'spurious', and 'strenuous'. There were a number of people to defend Latinisms and even Wilson admits that some of them are all right. And Shakespeare may make fun of Holofernes and his pedantry, but he himself is not a purist, and is a great user of new words.

Remodelling of Words :

Not only Latin influence brought us new words into the language, it caused existing words to be reshaped in accordance with their real or supposed Latin etymology. Examples of this can be found in Wilson's 'Art of Rhetoric'.

1.11. Loan Words from Other Languages

Although most of the new words were from Latin in the Renaissance, a number of words were borrowed from other languages as well. Quite a few were from classical Greek, although most of these words came *via* Latin or French. They tended to be learned words, and many of them are technical terms of literary criticism, rhetoric or the natural sciences. Literary or rhetorical words that have come straight from Greek include words like 'pathos', 'phrase' and 'rhapsody'. Some words that came *via* Latin were words like 'irony', 'drama', 'rhythm', 'trochee', and 'climax'. There were few words *via* French, like 'ode', 'elegy' and 'scene'. Scientific words that have come direct from Greek include 'Larynx' and 'cosmos', while *via* French came words like 'cube' and 'acoustic'. However, majority of the words came *via* Latin, for instance 'anemone', 'caustic', 'cylinder', 'stigma', 'python', 'electric' and 'energy'.

A number of words were introduced from Italian and Spanish. A part of the education of young educated men were to travel across the continent and France, Italy, and Spain were specially favoured. In the sixteenth century there are frequent sarcastic references of such brave men who returned from their tour of the continent affecting foreign clothes, customs, morals and larding his speech with a whole lot of foreign words. Most of these words were Italian and it has left its mark on English vocabulary. When we think of Italian words in English, we think of words connected with *arts*, and specially with music. Most of these words were in fact later importations, mainly from the eighteenth century, though a few words were loan words during the Renaissance period, for example, words like 'madrigal' and 'opera' in music ; 'sonnet' in literature; 'fresco', 'cameo' and 'relief' in visual arts, and in architecture, words like 'cornice' and 'cupda'. But in this early period there were other fields of activity like warfare, so there are words like 'squadron',

'parapet', 'salvo' and 'bandit'. Another field was that of commerce, and some such loan words were, 'traffic', 'contraband', 'argosy' and 'frigate'.

Few words were borrowed from Spanish, but here again loan words connected with commerce and warfare were introduced, for example, 'cargo', 'cask', 'anchovy', 'sherry', 'armada', 'galleon', 'parade'. The lighter moments of the Spaniards are reflected in words like 'guitar' and 'spades'. Many early words for American things came into English *via* Spanish and Portuguese as early explorations in America were carried out by the Spaniards and the Portuguese. Thus from Spanish came words like 'mosquito', 'potato', and 'cannibal', and from Portuguese came words like 'flamingo', 'molasses', and 'coconut'.

Quite a large number of loan words in the Renaissance is from low German, in which we can lump together Dutch, Flemish, and the dialects of the Northern Germany. These regions had close commercial contacts with England ever since the Norman Conquest, and many of the words borrowed by the English were words related to seafaring and trade. From the Middle English period we get words like 'luff', 'skipper', 'firkin' and 'deck'. Sixteenth century loan words include 'cambric', 'dock', 'splice', and 'yacht', while in the seventeenth century we find words like 'keelhaul', 'cruise', 'yawl', and 'smack'. The Dutch were famous for their painting, so we find words like 'easel', 'sketch', and 'stipple'.

There was a great change in the pronunciation that took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so that Shakespeare's pronunciation differed considerably from Chaucer's, but differed in small ways from that of today. The greatest change between Middle and Modern English is often called the Great Vowel Shift. This was a change in the quality of all the long vowel sounds.

Activity :

1. What was the position of Latin in the late Middle Ages ? Why couldn't English replace Latin ?

2. When and why did Latin cease to be used ?

3. To what extent did Latin still continue to exist ?

Discussion :

Latin is a classical Language, yet the importance of Latin continued. Why ? – Discuss.

1.12. English in the Scientific Age

By 1700, the main changes in the pronunciation that made up the Great Vowel Shift were all completed. Word forms, for instance, 'loveth' had disappeared from the ordinary educated speech, and was replaced by 'loves'. The pronouns 'thou' and 'thee', and the corresponding

verb forms like 'lovest', was no longer used. The auxiliary 'do' came to be used and the language had reached a stage at which its differences from present day English became very small. We can see this if we go through some of the writings of the early eighteenth century.

Addision's spelling is similar to ours, though there are slight differences in the spelling, like 'carry'd' and 'publick,' and slight differences in the punctuation as well. In the middle and early Modern English there had been no standard spelling. Each writer had his or her own spelling, even within the work of one writer there were differences in spelling. The spelling of even proper names was not fixed. So we see that Shakespeare, in his three signatures on his will, has used two different spellings of his own surname (Shakspere/ Shakespeare). But with the introduction of printing, standardization of spelling could be noticed to a certain extent by the middle of the sixteenth century, though there was still no standard system. A number of widely accepted conventions were also there. This problem was discussed by grammarians and spelling reformers in both the sixteenth and seventeenth century, because people wanted English to be 'fixed' in the way classical Latin was fixed. This classical desire for a stable language became even stronger in the eighteenth century, which is a great age of grammarians and lexicographers and Dr. Johnson was one of them. But in fact, standardization of English spelling had effectively taken place by the middle of the seventeenth century and very little has changed since then.

However, the standardized spelling which became established in the late seventeenth century was still an archaic one, and broadly speaking, it represented the pronunciation of the word as it had been in the late medieval age. This is the reason why we find so many oddities in English spelling today. There are still letters in the words that has ceased to be pronounced long ago, like the 'k' and 'gh' of 'knight', the 't' in 'castle', the 'w' in the word 'wrong'. In some cases a sound change has taken place, but the spelling represents the older pronunciation, as in 'clerk', 'Derby'. Distinctions are made in spelling where there is no longer any distinction at all, as in 'meat' and 'meet'. Conversely, new distinctions were seen without any change in spelling, distinction in the pronunciation, as in 'put' and 'putt'. Such things have introduced inconsistencies in English spelling. The spelling conventions that a language adopts are a matter of indifference, but it is important that it should use them consistently.

One result of the inconsistencies of English spelling is the existence of 'spelling pronunciations'. These arise when a word is given a new pronunciation through the influence of its spelling. The influence of the spelling leads many people to pronounce the 't' in 'often' and 'waistcoat', etc. The spelling pronunciation is now fully accepted in educated speech.

1.12.1 The Influence of Scientific Writing

The seventeenth century saw the victory of the scientific outlook in England. This was seen and felt everywhere and the influence was greater on the language—the way it had been used during the past three hundred years. Latin gave way to English as a language of science and scholarship. The rise of scientific writing in English helped to establish a simple kind of prose as

the central kind of modern English. Other kinds of prose also existed but a rhetorical style ceased to be the norm, and what we may call the plain style became central. This style is not confined to science alone; it is found in all kinds of expositional writing such as in history, philosophy, literary criticism, and so on. Unfortunately, all scientists do not write in a plain style. However, scientific writing, and the scientific attitude in general, played a part in the formation of this style.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the influences of science on the way the language was used was quite conscious. In 1667 Thomas Sprat wrote a history of the Royal Society, the first scientific society in England, and still it is the most famous. However, the seventeenth century scientists had their own ideas about the way language should be used.

The Scientific Vocabulary

The influence of science on language was the expansion of the scientific vocabulary. The scientists wanted technical terms for a number of things, like names of its branches and sub-branches (zoology, chemistry, history, genetics, etc.); for newly discovered or invented substances (oxygen, uranium, benzene, nucleic, and nylon etc.); for various parts of an organism (femur, flagellam, pericarp); for various kinds of scientific instruments (barometer, electroscope, vernier, cyclotron); for units of measurement (metre, micron, dyne, erg, ohm) ; for states and processes and relationships (anaesthesia, photosynthesis, symbiosis); for description of shapes and qualities (ovate, glabrous) ; and in general for an enormous number of objects and concepts of all kinds. One authority has estimated that the technical vocabulary of the natural sciences now runs into several millions of items. No one can know more than a fraction of this vocabulary. However, there is a considerable scientific vocabulary which is more popular, and some of the very common words are familiar to every man, for instance 'cell', 'atom', 'nucleus', 'volt', 'molecule', etc.

In forming the vocabulary, scientists have taken up various sources. One device is to take a word which is in everyday use and then give it a special scientific meaning, such as 'salt', 'pollen', 'fruit', 'parasite', 'fatigue', 'work', 'force', 'power', 'current', and 'resistence'. Another device is to take over words bodily from another language. Thus words from Latin have been taken, like 'bacillus', 'corolla', 'cortex', 'focus', 'genus', 'quantum', 'saliva' etc. Few words were taken from Greek, like 'cotyledon', 'iris', 'larynx', 'pyritis', and 'thorax'. But by far the commonest way of providing new scientific words is to invent them, using Greek and Latin material.

The number of words formed from classical elements, and especially Greek ones, is huge. Classical words have the advantage of being intelligible internationally. In any specialist field, the research worker presumably gets to know the meanings of the classical elements commonly used there, so that the words are not difficult to understand.

The great expansion of scientific vocabulary during the last three centuries has gone on at an ever increasing pace. The sixteenth century had introduced words to do with the human body, and also a number of names of deseases. In the seventeenth century, the new scientific words were mainly medical and biological, but there were also quite a few new words in chemistry, in

physics, and in mathematics. In the eighteenth century came an enormous expansion in the vocabulary of the biological sciences, for this was the great age of biological description and classification. In the late eighteenth century there were great changes in chemical theory, so many new words were produced during that time. In the nineteenth century, the expansion became explosive. Many specialized scientific fields were developing rapidly and many new words were introudced. In the twentieth century, the flow continued, specially in the fields like genetics and nuclear physics. Once again a great number of new words got into the language. Nuclear physics has had a profound effect on us all, both in changing our conceptions of the universe and in confronting us with new and terrifying problems of war and human survival, and we all know words like 'proton', 'neutron', 'electron', 'reactor', 'radioactive' and 'isotope.

Activity – I :

1. Why do we still find oddities in English spelling even to-day ?

2. When did the outlook for scientific development begin to be felt in England ? How did this change help the English language ?

3. What are the various sources for the formation of scientific words ?

Discussion :

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw a rapid explosion of scientific words into the language. What was the reason for that ? – Discuss.

1.13. English as a World Language

English in one of the major world languages. It is difficult to imagine or to realize that this is a recent development. Shakespeare, for instance, wrote for a speech-community of only a few millions, whose language was not valued in Europe and unknown to the rest of the world. It was only confined to England and South Scotland. The number of English speakers expanded because of the growth of population in England itself. During the Norman conquest, the population of England was about a million and a half. During the Middle Ages it increased to five million. Then due to the Plagues, the population had become a little less than what it was and by 1600 it was still about five million and by 1700 it was six million and nine million by the year 1800. Then with the Industrial Revolution, the population increased rapidly to 17 million and then by 1900 the population increased to thirty million people.

The English language penetrated gradually to the rest of the British Isles—though it is only about a couple of years that the language became the main language of Ireland, Wales and the Scottish Highlands. In William Wordsworth's poem—'The Solitary Reaper', he listens to the song of a 'solitary Highland lass' and says, 'Will no one tell me what she sings ?' He cannot

understand the language of the song because she was singing in Gaelic, and there was nobody around to interpret the language. The spread of English was due to the deliberate government policy. For instance, after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, many schools were established in the Scottish Highlands where English was the medium of instruction and Gaelic was forbidden. In Ireland, from Brian Friel's play 'Translations' (1980) it provides us with information about the workings of the British colonial linguistic policy in a nineteenth century Irish speaking community.

However, English has become a world language, because, it has spread far and wide outside the British isles, to all continents of the world due to trade, conquest and colonization. The process of wide diffusion began with English settlements in North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. English settlements in the West Indies also began at the same time, in competition with Spanish, French and Dutch colonizers. For some time there was occasional warfare between these four powers for domination of the Caribbean, and towards the beginning of the nineteenth century Britain had firm control of a number of islands including Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, St. Kitts, and Trinidad and Tobago. British domination of the Indian sub-continent dates from the second half of the eighteenth century. The East India Company was founded in 1600, and British trading-posts were set up in the seventeenth century onwards, but it was only from the 1770s that British rule was firmly established. British colonization in Australia began slightly later, that is after the American war of independance. The expansion of British influence and power continued at a greater rate during the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British displaced the Dutch in South Africa, and during that time British rule was also established in Singapore, British Guiana, New Zealand, and Hong Kong. In the second half of the century there was a 'scramble for Africa', in which colonial powers like Belgium, Britain, France, Germany and Portugal competed with each other for possessions in the African continent. As a result, British rule was established in some regions of Africa including what is now called Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

In all these places British English came to be used, while in the Phillippines and Puerto Rico, both taken by the USA from Spain at the end of the nineteenth century, the American form of English became popular. And it is most probably because of the great population in the United States, assisted by the massive immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that it has given English its present standing in the world. By 1880 the population of the United States had arisen to fifty million. By 1900 it was seventy six million and by 1950 it rose to a hundred and fifty million. And it is surely American political and economic power that accounts for the dominant position of English in the world today. For many years the United States authorities had a definite linguistic policy, insisting on compulsion of the English language. For instance, immigrants who wished to obtain the citizenship of America had to pass a competency test in the English language.

This world-wide expansion of English proves that it is now one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with over four hundred million native speakers, and perhaps the same number who speak it as a second language. So, now we have several varieties of English used for many different purposes in varying social contexts. In North America, Australia and New

Zealand, because of the dense settlements of English language speakers, the native languages like the Maoris, Australian Aborigines etc. had hardly any influence on the language of the settlers, that is English. In South Africa, inspite of the great number of native speakers, English has undergone very little influence from the other native languages of the country and this was perhaps because of the long period of British domination. Relatively unaltered varieties of English also survive in Zimbabwe, where English speaking people comprise of a very small minority, and in the Falkland islands, which are entirely English speaking.

In Australia, New Zealand and South Africa there is very little regional variation in the language, except for the use of some local words particularly in Australia. In the United States, on the other hand, there is more dialectal differences. It is usual to recognise three main dialect areas, the Northern, the Midland and the Southern. What is often called General American includes parts of all the three dialect areas. Canadian English is different again, though much closer to General American than to British English.

The English of the old 'White Commonwealth' and of the United States has remained relatively close to standard British English, and has been the principal language of the Commonwealth countries. In the islands of West Indies which were part of the British Empire, a variety of English became the first language of the population. This language was greatly influenced by the local languages of the inhabitants, which included both West African and Indian languages. As a result there is a variety of English in the West Indian country, ranging from an educated standard form which does not differ much from standard British English.

In many places English has become a second language, used together with one or more local languages for public purposes, and often for communication between different language groups within the community. India, for instance, has a population of about nine hundred million, and has over two hundred different languages, English is one of the official languages, along with Hindi and fourteen recognized regional languages, and is widely used as a language of administration and commerce.

A distinction is usually made between English as a second language and English as a foreign language. A Norwegian or a German usually learns English as a foreign language because this language will not be used for communication with other Germans or Norwegians, but it will be used to speak with foreigners. The learner is usually taught either standard British English or standard American English. But an Indian learns English as a second language and he would be expected to communicate in the language with other Indians and will hear it being spoken normally in the speech-community. Moreover, an Indian will very often learn a local variety of the language which is taught by an Indian who speaks that language.

In India, the medium of instruction in the schools was changed from English to the regional languages after independence, and as a result, there has been a gradual process of Indianization of the universities, which at one time were English medium. In Nigeria, primary schools have

been set up where the medium of instruction is in the local language, but the secondary schools and the universities are still English medium. In Singapore there are four official languages, Chinese (Mandarin), English, Malay and Tamil. At one time, Chinese was the medium of instruction, but inspite of their acquiring independence, English medium education has spread all over and now it is almost universal, whereas, Tamil, Chinese and Malaya are taught as a second language.

The kind of discourse for which English is used varies a great deal. In some communities where English is used as a second language, particularly in Indonesia, Hong Kong, and many African countries, it is used primarily in the spheres of administration, business, science-education, and the media. But in some places like India and Singapore, it is also used in the personal domain—within the family and among friends.

The various forms of English when used as a second language differ in a number of ways from standard British or American English. This is because of the influence of the speaker's first language. But there are English-based languages which are completely different from the standard types, namely, the 'pidgins' and 'creoles'. A pidgin is a supportive additional language used specially for the purposes of trade between groups that have no common language. It thus arises when two or more languages are in contact, and it is a simplified form of the main, dominant language, with influence from the other(s). This restricted type of pidgin may, however, be extended to cover other fields of discourse, and ultimately it is capable of fulfilling all language functions in a community. This is specially likely to occur in a multi-lingual area, where the pidgin can perform a useful function as a lingua franca. It may even become an official language. Papua New Guinea's pidgin, called 'Tok Pisin', is formally acknowledged in the country's constitution. But some pidgins have died out because the need for them have gone, but others have spread and gained wide currency, and there are numerous pidgins in the world to-day, many of them (though not all) are based on European languages, including English. There are many English-based pidgins, especially in the coastal area of West Africa and on the coasts and islands of South-East Asia.

Sometimes, it is seen that pidgin becomes the first language of a group. The language is then called 'creole'. There are 'creoles' based on the English language used in the Caribbean, for example in Barbabos and Jamaica, on the North coast of South America and even in the United States. The creole called Gullah is spoken by about a quarter of a million people living along the South Eastern coastal regions of the United States. It is also possible that, Black English, the speech of the majority of black Americans, is descended from a creole. Creples have also been brought to England since the Second World War by the immigrants who came from the West Indies. Local varieties have also developed known as 'London Jamaican'. Perhaps creoles developed in the Caribbean because of the mixing of population caused by the slave trade. The slave-traders herded together with speakers of many different West African languages. At the ports, where slaves were embarked and also on the slave-ships, the captive slaves probably communicated with one another in some kind of West African pidgin, which in the Caribbean plantations developed into creoles.

Pidgins and creoles often co-exist with standard varieties of the donor language, and the different forms of all the languages influence one another. In Jamaica, for instance, an English based creole is used along with the Jamaican standard English. Both these languages have influenced each other during the past three centuries and has led to a whole spectrum of usage; a 'post-creole continuum'. Speakers often vary their speech according to the social context and the effect they wish to have, moving towards the standard (acrolectal) end or towards the creole (basilectal) end of the continuum. Amongst the more educated speakers and those of higher socio-economic groups, there is a tendency to use the standard end of the spectrum, but this does not happen invariably because there are countervailing forces. Creole expressions are used to proclaim ethnic identity or membership of an in-group, on to suggest informality and sincerity, and also often used for humour and in songs.

In the same way, in West Africa, pidgins are used along with West African Standard English, and, switching from standard to pidgin, or vice versa or inserting pidgin expressions into standard speech are frequent amongst the people, being socially motivated. This code – mixing or code-switching is found in the novels of Chinua Achebe. In 'A Man of the People' (1996), the charismatic demagogue Nanga does not normally use his first language, but speaks either English or pidgin. He speaks in standard English for formal occasions, and adjusts his accent according to the listeners–i.e., who he is speaking to. He uses pidgin when he is speaking to lower-class characters (a chauffeur, a cook, etc.) and when he cracks a joke with his friends and colleagues, or when he wants to project his image as a 'man of the people'. Mrs Nanga, his wife, never speaks English, but only her local language, with a sprinkling of English words here are there. Odili, the school teacher-narrator, uses all three languages. He uses pidgin when he speaks to a girl-friend who speaks a different local language, when he addresses a lower-class character, and when he is speaking infomally to friends, often in a jocular manner.

This development of so many varieties of English has caused great problems and controversies about the language, especially in former British colonies which have become independent during the last half-century. During British colonial rule, Standard British English was imposed on the speakers of such countries, as a language for administration, and departures from it were taken up seriously and considered to be errors. After independence, there have been disputes in many such countries as to whether English should be retained as an official language at all, and, if it is retained, whether attempts should be made to teach Standard British English or whether the local variety of English should be taught as a standard. Various factors have influenced the arguments in this connection–including nationalist feeling, attachment to tradition and culture, desire for the development in science and technology, and the conflicting needs for local and for international communication. But in India there are many cross-currents. In India, after Independence, there was a movement in the Hindi-speaking belt of the North in favour of making Hindi as the main official language of the country, but was opposed by many people belonging to the South who spoke in Dravidian languages. If Hindi was made the official language, then that would bring about great advantage–both economic and political, to the Hindi speaking northerners. So most

of the Southerners preferred to retain English as the main official language. In some ex-colonies, a mastery of English was the privilege of a dominant élite, who supported the retention of the language. But, the more radical and democratic forces argued for the replacement by one or more local languages. Naturally, there were several controversies regarding this matter, fought out in the field of educational policy. The controversy still persists, but there seems, at the moment a trend in many countries to accept and retain English as the official language or a semi-official language, while recognizing the local variety of English as a standard. It is interesting to note that some of the most compelling literature in the English language during the last fifty years has come from ex-colonial regions where these arguments have persisted—for instance, in East Africa the poetry of Okot p'Bitek and the novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, in West Africa the plays and poetry of Wole Soyinka and the novels of Chinua Achebe.

Taking into account the numerous varieties of English in the world today, it is difficult or in other words, obviously impossible to do more than give a few examples of the differences between them and this can be done through the study of Phonology, which is the science of speech sounds, grammar, and vocabulary. Pidgins and creoles, however, should be considered separately.

Activity – J :

1. Why has English become a world wide language today ?

2. What is the position of English in India ?

3. Where is English used as a foreign language ?

4. Why do many nations prefer to use their local variety of English ?

5. Should Standard British English be used in India, or should people use their local variety ? Why ?

Discussion :

The development of so many varieties of English has led to controversies. What are they ? What is your view ? – Discuss.

1.14. Pidgins and Creoles

Today, there are a number of pidgins and creoles in the world, perhaps more than about two hudred. They are based on many different languages, such as Swahili, Arabic, Malay, and Japanese, as well as many European languages. Pidgins and creoles are actually hybrid language-systems, and the 'donor-language' is not the only source, though it is the most dominant one.

Pidgins and creoles, in a large number, are based on English. There are about forty areas where so-called English-based pidgins and creoles are spoken, and in some of these areas several varieties are spoken. They fall into two main groups—the Atlantic and the Pacific. The Atlantic varieties include those of Caribbean, of Guyana, and of West Africa (the Gambia, Siera Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Camaroon), and the Pacific varieties are those spoken in the South Sea islands, in Australia, and in the coasts of South-East Asia.

There is no clear distinction between pidgins and creoles. Some groups use it as a first language. This is true in West Africa, where the co-existence of more than four hundred different languages means that pidgins are especially useful. Even when pidgin is used as in auxilliary language, it can fulfil a wide range of functions. In West Africa, English-based pidgins are used for all normal language functions, along with standard English and the local languages, and some speakers use pidgin more than their native language. In this situation, the pidgin remains under the influence of the standard language, and will tend to evolve towards it.

In English-based pidgins, the main features taken over into the language are lexical. The various pidgins in the world often resemble one another in structure in much more than they resemble the dominant languages from which they are derived. A pidgin tends to preserve the absolutely minimal grammatical structures and therefore it is generally not considered to be a dialect of English. It is a different language in its own right, though there is an area of overlap in Jamaica with its continuum of usage from creole to Standard English, the intermediate varieties (mesolects) perhaps may be thought of as dialects of English.

The great simplification of pidgin-creole structures as compared with the donor-language is seen in both its pronunciation and grammar. The number of sounds (phonemes) is usually reduced. In Jamaican creole, many speakers use the same vowel in the words 'block' and 'black'. Similarly the morphological system is much simplified in pidgins and creoles. There is thus, no distinction in nouns between singular and plural. In West Africa, for instance, 'one person', is 'one man', 'ten persons' is 'ten man' and 'many persons' is 'plenty man'. In verbs, the third-person inflection '—es' is missing, so that the same verb-form is used throughout the present tense. There are so many other simplifications. Thus it is seen that pidgins are extreme forms of analytic languages—they mostly lack inflections, and rely on free morphemes to indicate grammatical relations. For this reason word-order is of great importance, and is strictly adhered to.

English-based pidgins and creoles may draw most of their vocabulary from English, but they make changes to it. Words are often used with new meanings, like West African 'chop' = 'to eat' and 'bif' = 'animal meat'. The same word is often used as noun, verb, and adjective. New compounds are formed, for instance, 'die' and 'man' i.e. 'dieman' = 'corpse'. Again, a common device is repetition. In Jamaican creole, 'smal' means 'small' and 'smalsmal' means 'very small'.

A few words also have come into pidgin from the local languages, like West African 'akara' = 'a kind of pancake'. In addition, all English-based pidgins seem to have words derived from

Portuguese, who were among the earliest European explorers and colonizers, and it has been suggested that many English-based pidgins were originally Portuguese-based, and were reframed when English influence replaced Portuguese.

1.15. Standard English

All kinds of developments that have taken place in the English language as it has spread all over the world during the last three centuries or so, has raised the question of Standard English—whether it exists or not, and if it exists, then what is it ? We can leave out pidgins and creoles, since these are something not to be considered as part of the English language. Yet we are still left with a wide variety of English that is used either as a first language or a second language.

In countries where English is used as a first language, there is a solid base of common usage which makes it possible to talk about 'Standard World English'. Regional variations can be seen in the spoken language, many of them being a matter of accent, and are mostly found in informal, slangy and lower-class speech. If we examine the more formal uses of language, particularly the formal style of written English, the differences become very small. In formal writing, the essential structure of the language is practically the same throughout the English-speaking world. The differences in vocabulary can be seen, but they are not enormous, and the differences in spelling is negligible. Therefore, there is a standard literary language which is very much the same throughout the English-speaking community, and it is this that deserves to be called 'Standard English'.

It is quite different when we consider English used as a second language. In such countries as India and Nigeria, a local variety of English is used in writing as well as in speech, and this can be considered to constitute a local standard. Whether these varieties of English will remain autonomous and go their own way, or whether on the other hand they will converge of World Standard English, still remains to be seen.

Activity – K :

1.   What is the distinction between pidgins, creoles and dialects ?

     Can we call pidgins and creoles a kind of dialect ? Why ?

2.   Where are pidgins and creoles used ? Can we call those Standard English ?

3.   What is Standard English ? Where is it used ?

Discussion :

     The English we speak in India varies from one state to another. Can that be labelled as 'World Standard English' ? Why ? What is 'World Standard English' ? – Discuss.

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1.16. English Today

In the English language today, it is seen that either it tends to move away from Standard English or it tends to move towards it. In countries where English is used as a second language, there has been a trend during the past fifty years or so, for local standards to become established, and for the language to develop independently of British or American English. If this trend continues for long then the local varieties may ultimately diverge greatly from Standard World English and possibly become separate languages.

On the other hand, forms of English used as a first language (as in Britain, North America, Australia, New Zealand) do not seem to be developing much from one another any longer, and sometimes even seem to be converging, and it is likely that they will continue to constitute a somewhat unified language as a major medium of international communication. The trend to diverge has been slowed down due to the great development of communications (aircraft, telegraph, telephone, internet) and the rise of mass media (the popular press, the cinema, radio, television, computer). These things have enabled the regional varieties of English to influence one another, and so reduce their differences. Such influences have been mutual, but at present the major influence has been the languages of the United States, and this influence has penetrated everywhere that English is spoken as a first language. Americans, not only form the largest single body of English speaking people, but also they have an importance as economic and political power and for prestige. Considerations of this kind play an important part in the influence of a language. Latin became the dominant cultural language of Western Europe, not only because it was superior to Greek or Arabic or the local languages, but because of the political, military and administrative achievements of Imperial Rome. In the same way, the wealth and power of America make it accountable for all linguistic matters.

The mutual influence is seen specially in vocabulary. It is surprising to learn that some commonly used words are of American origin. For instance, words like 'cockroach', 'loafer', 'stevedore', and 'tornado' are so familiar that we do not consider them to be American words, and the same is true, or rapidly becoming true, of more recent imported words like 'blurb', 'cagey', 'gimmick', and 'rugged'. American slang and colloquial words are particularly interesting, like : 'hassle' = quarrel, diffilty ; 'heist' = hold up, robbery ; 'hype' = confidence-trick, swindle ; 'scam' = ruse, swindle ; and to 'zap' = attack suddenly, move quickly. American influence has always been strong in the entertainments industry particularly in films and plays. This kind of American lexical influence goes on constantly, but other varieties of English have their own modest imports, for instance, from Australia words like 'bush', 'telegraph' and 'cuppa' have been introduced.

Dialect Mixing :

A similar kind of process of importing words from other sources is going on in Britain. The different dialects are being mixed and levelled. Besides, with the influence of the mass media, there has been that of universal and compulsory education, since the last quarter of the nineteenth

century. This has worked against the broader dialect elements, both regional and social. And, in addition to that, the population has been more mobile, and the small self-contained community has practically disappeared. Moreover, there has been continuous migration to the great cities, and with the two world wars, there has been mixing of people in enormous military armies. As a result, the traditional rural dialects of Britain have completely vanished, and have been replaced by new mixed dialects, based on the great city centres.

This does not suggest that the social and regional differences have also vanished. In Manchester, the spoken language is still different from the spoken language of London. A Manchester working-class man still speaks differently from a Manchester company director. In each region there is a speech-hierarchy, corresponding quite closely to socio-economic class. The differences are not just in accent, but also of grammar and vocabulary. The speech of the educated class who are at the top of the hierarchy is closest to Standard English, particularly in grammar and vocabulary, and to R P in pronunciation. As we go down the hierarchy, the divergences from standard usage become increasingly great. The degree of divergence, however, is also influenced by sex, by age, and by style. It is noticed that women diverge less from the standard usage than men of the same socio-economic group, and the divergence is the greatest in colloquial and informal style in all groups, and it is the smallest in formal situations.

Two very important grammatical features in non-standard speech are the use of past participles as past tense forms, for example; 'I seen him' instead of 'I saw him'; 'they never done it' instead of 'they didn't do it', and the use of the same form for adjectives and adverbs, for example : 'The lads played real good', instead of 'the boys played really well'. The fact that these are no longer standard is to some extent due to the eighteenth century prescriptions, who wanted past participles to be distinguished from past tense, and adverbs distinguished from adjectives. One possibility is that such non-standard usages could become standard, as young people's role-models increasingly become pop-stars and professional footballers, whose speech often are of the lower socio-economic group, hence the stigmatized usage of today may become the accepted usage of tomorrow.

We still have in Britain variations of regional and social usage, but the general mixing and levelling has resulted in the reduction of range of variations, and in addition all the varieties are undergoing constant change.

1.17. Received Pronunciation and Regional Accents

The Received Pronunciation (RP), is a non-regional accent based on the speech of the great public schools, which has been accepted as Standard English inside England for over a century. Increasingly, however there has been a tendency to use the accent of educated people in South-East England to replace RP as the standard : RP has lost some of the prestige, as people who have been educated at public schools have lost their monopoly of power and education. As a

result, today we find that majority of university students are not speakers of RP, and it is from them that most of the English professionals are recruited. Most of the school teachers also do not use RP. They use an educated regional accent, so that the influence of the shcools is towards this rather than towards RP.

This does not mean that RP has lost all its charm. It still has prestige, particularly in the city, in the higher reaches of Civil Service, and among officers of the armed forces. Besides, since it has been so fully described, it is the accent usually taught to foreigners learning British English. The public schools are no longer felt to have a monopoly of 'correct speech', and the prestige of educated regional English has risen enormously during the past fifty to sixty years. As an educated South Eastern accent and use is fairly similar to RP, there is a tendency now-a-days for this accent to be regarded as a standard one. This accent is used, for example, by many radio and television announcers and presenters. Besides, there has been a rise in the prestige of all regional accents in Britain, and perhaps we are moving towards the American position, where it is normal and acceptable for a person to use the educated regional accent, and there is no supra-regional class-account.

As a result, there is a tendency in present-day Britain to draw a line for 'acceptable pronunciation', and indeed of 'Standard English' and to take into consideration the usages of a larger part of the population. Some of the changes that seem to be taking place in the language are quite apparent than real. They may be changes in acceptance rather than actual substantive changes. What formally existed as a usage in some group, but was considered non-standard and unacceptable, may now come to be accepted as standard, because of the changing definition of what is standard. There are substantive changes going on, in pronunciation, in grammar, and in vocabulary.

1.17.1   Changes in Vocabulary

The expansion of vocabulary is going on at a greater rate today. Many new words are being coined from Greek and Latin morphemes for use in science and technology, and some of these are included in the general vocabulary, such as, 'cosmonaut' and 'stereo-phonic' (now shortened as 'stereo'). But of course, not all new scientific and technical words are coined from Latin and Greek elements. The engineering industries in particular tend to use English morphemes, and one common habit is the coining of new compound verbs, for instance, 'to centre drill', 'to colour code', 'to custom-build', 'to drop-forge', 'to field-test', and so on.

In the general vocabulary, the most popular method is to use affixation for word-formation. The most used prefixes in recent years include 'audio' (as in audiovisual), 'mini' (as in 'minivan'), and so on. The more traditional prefixes also continue to be productive, as in 'anti-poll-tax', 'non-event', and so on.

Compounding also continues, specially for the formation of new nouns. The huge development in the field of aviation, both civil and military, has led to many compounds beginning with 'air–',

for intance, 'air-drop', 'air-hostess', 'air-strip' etc. The influence of the Women's Lib movement, also has led to a tremendous coining of compounds like 'spokesperson', in which 'person' replaces the suffix '—man'. Another popular second element today has been '—centre'. What used to be Employment Exchanges are now called 'Job Centres'. A school library often turns into a 'resource-centre'.

Now words are also formed by shortening, for instance 'brill' for 'brilliant', and 'vibes' for 'vibrations'. Loans are not a major source of new words, however, a few words continue to drift in. For instance, from French has come 'discotheque' which is now shortened as 'disco'. In this way words from other languages have drifted into English.

1.17.2   Changes in Pronunciation

In the educated speech of South-Eastern England, the long vowels are often dipthongized. In non-standard speech, these dipthongs often begin at an even opener and more central position, becoming |ɑɪ| and |ɑʊ|.

This change can be seen as a continuation of the Great Vowel Shift, the long close vowels of Middle English. The variant pronunciations are quite old ones, and the change is one of acceptability. It is interesting to note that the same pronunciations are common in Australia, and were perhaps taken there from Southern England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

There is a tendency for the /r/ sound to be lost in unstressed syllables. This has been the case since a long time, particularly where there are two successive occurrences of /r/, as in 'February', 'library', 'temporary', etc. This is noticed in colloquial speech.

Changes are taking place in the way words are stressed. There are pairs of words where the noun has first-syllable stress, and the verb has second syllable stress, and in such cases many speakers now stress the verb also on the first syllable, for instance, in words like 'annex', 'contest', 'contract', 'escort', etc. In cases where both the noun and the verb have second syllable stress, there is a tendency for noun to be given first syllable stress, as with 'blockade', 'discharge', 'dispute' etc.

In words of more than two syllables, there is an apparent tendency to move the stress from the first to the second syllable, as in 'aristocrat', 'communal', 'controversy', 'doctrinal', etc. The changes are all due to dialect mixing of our times. The word 'cigarette' and 'magazine', are normally pronounced in Britain with the main stress on the final syllable, but now-a-days some speakers instead put it on the first, probably as a result of American influence.

A recent trend today is to put heavy stress on prepositions particularly by news readers and announcers, who often say such things as : 'A report ON todays proceedings IN Parliament will be given BY John Smith OF our news-staff'. Perhaps this is done for clarity and emphasis. It is not impossible to say that changes are taking place in the way speakers use stress and intonation

to give emphasis. A trend which is noticed due to the spread of higher education and of foreign travel is the adoption of what can be called 'continental pronunciations'. Words borrowed from other languages very soon get adopted to an English style of pronunciation. Nowadays, however, these words are given a 'foreign' kind of pronunciation again.

The continental influence is perhaps reinforced by the 'new' pronunciation of classical Latin, where the vowel sounds are of the 'continental' style, whereas the 'old' pronunciation had anglicized vowels. An Englishman today who knows Latin will have learnt the 'new' style of pronunciation which has continental-style vowels.

1.17.3   Changes in Grammar

In grammar we can see the continuation, in small ways, of the long-term historical trend in English from a system that relies on inflections to one that relies on word-order and grammatical words. One example is that of comparison of adjectives, where 'more' and 'most' are used, for instance, 'more notorious', 'most notorious' which is spreading instead of the endings (–er' and '–est'.) There was a time when '–er' and '–est' were used much more widely than today. In Early Modern English we come across forms like 'ancientest', 'famousest', 'shamefuller', 'perfecter', etc. In early twentieth century adjectives of more than two syllables always had 'more' and 'most', for instance, 'more notorious', 'most notorious', while adjectives of one syllable normally had '–er' and '–est', for instance, 'ruder', 'rudest' etc. Adjectives of two syllables varied. Some adjectives, for example, used 'more famous', 'most famous' and some used 'commoner', 'commonest' etc. Recently 'more' and 'most' have been spreading to adjectives of one syllable, so we often hear people saying, for instance, 'John is more keen than Mary' and 'It was more crude than I expected'.

Otherwise, on the whole, noun and verb forms have remained very stable during the Later Middle English period, because of the influence of the standard literary language and of the educational system. But the group of learned nouns borrowed from Greek and Latin are used as they are with their original plural forms, for example, 'dogma/dogmata; formula/formulae; genus/genera; syllabus/sylabi, etc. There is slightly different development to be seen in nouns which have a learned plural in '–a' like 'bacterium', 'criterion', 'datum', 'medium', etc. Now it is quite common to hear or read such expressions as 'the mass *media*', 'this *criteria*' and '*a bacteria*'. Therefore, the decline of the classics in English education has played a part here, but at the same time the change is absolutely in line with the general development of the language.

A fairly recent development in England is the tendency of the people to use auxiliary 'may' instead of 'might'. An example of which was seen in an English Daily– 'Just before half-time, Leeds United may have scored a goal', which meant that they might have scored a goal but had failed to do so. This was really quite baffling. Since then, for many of the younger generation, indeed, auxiliary 'might' now hardly exists, either 'may' or 'could' being used instead.

Another change with auxiliaries is with that of 'dare' and 'need', which are ceasing to be auxiliaries any more. They are coming more and more to be used as ordinary verbs.

A construction which has become common in recent times is what we can call 'conflated as'. For example, if a man has a nickname 'Nobby', we can say 'He is called Nobby', or 'He is known as Nobby'. If these sentences are turned round into subordinate clauses introduced by 'as', the first phrase becomes 'Nobby, as he is callled'. The second phase becomes 'Nobby, as he is known as' but in fact the second 'as' is variably omitted, and the phrase comes out as 'Nobby, as he is known'. This is a common phenomenon, and is perhaps a sign that there has been changes in peoples feeling for 'clause'-structure.

Activity – L :

1. How is English Language today moving away from Standard English ?

2. What are the reasons for dialect-mixing ?

3. What is Received Pronunciation (RP) ? In what way is it helpful ?

4. What kind of differences are to be seen in the English Language today ?

5. How is English vocabulary expanding at a greater rate today ?

6. How are changes in pronunciation taking place ?

7. What changes do we see in the grammar ?

Discussion :

'The rapid changes in the English Language today are causing problems for the learners of the language today,' – Discuss.

1.18. English Tomorrow

It is very difficult, and in fact, rather dangerous to predict what the English language will be like in a hundred years time. The changes that we find in recent times suggest what forces are at work in the language today and the likely shape of things in the future, but the history of the language in the coming century will depend on the history of the community itself.

The most striking thing at the moment is the expansion of vocabulary, which is likely to continue. Another trend is dialect-mixing, with American influence predominant and this will also continue unless some global disaster disrupts world communication. Within England, public-school English already seems to have been supplanted by educated South-Eastern usage as standard language, but it is also quite possible that other regional varieties of the language will achieve similar recognition. This seems to be quite normal for radio and T.V services in the English regions to have announcers and presenters who use the local form of language. In Britain, outside England, such regional standards are already well-established. In pronunciation, the trend

to diphthongize all long close vowels may well continue, and could lead to further changes in the vowel system. In grammar, the trends of the last few decades continue to exist. There could be more substantial changes caused by the spread of the standard language by users which at present are non-standard. For example, the past-tense forms like 'I done it' might become acceptable, as might the conflation of adjective and adverb forms. But, whether or not these things will happen depends on the social history of the country, which we can not predict.

But we can be sure that the process of change, which we have traced from the early Indo-European period upto modern times, is still going on and will continue too. It needs an effort of detachment to recognize current changes. We are so thoroughly used to one form of the language that we are likely to dismiss innovations as mistakes or vulgarisms. On the other hand, if our own elders show their disapproval for such use of the language, we would probably dismiss them as dull and rather old-fashioned. Such conservatism is inevitable, and of course necessary for the stability of the language. But we must step outside such attitudes, and consider the whole speech-community with scientific detachment. We shall then recognize that our behaviour is simply that of one group at one point of time, and that in the next generation the changes that we deplore may well have become completely acceptable, and indeed uniquely right for the users.

Besides, we should enjoy the language that we speak. As speakers of English, we should consider ourselves fortunate to be inside a language of enormous richness and variety. It can be fun simply to listen to many varieties of English from different parts of the world of different social groups of different occupations and also to enjoy the ways in which the language is changing. In this world of change, it is quite natural to long for stability, to want to have a fixed language standard. But it can't be done. The whole of nature is in flux, and so is the whole of human life, and we have to bear with it. It is not good clinging to the bank, we have to push out into the flux and swim with the crowd.

Activity – M :

1. What do you think will English Language be like in the future ?

2. In this module, you have read about the origin of Language – the different theories that some linguists have predicted and put forward. Which of those do you think is/are plausible ?

3. You have also read about the history of the English Language, right from the Indo-European period to modern times. Which period was the most important for the development of the Language ? Why do you think so ? Give reasons.

Discussion :

What do you think will be the future of English in India ? Do you think it will gain importance day by day ? Or will it just become a foreign language ?

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6. *Study of Language* – J. B. Carroll (OUP), 1953.

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Unit 2 □ Phonetics and Phonology, English Consonants and Vowels

Structure

2.1. Introduction

Millions of foreigners want to learn English. For some it is only a matter of reading and writing, but there are others who want to be able to speak English well, with a pronunciation which can be easily understood both by his fellow beings and fairly educated foreigners.

Written English and spoken English are different things. Writing consists of marks which make no noise and are taken in by the eye; speaking is organized sound taken in by the ear. Fortunately there is a lot of English spoken about the world. On films, on the television, on the radio, on gramophone records. Most people have the opportunity of listening to English in some way. And this is what one must do. One must *listen* to it not for the meaning but for the sounds. One must try to understand how the English sounds differ from the nearest sounds in one's language. When this is understood, one should say the sounds *aloud.* It is no use practising silently. Gramophone records or recorded tapes of speech sounds are useful and are available. It is better to listen to the same passage six times than listening to six different passages. Careful listening is the most important thing; and careful watching of performance with listening will bring one nearer to the ideal of a perfect English pronunciation.

In India English is spoken variously. Our country has eighteen officially recognized languages and 1652 dialects according to the 1991 Census of India. It is impossible to demand a uniform standard of pronunciation for a foreign language in such a vast country, where even the mother tongue is spoken differently by different groups of people belonging to the same language community.

Prof. V. K. Gokak says that many speak English as if it were Hindi, Bengali, Marathi or Tamil. The majority of Indians, despite long years of studying English, remain unintelligible to each other.

2.2. Standard Pronunciation

It is thought by many that there ought to be a standard. It would be useful to every Indian and it would help others who may not be Indians. Attempts have been made to recommend standards, but it cannot be said that any standard actually exists. There are numerous varieties of the spoken form of the English language and regional variation seems to be reflected in phonology. Regional separation of English-speaking communities both within the United Kingdom and throughout the world has obviously resulted in the varieties of spoken English as we find today. And there are distinct characteristics of the English language as it is spoken in Australia, New Zealand, Africa and North America.

Also relevant in this connection is the question of education and social standing. Within each dialect areas, there is considerable variation in speech according to education and social standing. Uneducated speech is generally the regional dialect, whereas the educated speech is one which cuts across dialectal boundaries. Educated speech naturally tends to be given more prestige and more importance. The government agencies, the learned professions, the press, the law court and the media want to address themselves to a public beyond their dialectal community; so they prefer the educated speech.

For this reason BBC English came to be accepted as the vehicle of verbal communication for educated Englishment in general. In the U.S.A. it was the 'network English, a designation for general educated idiom in America, which was generally used in speech by the American elites. Educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as standard English. It is standard English by common acceptance and a kind of acceptance and a kind of consensus, arrived at voluntarily and only implicitly by the people at large.

2.3. Received Pronunciation (RP)

In British English one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard'. And that is called 'Received Pronunciation' or R. P. This pronunciation, according to Daniel Jones, is usually heard in the everyday speech in the families of Southern English people who have been educated in public schools.

Other educated people of Southern England, specially most of the Londoners who had a university education, use RP in their speech. It is observed consciously or unconsciously by many others in most parts of the English-speaking world.

Language observers have reported that people who frequently visit London or come in touch with public school products hear RP and also try to pick up this mode of speech. The BBC radio broadcasting also helped its wide propagation. As a result of this factor this form of speech

is more widely and more easily understood by Englishmen than any other form. As it is free from regional dialectal influences and as it is used by the best speakers of the language, others found it convenient and even respectable in learning and using it in their own speech.

However, RP is to some extent associated with the limited coteries of the elite classes of Great Britain. So RP cannot be recommended as the standard which everyone should adopt within Great Britain or outside, however advantageous in many respects it may be. There are objections, for people are extremely touchy about their language, specially their speech.

Today RP is easily understood in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand and by the English-speaking Canadians. In the United States, where so many varieties of English pronunciation are to be heard, RP is fairly universally understood without difficulty. However, the fact that it is understood throughout the English-speaking world does not mean that it is used by a majority of the English-speaking people. Its actual uses are small in number even though its admirers and potential users are numerous. Those countries which have English as a foreign or second language on their curriculums generally prefer RP as a model to other varieties of English pronunciation.

While we recognize the necessity for the introduction of a spoken English course in the syllabus, the question arises what standard of spoken English shall we select and follow ? The obvious answer would appear to be received standard i.e. the R.P. whose great resources and teaching materials are readily available.

But many experts say that the teaching of the RP in our country is not possible. The grassroots realities do not permit such a luxury ; nor is it desirable. One suggestion is that we should teach what has been loosely called the Educated Indian Pronunciation, which is a mixture of British and Indian English pronunciations. The best speakers of English in each of our states use it. Peter Strevens, E. V. Gatenby and V. K. Gokak seem to support this view. But Gokak says that Educated Indian Pronunciation should be free from provincialisms or the gravitational pull of the mother tongue. Besides, it should have a larger number of vowels, diphthongs and consonants and also a stress system and a system of intonation. And the most important prerequisite of the Educated Indian Pronunciation is that it should be "completely intelligible to speakers of other educated dialects of English as well as to speakers of local dialects of English in India".

The views of Strevens, Gatenby and Gokak are practical and unambitious. But however pragmatic their suggestions might seem to be, there is a risk in adopting this particular standard of English. The purity and authenticity of the English speech is likely to be affected. If the standard is diluted, which is most likely to happen, then it won't be intelligible to the native speakers of English, not will they be intelligible to us.

Learning certain important and rather difficult features of the RP is likely to be unattainable. But if our students of English can undergo a training even for a limited result, then is it not advisable for them to aim at learning a better and more useful variety of English pronunciation ? As a model of good spoken English RP has not lost its utility despite criticism by many that RP is a class dialect or that RP is artificial or that RP is spoken by a small minority of Englishmen. Moreover, we will gain little if we refuse to submit ourselves to the discipline needed to learn RP or a close approximation to this variety of English pronunciation.

2.4. Letters and Sounds

Letters are written ; sounds are spoken. In ordinary English spelling it is not always easy to know what sounds the letters stand for ; for example the vowel sounds in the words *city, busy, women, pretty, village* all sound alike. In *man, many, gate, father, fall* the vowel *a* pronounced in five different ways. The common notion that these are five English vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*) is wrong. We shall see that there are at least twenty vowels to consider.

Read the following list and notice carefully the vowels given in italics.

f*ee*l	f*oa*l	c*a*t	p*ie*r
f*i*ll	f*i*le	c*o*t	p*ea*r
f*e*ll	f*ou*l	c*u*t	p*oo*r
f*a*ll	f*oi*l	c*u*rt	b*u*tter
f*u*ll		c*a*rt	
f*oo*l			
f*ai*l			

Most of these sounds represented again by letters in italics occur surrounded by consonants, although most of them can also occur initially and finally. Now consider carefully the following list. All the initial sounds except three (*long, measure, maze*) are different. The letters which stand for those sounds are printed in italics :

*p*ier	*f*ear	*r*ear	*ch*eer	*c*alm
*b*eer	*v*eer	*m*ere	*j*eer	*l*ong
*t*ier	*sh*eer	*n*ear	*s*ere	mea*s*ure
*d*eer	*h*ear	*w*eird	*th*is	ma*z*e
*g*ear	*l*eer	*y*ear	*th*eatre	

In the list given above all the sounds indicated by italics are different. If you count the sounds which are distinctive in initial, medial and final position, you will find that there are twenty-four altogether. These are called *consonants*.

A *consonant* is a sound accompanied or unaccompanied by voice, in which there is either a complete or partial obstruction which prevents the air from issuing freely from the mouth.

A *vowel* is a voiced sound in the pronunciation of which the air passes through the mouth in a continuous stream, there being no obstruction and no narrowing such as would produce audible friction.

2.5.   The Phonetic Script

In teaching English pronunciation we often find that there is very little help that we can get from the spelling of the words. The following words

through,	cough,	rough
though,	bough	

reveal five different pronunciations for the group of letters – *ough*. Again the following words

need	read	believe	key
machine	receive	people	quay

have eight different spelling for the same vowel sound.

Thus it can be said that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the sounds as they are uttered and the letter or symbol which appears in the written word. Therefore, it is necessary to have some consistent representation of the language so that we can have a cleaner understanding of the distinctive sounds which exist in the language. Discrepancies between pronunciation and ordinary spelling confuse the learner and the result is mispronunciation. Such mispronunciations may, however, be avoided by the use of Phonetic Transcription.

The phonetic alphabet given below is that of the *International Phonetic Association* (IPA)

CONSONANTS

Symbol	Key Word	Symbol	Key Word
p	pear	ʃ	shall
b	bear	h	hear
t	tree	l	leer
d	deer	r	rear
g	gear	m	mere
f	feel	n	near
v	very	w	wall
j	year	s	base
z	maze	ð	bathe
¥	rouge	k	make
θ	bath	ŋ	long
tʃ	cheer	dʒ	jeer

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VOWELS

* Symbol		Symbol		Symbol	
æ	cat	ʌ	run	əu	no
a:	arm	u	put	ɛe	pear
e	bed	u:	fool	ie	hear
e:	her	e	ago	ɔi	boy
i	sit	ai	my	ue	poor
i:	see	au	how	aie	fire
c	hot	ei	day		
c:	saw				

[* You may observe slight variations in the symbols in many texts and dictionaries, but they would present no difficulty. You will be able to read the symbols with ease, once you are familiar with these.]

The use of the colon (:) with vowels / i: c : a: u: / is to show that they are in general *longer* than / i c e u /. But remember they are also different in their actual sounds.

Consider the following words in phonetic script :

city / siti /   many / meni /

busy / bizi /   banana / bena:ne /

women / wimin /   bother / beiðe/

man / mæn /   house / haus /

thought / θc:t /   cough / kcf /

rough / rʌ f /

rain, rein, reign / rein /

2.6.   Sounds and Sound Groups : Phonemes

A sound is formed by definite movements of the organs of speech ; if those movements are exactly repeated the result will always be the same sound. However, there are possibilities of difference in producing the same sound. For instance, the initial consonant sounds of *tea* and *two* are different from each other.

Sometimes each of the letters used to show pronunciation may stand for more than one sounds ; but each of the sounds represented by one letter has a great deal of similarity to the other sounds represented by the same letter ; they have more similarities than differences. These groups of sounds, each represented by one letter of the phonetic alphabet are called *phonemes*. Phonemes, therefore, are the minimum significant sound units. Change of phonemes can bring about a change of meaning. Phonemes can be identified by finding pairs of words (e.g. *pin* and *bin*) with different meanings.

The method of representing each phoneme by one symbol is called *phonemic transcription*. Phonemic transcription is generally represented as enclosed in diagonal lines / ..... /. The phonemes of English are the basic contrasts which make it possible to keep each word separate from every other e.g. / fi:l / from / fil / ; / sin / from / siŋ /.

The distinction between two phonemes is significant i.e. capable of distinguishing one word from another. Different sounds which belong to the phoneme do not distinguish one word of a language from another.

A transcription of the type 'one letter one phoneme' is called a *Broad Transcription*. A transcription which provides special signs for subsidiary members of phonemes is called a *Narrow Transcription*.

It is necessary at first to be sure that the basic sounds of the language are being properly pronounced. The best way of doing that is to practise single words or very short phrases. But we do not talk in single words, and not in single sounds. The sounds and words are connected together with others to make of longer utterances, and these longer utterances have special difficulties of their own.

First, they must be pronounced smoothly, without hesitations and without stumbling over the combinations of sounds. It may be quite easy to pronounce separately the words *both, them, early, left, of,* but it is much more difficult pronounce *both of them left early* without hesitating and without making mistakes.

Secondly, in a longer English sentence some of the words are treated as being more important than others; it is necessary which these words are and how they are treated in speech. Words which are not regarded as being particularly important often have a different pronunciation. For example the word *can* which is pronounced / kæn / if it is said by itself, is often pronounced / ken / in phrases like *you can have it* / ju: ken hæv it /.

Thirdly, the rhythm of English must be mastered, that is, the different lengths which the syllables of English are given and the reasons why these different lengths occur.

Fourthly, the tune of the voice, the melody of speech is different in different languages. It is necessary to learn something of the English way of using tune. For example, when we say *thank you* the voice may go from a higher note to a lower one ; it means sincere gratitude. When it goes

from lower note to a higher one it means that the matter is purely routine. To confuse the two would clearly be dangerous.

All these matters will be dealt with later ; but the most important thing is to be sure that the basic sounds are right, and this requires knowledge of the working of the speech organs ; this is the subject of the next section.

The Organs of Speech

When we speak a stream of air is breathed out from the lungs and this stream of air, when passing through the narrow spaces in the human throat and mouth, makes a *sound*. By modifying the shape of the passage through which the air passes when we speak, we can make a number of different sounds. There are a number of points at which the course of the air stream may be varied. The organs situated at these points constitute the *speech organs*.

2.7.1. The Larynx

The first point where it is possible to modify the air stream is at the top of the windpipe, which ends in a bony structure called the *larynx*.

The front part of the larynx protrudes and is popularly known as the 'Adam's apple'. Inside the larynx are the *vocal cords* which are like small lips projecting from the sides of the larynx and connected with muscles so that they can be brought together and placed edge to edge in the

W	WINDPIPE
T	TEETH
HP	HARD PALATE
SP	SOFT PALATE
BL	BLADE
L	LIPS
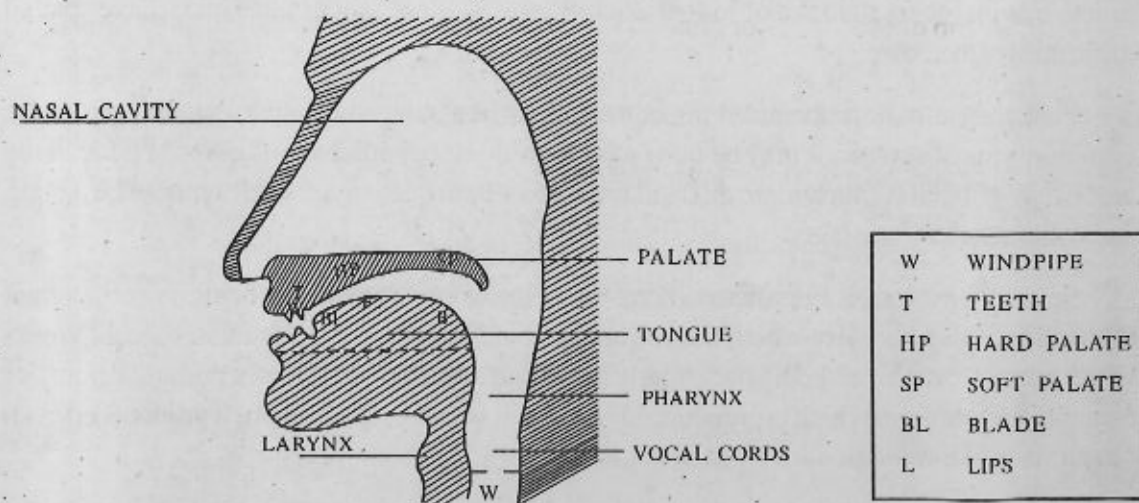
middle of the air passage, or be drawn apart leaving a wide opening between them. This opening is called the *glottis*.

When the vocal cords are drawn apart, the air from the lungs can pass freely through the open glottis. This is the position we use when we breathe normally without speaking. The passing

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of the air through the open glottis produces a faint sound, which becomes audible to other people if we breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. We utilize the sound for the purpose of speaking ; it is the sound / h/.

The wide open position of the glottis is used for speech sounds (which are at the same time further modified in the mouth) called *voiceless* consonants. These sounds are called voiceless because they lack the special element known as voice.

Voice is the kind of sound produced when the vocal cords are brought together edge to edge while air is being pressed up from the lungs. The pressure of air causes the cords to vibrate. The closed position of the glottis is used for speech sounds (which are at the same time modified in the mouth) called *voiced consonants*.

All vowels are examples of voiced sounds.

2.7.2. Pharynx

Immediately above the larynx is a space behind the tongue and reaching up towards the nasal cavity : this space is called the *pharynx*. When the air stream has passed through the glottis, it enters the cavity formed between the root of the tongue and the back wall of the throat. This is the pharyngeal cavity. At the base of the tongue and projecting into the pharynx is the *Epiglottis*, a small flap which serves when swallowing to prevent food from falling into the larynx.

2.7.3. Nasal Cavity

At the top of the throat (or pharyngeal cavity) there is a forking of the air passage. The breath may pass out through the mouth, or through the nose by way of the nasal cavity. If we make the sound *ng* in *song* the air stream passes through the nasal cavity.

2.7.4. The Palate

The palate forms the roof of the mouth and separates the mouth cavity from the nose or nasal cavity. Make the tip of your tongue touch as much of your own palate as you can : most of it is hard and fixed in position ; but when your tongue-tip is as far back as it will go, away from your teeth, you will notice that the palate becomes soft.

You can easily see the soft part of the palate if you use a mirror : turn your back to the light, open your mouth wide and say the vowel /a:/ and move the mirror so that the light shines into your mouth. You will be able to see the soft palate curving down towards the tongue and becoming narrower as it does so until it ends in a point called the uvula. The soft palate can move : it can be raised so that it makes a firm contact with the back wall of the pharynx, and this stops the breath from going up into the nasal cavity and forces it to go into the mouth only. And when you relax after this the soft palate will come down again into its lowered position.

In this lowered position, the soft palate allows the breath to pass behind itself and up to the nasal cavity and out through the nose. This is the normal position of the soft palate when we are not speaking but breathing quietly through the nose, with our mouth closed.

The hard, fixed part of the palate is divided into two sections, the *alveolar ridge* and the *hard palate*. The alveolar ridge is that part of the gums immediately behind the upper front teeth, and the hard palate is the highest part of the palate, between the alveolar ridge and the beginning of the soft palate. The alveolar ridge is specially important in English because many of the consonant sounds like /t d n l r s z ∫ ¥ t∫ dᵧ / are made with the tongue touching or close to the alveolar ridge.

2.7.5. The Teeth

The lower front teeth are important while making the S and Z sounds. The two upper front teeth are more important ; put the tip of your tongue very close to the edge of these teeth and blow ; this will produce a sound like the English θ in *thin* ; if you turn on the voice during this θ sound you will get a sound like the English ð in *this*.

2.7.6. The Tongue

The tongue is the most important of the organs of speech. In phonetics it is convenient to divide the surface of the tongue into two parts, the *front* and the *back,* which lie opposite the hard and soft palates respectively when the tongue is in the position of rest. The front of the tongue also includes the *blade* which normally lies opposite the teeth ridge. By giving the tongue different shapes, by bunching it up or flattening it out, and by raising or lowering different parts of it, we can modify the space through which the air has to pass and thereby produce many different sounds.

2.7.7. The Lips

It is obvious that the lips can take up various different positions. They can be brought firmly together as in *p* or *b* or *m* so that they completely block the mouth ; the lower lip can be drawn inward and slightly upwards to touch the upper front teeth as in the sounds f and v. In normal speech the lips are never very far apart, they do not take up very sounded shapes, they are rarely spread very much and almost never pushed forward or protruded.

Any effective speech is an exceedingly complex process. The production and transmission of the sound involves a complicated chain of event. The psychological stimulus conveyed to the organs of speech by the nervous system activates the lungs, the larynx and the cavities above in such a way that they perform a series of movements leading to the production of a particular pattern of sound.

Phonetics is the study and science of sounds, their production by the various organs of speech. *Articulatory Phonetics* is its branch concerned with the study of speech sounds in terms of the mechanisms of their production by the human vocal apparatus.

2.8. The Consonants of English

Let us now look at how the movements of the organs of speech combine together forming the consonants in English. The difference between an English sound and one in your language may seem quite small when it is described, but this small difference in the movement of the speech organs may make all the difference between an English sound and one which is not. When you study the movements of the speech organs for a certain English sound, try to compare them with the movements for a similar sound in your language.

Consonants are perhaps more important than vowels because even if we pronounce the consonants only, most English words would be easy to understand. Consonants form the bones, the skeleton of English words and give them their basic shape. Moreover, differences of accent are mainly the result of differences in the sound of the vowels ; if the consonants are imperfect there will be a great risk of misunderstanding.

The twenty-four consonants of English can be arranged in a number of groups, each group having in common certain characteristics of articulation. Unlike vowels and diphthongs, the consonants produce audible friction by the obstruction of breath stream at one or more points along their passage through the articulatory organs.

Consonants are classified according to the organs articulating them, that is according to the *place* or point at which they are made, and also according to the *manner* of their articulation, that is, according to the way in which they are made.

Daniel Jones says : "Description of the manner of forming the consonants takes into account the following particulars :

    (i)   the place (or places) of articulation,

    (ii)   the state of air-passage at the place (or places) of articulation,

    (iii) the position of the soft palate, and

    (iv) the state of the larynx."

When English consonants are classified according to the organs articulating them, that is, according to the *place* where they are made, they may be divided into the following main clauses :

    (a)   bi-labial   :   p, b, m w

    (b)   labio-dental   :   f, v

    (c)   dental   :   t, d, n, s, z, l

    (d)   post-alveolar   :   r

(e)	Palato-alveolar	:	t∫, dʒ, ∫, ¥	
(f)	palatal	:	j	
(g)	velar	:	k, g, ŋ	
(h)	glottal	:	h	

When the consonants are classified according to the *manner* in which the organs articulate them, we get the following main classes :

(i)	plosive	:	p, b, t, d, k, g
(ii)	affricate	:	t∫, dʒ
(iii)	nasal	:	m, n, ŋ
(iv)	lateral	:	É
(v)	fricative	:	f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ∫, ¥, h
(vi)	semi-vowel / gliding consonants	:	w, j, r

The following table shows the place and manner of articulation of the English consonants. The top boxes show the organs by which they are articulated; those down the side show the manner in which they are articulated.

	Bilabial	Labio Dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palato-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d				k g	?
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z		∫ ¥			h
Affricate						t∫ dʒ			
Nasal	m			n				ɳ	
Lateral				É					
Semi-vowel	w				r		j		

English Consonants

You will see that in the articulation of the plosive, affricate and fricative consonants there is a total closure or stricture causing friction. In the articulation of the nasal, lateral and semi-vowel (frictionless continuant) consonants, on the other hand, there is only a partial closure or an impeded oral or nasal escape of air.

2.91 Description of English Consonants

2.9.1. Plosive or Stop Consonants

English has seven plosive consonant phonemes : p, b, t, d, k, g, ?

In these consonants the breath is completely stopped at some point in the mouth, by the lips or tongue-tip or tongue-back, and then released with a slight explosion. Thus there are three stages in the production of these consonants : closure, compression and release.

p

p is a strong stop consonant. In pronouncing p the air passage is completely blocked by closing the lips and raising the soft palate. The air is compressed by pressure from the lungs, and when the lips are opened the air suddenly escapes from the mouth and in doing so makes an explosive sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate. Thus it can be defined as a *voiceless bilabial plosive consonant.*

When p commences a strongly stressed syllable, it is somewhat *aspirated.* Aspiration is the voiceless interval consisting of a strongly expelled breath between the release of the plosive and the onset of the following vowel. There is a little puff of breath i.e. a slight h-sound immediately following the plosion and preceding the vowel.

Examples : / pei / / praid /

When p occurs between vowels the aspiration may be less noticeable or even absent, but it will never do any harm to keep the aspiration in this position too.

Examples : /hæpi / /peipe / /eplai /

In final position p is aspirated and shortens the vowel before it. Try these : / rip / / roup / / tæp / / kæp /

Some of the commonest words containing / p / are : *pigs, page, pair, paper, pardon, pass, pay, people, perhaps, piece, place, April, possible, complain, complete, happen, important, open, sleep, group, heap, hope, shape, up, wrap.* [Consult Daniel Jones's *Pronouncing Dictionary* and give the phonemic transcription of these words]

b

The English consonant b is pronounced like b, except that the force of exhalation is weaker and the vocal cords are made to vibrate so that the voice is produced during the articulation of the phonemes. It is a voiced bilobial plosive consonant.

As in p the lips are closed firmly, and the soft palate is raised so that the breath cannot get

out of the nose or the mouth but is trapped for a short time. When the lips are opened suddenly the breath rushes out with a slight explosion or popping noise.

However, **b** is a weak plosive and it *never* has aspiration ; the sound must be distinguished from **v** ; *marble* and *marvel* should be differentiated. Take great care to close the lips *very firmly* for **b** so that the sound makes an *explosion* and *not a friction*.

Try to say the following pairs :

rip	rope	cap	wrap	tribe	club
rib	robe	cab	grab	drive	glove

Now give the phonemic transcription of the following words. (You may consult a dictionary with phonetic symbols) :

back,	*bag,*	*bath,*	*beautiful,*	*because,*	*become,*	*before,*
begin,	*believe,*	*besides,*	*between,*	*black,*	*both,*	*bread,*
break,	*bring,*	*bought,*	*buy,*	*busy,*	*February,*	*harbour,*
neighbour,	*visible,*	*probable,*	*remember,*	*rub,*	*slab.*	

t

t is a strong plosive consonant. The tip of the tongue is firmly against the middle of the alveolar ridge, not too near the teeth and not too near the hard palate.

The soft palate is raised, so that the breath cannot escape through either the nose or the mouth, but is trapped for a short time. The sides of the tongue are firmly against the sides of the palate, and when the tip of the tongue is lowered suddenly from the teeth ridge the breath rushes out with a slight explosion. It is a voiceless alveolar plosive consonant.

The plosive **t** is aspirated. Try to say the following words :

two / tu: /	torn /tc:n/
ten / ten /	tie / tai /
ton / tʌn /	town / taun /
tune / tju:n /	twin / twin /

When **t** occurs between vowels, the aspiration may be weaker or even absent, but it will not do any harm to keep the aspiration in this position too. Observe the following carefully :

writer / raite/	wetting / wetiŋ/
rider / raide/	putting / putiŋ/
water / wc:te/	whitish /waitiʃ /

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In final position **t** is aspirated and shortens the vowel before it.

Now give the phonemic transcription of the following words. (You may consult Daniel Jones's pronouncing dictionary.)

Table,	*take,*	*tall,*	*today,*	*together,*	*towards,*	*too,*
Tuesday,	*turn,*	*two,*	*talk,*	*after,*	*better,*	*towards,*
matter,	*particular,*	*quarter,*	*Saturday,*	*eat,*	*eight,*	*it,*
ought,	*might,*	*put,*	*what,*	*lot,*	*not.*	

d

d is short and weak and never aspirated.

d is a weak plosive. The tip of the tongue is firmly against the middle of the alveolar ridge. The soft palate is raised, so the breath cannot escape through either the nose or the mouth, but is trapped for a short time. The sides of the tongue are firmly against the sides of the palate, so that the breath cannot pass over the sides of the tongue. When the tongue-tip is lowered suddenly from the teeth ridge the breath rushes out with a slight explosion or popping noise. It is a *voiced alveolar plosive consonant*.

Try to say the following :

do / du : /   down / daun /

done / d ∧ n /   dwindle / dwind! /

dawn / dc : n /   die / dai /

Now transcribe some of the common words containing / d / :

day,	*dear,*	*December,*	*decide,*	*depend,*	*different,*
difficult,	*door,*	*during,*	*Monday,*	*holiday,*	*medicine,*
afraid,	*bird,*	*oil,*	*road,*	*failed,*	*started.*

k

k is a strong plosive consonant. The back of the tongue is in firm contact with soft palate ; and the soft palate is raised, so that the breath is trapped for a short time. When the tongue is lowered suddenly from the soft palate, the breath rushes out of the mouth with a slight explosion. It is a *voiceless velar plosive* consonant.

k is aspirated in the same way as **p** and **t**. When **k** occurs between vowels the aspiration may be weaker. In final position **k** shortens the vowel before it.

Try the phonemic transcription of the following :

cave,   curl,   class,   card,   coal,   broke,   car,

cause,   kitchen,   cold,   corner,   because,   excuse,   dark,

lack,   music,   take.

<center>g</center>

g is a weak plosive consonant. The back of the tongue is in firm contact with the soft palate; the soft palate is raised so that the breath is trapped for a short time. When the tongue is lowered suddenly from the soft palate, the breath rushes out of the mouth with a slight explosion. It is a *voiced velar plosive.*

g is short and never aspirated.

In final position g is very gentle and lengthens the vowel before it.

Some of the commonest words containing g are :

garden,   girl,   glass,   great,   green,   grey

guess,   again,   ago   agree,   angry,   August,

language,   together,   longer,   bigger,   stronger.

(Transcribe the above words with the help of a pronouncing dictionary).

<center>?</center>

? is a sound which is commonly known as glottal stop. It may also be called the *glottal plosive* consonant. Though it is not an essential sound of the English language it may be helpful to know its existence.

In forming the ? sound the glottis is closed completely by bringing the vocal cords into contact. The air is compressed by pressure from the lungs. Then the glottis is opened so that the air escapes suddenly.

It is neither voiced nor voiceless.

An exaggerated form of this consonant constitutes the explosive sound heard in coughing.

2.9.2.   The English Affricate Consonants

An 'affricate' consonant is a kind of plosive in which the articulating organs are separated more slowly than usual. In ordinary plosives the separation is made with great rapidity. In English there are two significant affricate consonants, t∫ and dʒ.

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The tongne-tip touches the back of the alveolar ridge and the soft palate is raised so that the breath is trapped for a short time. The rest of the tongue is in ʃ position. The tongue-tip moves away from the alveolar ridge a little way and the whole tongue is then in the ʃ, ¥ position, so that a short period of this friction is heard.

Children often imitate a steam engine by a series of tʃ sounds. The sound is defined as a *voiceless palato-alveolar affricate* consonant.

Some of the words containing /tʃ/ are:

chair,	church,	fortune,	future,	kitchen,	nature,
picture,	question,	March,	speech,	watch,	which,
reach,	rich,	each,	catch,	much,	such,
teach.					

d¥

The English / d¥ / phoneme is formed like / tʃ / except that the vocal cords are made to vibrate so that voice is produced during the articulation of the sound.

It may be defined as a *voiced palato – alveolar affricate* consonant.

Some of the commonest words containing / d¥ / sound are:

general,	major,	ledger,	gentleman,	January,	join,
joke,	joy,	judge,	July,	June,	danger,
imagine,	soldier,	subject,	age,	arrange,	edge,
language,	manage,	message,	village,	page,	strange

2.9.3. Fricative Consonants

Fricative consonants are formed by the narrowing of the air passage at some point so that when air is expelled it escapes with a kind of hissing sound. They are / f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ¥, h /.

f

The soft palate is raised so that no air goes through the nose and it is all released through the mouth. The bottom lip is very close to the upper front teeth; this forms the narrowing and when air is pushed through this narrowing it causes slight friction. The tongue takes up the position necessary for the following sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate.

f is a strong consonant. It is never voiced. It is a strong, voiceless long consonant. It may be defined as a *voiceless labiodental* fricative.

When f occurs at the end of words, after a vowel, it has an effect on the *length* of the vowel. It makes the vowel shorter.

Some of the most common words which contain /f / are :

family,	far,	father,	first,	four,	from,
front,	after,	different,	perfect,	half,	off,
laugh,	cough,	rough,	philosophy,	enough	

(Transcribe the above mentioned words in italics you may consult D. Jones's dictionary.)

v

In pronouncing v the soft palate is raised so that no air goes through the nose and it is released through the mouth. The bottom lip is very close to the upper front teeth. This forms the narrowing and when the air is pushed through this narrowing it causes slight friction. The vocal cords are made to vibrate.

The consonant is therefore called *voiced labio-dental fricative*. v is weak. When v occurs at the end of a word, after a vowel, it makes the vowel longer.

Transcribe the following : (You may consult any pronouncing dictionary with phonetic symbols)

very,	visit,	value,	violet,	view,	ever,	never,
seven,	heaven,	travel,	even,	live,	five,	prove,
believe,	twelve,	have				

θ

In producing this sound the soft palate is raised so that all the breath is released through the mouth.

The tip of the tongue is close to the upper front teeth.

The main part of the tongue is fairly flat.

The vocal cords are not made to vibrate. It may be defined as *voiceless dental fricative*.

θ is strong. It occurs in words like *thin, think, thought, threatre, Thursday, thank* etc.

Look up Daniel Jones's Pronouncing Dictionary and transcribe the following words :

thick,	thing,	thirsty,	thousand,	three,	through,
thirty,	healthy,	wealthy,	bath,	earth,	fourth,
worth,	south,	path			

In producing the sound the soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth.

The tip of the tongue is close to the upper front teeth.

The vocal cords are vibrated. It is therefore a *voiced dental fricative* ð is weak.

Between vowels ð is voiced, but the important thing is to make it very short and weak.

It occurs in words like *other, rather, worthy, further, brother, mother.*

Look up Daniel Jones's Dictionary and transcribe the following words :

the,	this,	that,	these,	those,	smooth,	with,
weather,	breathe,	clothes,	father,	neither,	them,	though,
than,	mother,	brother,	they.			

S

The position of the speech organs for S sound are :

a. The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is relased through the mouth.

b. The tip and blade of the tongue are very close to the alveolar ridge.

c. The teeth are very close together.

d. S is strong and voiceless. In may be defined as *voiceless blade alveolar fricative.*

S is the normal sound of the letter S in English as in *sets*. In the beginning of a word s is always pronounced S, but in other positions it is frequently pronounced z.

Some of the common words containing S are :

some,	same,	Saturday,	Sunday,	second,	self,	seven,
since,	small,	school,	sister,	against,	almost,	beside,
message,	Mrs,	use (n)	miss,	cats,	perhaps.	

Z

Z is weak and voiced.

It is produced by raising the soft palate and releasing the breath through the mouth.

The tip and blade of the tongue are very close to the alveolar ridge.

The teeth are very close together.

It is defined as *voiced blade alveolar fricative.*

It occurs in words like *lose, cause, plays, knees, his, as.*

Observe carefully :

/ ju:s / use (n)	/ haus / house (n)	cats / kæts /
/ ju:z / use (v)	/ hauz / house (v)	dogz / dɔgz /
/ ju:st / used (to)		

Transcribe the following words :

noisy,	*busy,*	*reason,*	*easy,*	*lazy,*	*because,*
has,	*lose,*	*was,*	*days,*	*does,*	*moves,*	*please*

<center>ʃ</center>

ʃ is a strong friction sound and is unvoiced.

The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth.

There is a narrowing between the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveolar ridge.

The front of the tongue is higher than for s and z.

The lips are very slightly rounded.

It is defined as a *voiceless palato-alveolar fricative* consonant.

Transcribe the following words. Look up Daniel Jones's Pronouncing Dictionary.

shape,	*ship,*	*shop,*	*shall,*	*should,*	*short,*
shut,	*show,*	*shoulder,*	*shine,*	*sure,*	*anxious,*
ashamed,	*machine,*	*patient,*	*station,*	*nation,*	*ocean,*
mention,	*precious,*	*crash,*	*fish,*	*greenish,*	*wish,*	*dish.*

<center>ʒ</center>

ʒ is weak and voiced.

The soft palate is raised and the breath is released through the mouth.

There is a narrowing between the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveolar ridge.

The lips are slightly rounded.

It is defined as a *voiced palato-alveolar fricative* consonant.

Transcribe the following words with help from Daniel Jones's Dictionary :

vision,	invasion,	rouge,	closure,	measure,	pleasure,
usual,	division,	inclusion,	illusion,	provision,	explosion,
leisure,	garage,	barrage,	revision.		

h

It is the sound heard when air passes out through the wide open glottis and the mouth is held in the position of a vowel.

There are as many varieties of **h** as there are vowels, because h always occurs before a vowel and consists of the sound of breath passing between the open vocal cord and out of the mouth.

"Leaving out / h / is the biggest danger, but a lesser error is to make h-sounds too noisy." O'Connor.

Compare the sounds in the following pairs :

/ha:m/	harm	/a:m/	arm	/hi:t/	heat	/i:t/	eat
/hedʒ/	hedge	/edʒ/	edge	/hc:l/	hall	/c:l/	all
hɛe/	hair	/ɛe/	air	/hil/	hill	/il/	ill

Some of the words containing / h / are given below :

half,	hat,	health,	hear	here,	heart,
high,	hide,	history,	hold,	home,	hope,
horse,	house (n),	hundred,	behind,	inhale,	rehearse,
coherent.					

2.9.4. Nasal Consonants

There are three phonemes in English which are represented by nasal consonants / m, n, ŋ/. In all nasal consonants the soft palate is lowered and at the same time the mouth passage is blocked at some point, so that all the air is pushed out of the nose.

m

The soft palate is lowered ; the mouth is closed ; and the air passes through the nose. The tongue is held in a neutral position. Th vocal cords vibrate, and voice is produced.

It may be defined as a *voiced bi-labial nasal* consonant.

Look of the Pronouncing Dictionary and transcribe the following :

lamb,   *lamp,*   *room,*   *lump,*   *games,*   *mine,*

lambs,   *lump,*   *complained.*

/ m / is sometimes syllabic ; that is, it occupies the place at the centre of the syllable which is usually occupied by a vowel.

It occurs in words like *blossom, rhythm* (blcs-) (rið-), but more often they are pronounced / blcsem / and / riðem /. You may choose either of the two.

n

The phoneme is formed as follows. The mouth passage is completely blocked by raising the tip of the tongue to touch the teeth-ridge. The soft palate is lowered so that the air passes through the nose. The vocal cords vibrate so that voice is produced. The sound may be defined as a *voiced alveolar nasal* consonant.

/ n / is *often* syllabic. In words such as *written, garden* / n/ is almost always used immediately after the / t / or / d / that is / ritn / or ga:dn.

Transcribe the following : (You may look up Daniel Jones)

need,   *never,*   *new,*   *nine,*   *no,*   *noise,*   *north,*

now,   *know,*   *knee,*   *any,*   *enough,*   *funny,*   *general,*

journey,   *again,*   *alone,*   *begin,*   *between,*   *can,*   *done,*

down,   *green,*   *learn,*   *one,*   *son,*   *than,*   *kitten.*

ŋ

This is the third English nasal consonant. In producing it the soft palate is lowered and all the air is released through the nose.

The mouth is blocked by the back of the tongue pressed against the soft palate. The sound is voiced. It is therefore defined as a *voiced velar nasal* consonant

/ ŋ / does not occur at the beginning of words in English, but it does occur between vowels.

Observe carefully :   /siŋe/ singer   / bæŋiŋ /banging

                  /siŋiŋ /singing   /t^ŋz/ tongues

                  /Écŋiŋ/longing   / Écŋ egeu / long ago

A useful general rule is that if the word is formed for a *verb*, no / g / is pronounced. But if not / g / is pronounced as in / strcŋge / and / æŋge /. Notice the difference between / Écŋge / and

/Écɲiŋ/ (formed from the verb *long*). The sound g is never pronounced before a following consonant, for example /siŋz/ *sings*, / bæ ŋd / *banged.*

Transcribe the following :

anger,	anxious,	drink,	finger,	hungry,	language,
sink,	thank,	think,	bring,	during,	evening,
mourning,	song,	spring,	wrong,	young.	

2.10. Lateral Consonants

The English consonants l is formed laterally, that is, instead of the breath passing down the centre of the mouth, it passes round the sides of an obstruction set up in the centre.

In producing it the soft palate is raised.

The tongue-tip and the sides of the tongue-blade are in firm contact with the alveolar ridge.

The air is released between the sides of the tongue and the palate.

The sound is voiced and there is no friction (except when it is immediately after / p / or /k/.

There are two chief varieties of I in English. These are clear l and dark l; clear l occurs before consonants and in final positions, for example, / leit / *late*, / laud / *loud*. The dark l occurs before consonants and in final positions as in / fil / *fill*, /fild / *filled.*

Many English speakers use only a clear l in all positions, and many others use only a dark l, and many others use both.

/ l / is very often syllabic ; it occcurs in a position usually occupied by a vowel. Most English people would pronounce such words as *parcel, level, puzzle, novel*, as / pa:s , / / lev , / / pʌz , / / ʌcv , /.

Transcribe the following :

language,	laugh,	learn,	listen,	little,	allow,	already,
cold,	colour,	difficult,	early,	self,	yellow,	able,
beautiful,	fall,	fulfil	girl,	people,	possible,	
table,	well					

Gliding Consonants or Frictionless Continuants

There are three consonants / j, w, r / which consist of a quick, smooth, non-friction glide towards a following vowel.

W

In producing this sound the lips are firmly rounded. There is considerable raising of the back of the tongue in the direction of the soft palate. The soft palate is raised and the vocal cords are vibrated. It is described as *labio-velar* semi-vowel, or gliding consonant.

Start with / u: / or /u/ and follow this immediately by the vowel c: ; this is the word / wc: / *war*.

Observe the following carefully :

/ wct ʃ / watch	/ wait / white	/swɛe / swear	/kwaiet / quiet
/ wɛe / where	/ wud / wood	/dweliŋ/dwelling	/ wei / why
/witʃ / which	/ wen / when	/ wɛe / where	

W does not occur in final position.

Some of the commonest words containing / w / are :

one,	*wait,*	*walk,*	*warm,*	*water,*	*well,*	*what*
woman,	*word,*	*work,*	*away,*	*quarter,*	*question,*	
quite,	*twenty,*	*twice.*				

j

In pronouncing **j** the speech organs start at or near the position for the English short vowel i and immediately leave this for some other sound of equal or greater prominence.

The front of the tongue is raised rather high in the direction of the hard palate. The lips are spread ; the soft palate is in a raised position and the vocal cords are made to vibrate.

The consonant may be described as unrounded palatal glide.

Observe the following carefully :

/ ja:d / yard	/jc: / your	/ jet / yet	/ ju: / you
/ dju: / due	/fju: / few	/ vju:/ view	/ nju: / new
/ vælju: / value	/mju:zik/ music		

Most American speakers do not use / j /. R. P. speakers always use / j / after / t, d, n /. / j / does not occur in final position.

Transcribe the following. If necessary, take help from Daniel Jones's Dictionary :

year,	*yes,*	*yet,*	*young,*	*use,*	*usual,*	*useful,*
Europe,	*amuse,*	*cure,*	*during,*	*educate,*	*huge,*	*January,*
knew,	*Tuesday,*	*value.*				

Many scholars describe it as a fricative sound. But A.C. Gimson and J. D. O'Connor regard it as a gliding frictionless consonant.

In producing it the tongue has a curved shape with the tip pointing towards the hard palate at the back of the alveolar ridge ; the front is low and the back is rather high.

The tongue-tip is not close enough to the palate to cause friction. The lips are sometimes rounded, specially when **r** is at the beginning of words. The soft palate is raised ; and voiced air flows between the tongue-tip and palate with no friction.

Foreign learners often replace this sound by the sound by the **r** in their own language. Sometimes they use a *rolled* sound in which the tip of the tongue taps very quickly against the alveoler ridge. Sometimes they use a friction sound with the back of the tongue close to the soft palate. They are understood, but they sound foreign.

In R. P. /r/ only occurs before vowels, never before consonants, so words like *learn, sort, farm* do not contain /r/ (/e:n//sc:t//fa:m/)

If your model is American you will pronounce /r/ before consonants ; if it is R.R. you should not.

At the end of words R. P. has /r/ only if the immediately following word begins with a vowel. For example *never better* will be /neve bete/ ; but *never again* will be /never egen/. This is known as the *linking r* ; some speakers do not use it ; but most people do use it.

Observe the following carefully :

/beter cf/ better off   /hier it iz/ here it is

/fc:r c: faiv/ four or five   /puer euld mæn/ poor old man

It is quite usual to hear this linking /r/ following the vowel /e/ even when there is no letter *r* in the spelling as in /æfriker en ci ʃe/ *Africa and Asia.* Some speakers dislike this so-called 'intrusive r', so it is perhaps best for you not to use it.

Transcribe the following. Consult Daniel Jones's Dictionary.

rain,	rather,	ready,	real,	remember,	road,	roof,
rule,	write,	wrong,	agree,	arrange,	dress,	every,
foreign,	interest,	pretty,	serious,	terrible,	worry	

2.11. Vowels

You have already seen that a vowel is a voiced sound in the pronunciation of which the air passes through the mouth in a continuous stream, these being no obstruction and no narrowing

such as would produce audible friction. It means that the characteristic qualities of vowels depend on the shape of the open space above the larynx. The passage forms a resonance chamber which modifies the quality of the sound produced by the vibration of the vocal cords. Different shapes of the passage modify the quality in different ways and consequently give rise to distinct vowel sounds.

The number of possible vowels is very large, but the number actually used in any particular language is small. In English it is not necessary to distinguish more than *twelve* pure vowels and *eight* diphthongs. The term 'pure' vowel indicates a vowel, during the production of which the organs of speech remain approximately stationary. A diphthong in which the organs of speech perform a clearly perceptible movement.

The chief organs concerned in modifying the shape of the passage are the tongue and the lips. The vowels of well-defined quality are chiefly those in which the tongue is markedly raised in the front or at the back or is quite low down in the mouth. It is from among these vowels which are as remote as possible from 'neutral' position that it has been found convenient to select eight 'Cardinal Vowels' which are described below.

2.11.1. Cardinal Vowels

Since it is quite difficult to describe a vowel sound in writing, Daniel Jones devised a system is which there is a set of eight *Cardinal Vowels* which can be used as points of reference from which other vowels can be measured. The cardinal vowels do not possess any intrinsic merits as sounds.

The tongue positions of the eight primary cardinal vowels may be represented diagrammatically as in the figure given below where the relative position of the highest points of the tongue are shown by dots.
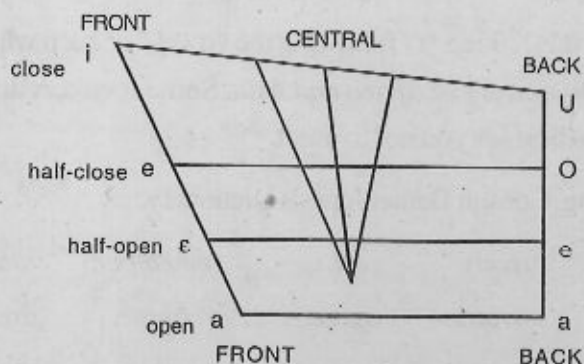
Diagram illustrating the tongue-positions of eight primary Cardinal Vowels

The shape of the diagram is a compromise between scientific accurary and the requirements of the practical language teacher.

When we classify according to the *height of the tongue* we distinguish four classes. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on the line *i – u* are called *close vowels* ; those which have

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their tongue-positions on the lines $e-o$, $\varepsilon-c$, $a-a$ are called *half-close* vowels, *half-open* vowels and *open* vowels respectively. Vowels in which the highest point of the tongue is in the centre part of the vowel figure are called *central* vowels.

Close vowels are those in which the tongue is raised as high as possible consistently with the sounds remaining vowels.

Open vowels are those in which the tongue is as low as possible.

Halfclose vowels are those in which the tongue occupies a position about one-third of the distance from 'close' to 'open'.

Half-open vowels are those in which the tongue occupies a position about two-thirds of the distance from 'close' to 'open'.

When we classify according to the *part of the tongue* raised we distinguish three classes. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on or near the line $i-a$ are called 'front vowels', in other words the front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on or near the line $u-a$ are called back vowels i.e. the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate. Vowels in which the highest part of the tongue is in the centre part of the vowel figure are called central vowels.

Vowels are also classified according to the *lip-position*. The lips may be spread as in i, rounded as in c, u, and neutral e.

Vowels may also be differentiated by degrees of *muscular tension*. For instance i: is often described as a tense vowel, and i as the corresponding lax one.

Observe carefully the following diagram where the position of the English vowels are shown.
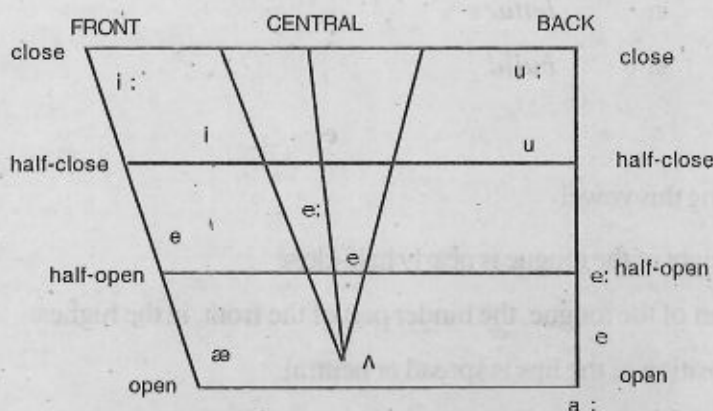
2.11.2. English Vowels : Description

i :

This is a long vowel and its tongue position is shown in the above diagram. (All vowels are voiced and the soft palate is in a raised position).

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Height of the tongue	:	nearly close
Part of the tongue	:	front raised towards the hard palate
Position of the lips	:	spread or neutral

English words with various spellings in which this vowel is present

police, *machine,* *complete,* *even,* *free,* *cheese,* *sea,*

reason, *field,* *piece,* *seize,* *receive,* *key,* *people,*

quay

i

In pronouncing this vowel the general position of the tongue and the lips resemble that of **i:** ; but the tongue is lower and slightly retracted.

The height of the tongue is nearly half-close. The hinder part of the front of the tongue is the highest. The lip position of the lips is spread or neutral. Muscles are lax.

Examples of some English words in which this vowel sound occurs :

i	in	*rich, king*
y	in	*city, symbol*
e	in	*become, pretty, horses*
ic	in	*ladies, cities*
a	in	*village, private*
u	in	*lettuce*
ui	in	*build*

e

In producing this vowel

the height of the tongue is nearly half-close

the part of the tongue, the hinder part of the front, in the highest

the position of the lips is spread or neutral.

The sound occurs in the following English words

set, *bed,* *went,* *many,* *any,*

dead, *head,* *breath,* *said,*

Leicester, *friend,* *Geoffrey*

In producing this vowel

the height of the tongue is between half-open and open

the front part of the tongue is the highest

the position of the lips is spread or neutral.

The sound occurs in

hat,	cat,	rat,	fat,	mat,
rash,	crash,	exact,	lamb,	
plait,	plaid			

a:

In producing this vowel

the tongue is very low down in the mouth and the height of the tongue is fully open ;

the position of the lips is neutral ;

the tip of the tongue is slightly retracted from the lower teeth ;

English words in which contain this sound :

car,	part,	March,	heart,	
clerk,	sergent,	command,	laugh,	
har,	father,	memoir,	reservoir,	barrage.

c

The tongue is held in the lowest and most backward position possible.

The height of the tongue is fully open. The back of the tongue is the highest. The position of the lips is open lip- rounding.

The tip of the tongue is retracted from the lower teeth.

English words in which the sound occurs :

not,	dog,	pond,	solid,	foreign,
what,	want,	watch,	quality,	long,
cough,	knowledge,	yacht,	box.	

The height of tongue is between half-open and open.

The back of the tongue is highest. The position of the lips is between open and close lip-rounding.

English words in which the sound occurs :

all,	talk,	war,	born,	cord,	horse,
saw,	law,	yawn,	daughter,	fault,	
cause,	bought,	ought,	before,	door,	
board,	court,	four,	broad.		

u

Its tongue position is considerably higher than that of the long e:

The tongue, however, is not so high as for the long vowel u :

The lips are rounded fairly close. The height of the tongue is just above half-close.

English words in which the sound occurs :

put,	full,	butcher,	wolf,	woman,	
bosom,	good,	book,	wool,	could,	should
would,	look,	push,	butcher.		

u :

The back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate

The tongue is raised almost to close position

Lips are rounded in fairly close position.

English words in which the sound occurs :

tomb,	whom,	move,	do,	food,	spoon,
shoe,	too,	rude,	June,	soup,	routine,
canoe,	new,	crew,	chew,	blue,	juice,
fruit,	beauty.				

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Height of the tongue is half-open.

The fore part of the back is the highest.

The lips are spread.

The opening between the jaws is wide.

Words in which the sound occurs :

cut,	hurry,	mutton,	among,	comfort,	company,
compass,	front,	honey,	money,	rough,	London,
love,	courage,	double,	cousin,	blood,	does.

<p style="text-align:center">e :</p>

This is a central vowel, which means that the central part of the tongue is raised in order to make it. The tonge is raised to about midway between half-close and half-open positions. The lips are spread and the opening between the jaws is narrow. It is not possible to make the sound properly with a wide open mouth.

English words in which the sound occurs :

her,	fern,	serve,	fir,	girl,	bird,	mirth,
fur,	turn,	church,	myrtle,	ear,	heard,	earth,
courteous,	journal,	amateur,	chauffeur,	word,	work,	world.

<p style="text-align:center">e</p>

e without the length mark is a relatively short English vowel, and it is often called 'the neutral vowel' or 'schwa' by phoneticians. The central part of the tongue is raised, and the tongue is raised about one third of the way from open to close. The lips are in a neutral position.

Examples of English words with different spellings :

e occurs in syllables with weak stress.

mother,	doctor,	clour,	figure,	better,
better,	alone,	about,	above,	suppose.

2.12. The English Diphthongs

R.P. has eight essential diphthong phonemes :

ei, eu, ai, au, ci, ie, εe, ue

A diphthong consists of a deliberate or intentional glide. Speech organs start in the position of one vowel and move towards another.

There are two elements in a diphthong. The first element is the starting point, while the second element is the point in the direction of which the glide is made.

Most of the length and stress associated with the glide is concentrated on the first element. The second element is only lightly sounded. It is, however, important to recount that the diphthongs result from a quick transition in producing one vowel to producing another vowel while the sound of the first vowel is still in progress. That is, in a diphthong we pronounce two sounds within the time it normally takes to pronounce only one.

ei

The diphthong **ei** starts at about the English vowel e and moves in the direction of i. In other words, it begins at about half-way between the half-close and half-open positions and move upwards in the direction of i. The starting point is a little higher than that of e. The lips are spread.

Examples of English words in which this diphthong occurs :

came,	make,	plain,	daisy,	day,	play,	weigh,
veil,	they,	great,	break,	late,	haste,	same,
face,	bathe,	table,	pay,	change.		

eu

In producing the diphtong **eu** the height of the tongue is a little nearer to half-close than to half-open. The fore part of the back of the tongue is raised. Lips are slightly rounded.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

home,	post,	only,	noble,	road,	toast,	soap,
oak,	toe,	foe,	go,	no,	dough,	sole,
soul,	poultry,	know,	blow,	growth,	shoulder,	sew,
bureau,	old,	won't				

ai

The diphthong starts with the mouth well open. The glide begins at a point slightly behind the front open position and the second element moves in the direction of i. The height of the tongue is low ; the front part of the tongue is raised, and the position of the lips is spread to neutral.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

time,	idle,	night,	fly,	cry,	by,	pie,
die,	lie,	dye,	high,	height,	fly,	light,
either,	neither.					

au

The glide **au** diphthong begins at a point between the back and front open position, and moves in the directions of **u**. The height of the tongue is low ; the hinder part of the back of the tongue is raised and the lips are neutral.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

land,	house,	out,	bough,	cow,	town,
flower,	bow (bend the body),	doubt,	gown,		
mouth,	now,	fowl,	foul,	vow,	
thousand,	shout,	how.			

ci

The diphthong begins about half-way between c and c : and moves in the direction of *i*. The diphthong begins at a position which may be described as back, rounded and slightly half-open. The lips are spread.

Some English words in which the sound occurs :

noise,	voice,	point,	boy,	employ,	royal,
toy,	Doyle,	coin,	choice,	joint,	loyal,
foil,	soil,	hoist.			

ie

The diphthong starts at about the position of the English vowel *i* and moves in the direction of e. It begins by being fairly close, front and unrounded and ends at a central, nearly half-open, unrounded position.

Some English words which contain this diphthong :

deer,	peer,	tear,	here,	weird,	fierce,
idea,	Ian,	museum,	steer,	beard,	pierce,
beer,	tier,	gear,	cheer,	sheer,	seer,
jeer,	year.				

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This is a diphthong which starts about half-way between the English vowels *e* and *æ* and moves in the direction of e. The height of the tongue is half-open ; the front part of the tongue is raised and the lip position is spread or neutral.

Some English words which contain the diphthong :

care,	*rare,*	*share,*	*air,*	*fair,*	*pair,*
bear,	*fear,*	*tear* (Nb),	*dare,*	*chair,*	*vary,*
there,	*hare,*	*wear.*			

ue

It begins at a vowel which may be described as between close and half-close, back and moderately rounded, and move to a nearly half-open, central, unrounded sound.

English words in which this sound occurs :

sure,	*cure,*	*endure,*	*poor,*	*moor,*	*curious,*
during,	*tour,*	*gourd,*	*sewer,*	*truant,*	*fluently,*
jewel,	*influence,*	*tourist,*	*steward,*	*Muir.*	

2.12.1 Classification of Diphthongs

Closing Dipthongs : These diphthongs (ei, eu, ai, au, ci) move from an opener to a closer position.

Narrow Diphthongs : In these diphthongs (ei, eu) the movement of the tongue is relatively small; in all others it is wide.

Centring Diphthongs : In these diphthongs (ie, εe, ue/ce) the tongue moves in the direction of e which is a central vowel.

2.13. Interference between L_1 and L_2

Extensive experience in the teaching of foreign languages has shown that one of the surest ways of learning to pronounce a foreign language is by a systematic comparison of the sounds of the mother-tongue with those of the target language. Although the sound systems of the two languages are never the same, the problem can be predicted at least in part by comparing the sound system of the two languages. One who begins to learn a second language begins with a fairly articulate verbal repertory. This verbal repertory is usually considered as expediting the process of learning a second language. But in many cases it actually tends to filter the sound

system of his native language into the system of the foreign language. The postulate that phonemic similarities facilitate the process of learning is false. The position is that partial similarities create greater problems than totally different sounds. This habit of transferring native sounds into the sounds of the second language is often called *interference*. The learner of a foreign language is often tempted to substitute the native phonemes which apparently resemble the foreign phonemes. Hence a contrastive study may be useful, for it locates the areas of difficulty.

These areas of difficulty may be classified in the following manner :

I. Vowels :

A.   The difference in length not normally recognized in the reproductions of Bengali vowels and confusions resulting from it :

   i.   The distinction between / i / and / i : / is not easily recognized or reproduced. e.g. *bit* and *beat* ; *ship* and sheep.

   ii.   Similar confusion exists in recognizing and reproducing the difference in length between / u / and / u :/ sounds, e.g. *full* and *fool*.

   iii.   The difference between / e / and / ei / is also overlooked. The result is loss of intelligibility ; e.g. *let* and *late* ; *wet* and *wait.*

B.   Absence of certain L₂ sounds in the sound-system of the first language.

   i.   The English sound / c : / does not occur in the Indian languages, e.g. *caught* and *sawed*.

   ii.   The tendency to substitute / c / for / ʌ / in Bengali.

   iii.   The absence of the central vowels in the Bengali language creates confusion. Unless the situational context and the linguistic context are clear the hearer is likely to be confused. e.g. *bird* and *bard, heart* and *hurt.*

C.   Certain English diphthong sounds are approximated to their nearest pure vowel sounds in Bengali :

   i.   Most of the English diphthongs are reproduced fairly accurately in Bengali and there is no loss of intelligibility.

   ii.   The English diphthong sounds / ue / and / ce / present the greatest difficulty to the Bengali learners.

II. Consonants :

A.   In Bengali all labials are bilabials. They are substituted for English labio-dentals.

   i.   The voiceless aspirated bilabial plosive / ph / in Bengali often replaces the English labio-dental fricative / f /.

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ii.   The voiced labio-dental fricative / v / is replaced by voiced aspirated bilabial Bengali plosive / bh / .

B.   Confusion resulting from inadequate recognition of the English fricatives.

i.   English / θ / and / ð / sounds are replaced by dental plosives in Bengali.

ii.   Voiceless alveolar fricatives / s / and / ʃ / are often confused, though the sounds exist in the Bengali language.

iii.   The voiced alveolar fricative / z / tends to be replaced by the voiced alveolar affricate in Bengali.

iv.   The English sound / ¥ /, voiced palato-alveolar fricative, tends to be replaced by the aspirated palato-alveolar affricate in Bengali.

C.   Confusion resulting from insufficient aspiration :

i.   The English / p / sound is often weakly aspirated for the corresponding Bengali sound is normally unaspirated.

The foregoing study is by no means comprehensive. Attempt has been made to locate some of the areas of difficulty.

2.14.   Stress

Stress is an essential feature of English, though not of certain other languages. In the sentence *I could hardly believe my eyes* the words *hardly*, *believe* and *eyes* are stressed. This means that one of the syllables of the word is said with greater force with greater effort, than the others. In *hardly* it is the first syllable / ha:d/ and in *believe* it is the second syllable / –li:v/. *Eyes* is a monosyllabic word. Thus stress may be defined as force or emphasis with which a syllable is uttered, to give it some degree of prominence.

Stress occurs in two forms in English :

(a)   word stress on any word of two or more syllables;

(b)   phrase stress on any utterance of two or more words, which forms a unit of sense.

2.14.1.   Word Stress

For word stress, it is clearly essential to know how many syllables each word contains, and what degree of stress to put on each. Every English word has a definite place for the stress and we are not allowed to change it. The first syllable is the most common place for the stress, as in *father, any, steadily, gathering, excellently, obstinacy reasonableness*. Many words are

stressed on the second syllable like *about, before, attractive, beginning, intelligent, magnificent*. Some words have two stressed syllables, for example, *fourteen* 'fɔːˈtiːn, *half-hearted* 'haːf ˈhaːtid, *disbelieve* 'disbiˈliːv, *examination* igˈzæmiˈneiʃ en. Some are stressed on the third syllable.

It is generally sufficient to distinguish two kinds only : *primary stress* and *secondary stress.* Primary stress is marked usually by placing a vertical mark (') immediately before the stressed syllable ; secondary stress is usually marked by the sign (ˌ) a low vertical mark e.g. ˌexamiˈnation.

How do we know where the stress is to be given ? There is no simple way of knowing which syllable or syllables in an English word must be stressed. But every time you learn another word you must be sure to learn how it is stressed. Any good dictionary of English will give you this information.

You may, however, remember the following rules. There are exceptions to these rules, but you will find these rules very helpful.

a. Words of one syllable, if they are purely grammatical words, are usually not stressed, e.g. pronouns (*I, me, you, he, she* etc.), prepositions (*to, for, at, from, by* etc.), articles (*a, an, the*). Other monosyllabic words may be stressed, for example, verbs (*eat, love, take, try,* etc), nouns (*head, chair, book, pen,* etc), adjectives (*good, blue, long, cold* etc.) adverbs (*well, just, quite* etc.) and the like. In general, words which provide most of the information are stressed. Numbers, Yes/no, exclamations, and question words are also stressed.

b. Word stress may be used to distinguish word -function :

Noun / Adjective	Verb
'abstract	abs'tract
'accent	ac'cent
'digest	di'gest
'torment	tor'ment
'transfer	trans'fer
'absent	ab'sent
'conduct	con'duct
'contract	con'tract
'permit	per'mit
'desert	de'sert
'object	ob'ject
'perfect	per'fect
'produce	pro'duce

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Noun / Adjective	Verb
ˈprogress	proˈgress
ˈprotest	proˈtest
ˈrecord	reˈcord
ˈsubject	subˈject

c. Native words and early French adoptions tend to have the main stress on the root syllable and to keep it there, regardless of the affixes that word-formation may add :

ˈkingly,	ˈkingliness,	ˈkingship,	ˈkingdom,	unˈkingliness
ˈlove,	ˈlover,	ˈloving,	ˈlovingly,	ˈloveliness, lovely
ˈstand,	underˈstand, misunderˈstand			ˈmisunderˈstanding
ˈpassion,	ˈpassionate, ˈpassionately,			ˈdisˈpassionately

d. By contrast, with the more recent adoptions and coinages, specially those based on words from the classical languages, the place of the stress varies according to affixation:

ˈtelegraph,	teˈlegraphy,	teleˈgraphic
ˈphoto,	phoˈtography,	photoˈgraphic
ˈtransport,	transˈportable,	transporˈtation
ˈargument,	arguˈmentative,	argumenˈtation

e. Words ending in the following suffixes have stress on the syllable before the suffix:

– ic	:	eˈlectric, draˈmatic
– ical	:	poˈlitical, geoˈmetrical, philoˈsophical
– ically	:	scienˈtifically, ˈpractically
– ity	:	ˈprobity, moˈrality, probaˈbility
– ial	:	reˈmedial, inˈdustrial
– ially	:	inˈdustrially, matheˈmatically
– ian	:	liˈbrarian, ˈAsian, repiˈtilion
– ion	:	ˈaction, diˈvision, introˈduction
– tion	:	examinˈation, consideˈration

f.   Words ending in the following suffixes take a stress within the suffix :

– *bility*   :   aˈbility, possiˈbility

– *ality*   :   reˈality, univerˈsality

g.   When it is necessary to emphasize words which have both a primary and secondary stress and in which the secondary stress precedes the primary, the secondary stress is often reinforced and becomes as strong as the primary stress :

ˈfundaˈmental,   ˈdistriˈbution,   resˈponsiˈbility

ˈdisappeˈarance,   ˈrecomˈmend,   ˈartiˈficial

h.   In longer words the greater the distance between the secondary stress and the primary stress, the more readily does this reinforcement of the secondary stress take place.

ˈrepresenˈtation,   ˈcharacterˈistic,   ˈcaricaˈture

ˈperpendicuˈlarity,   ˈcharacteriˈzation

i.   The last syllable of words ending in *–ute, – ude, –ise, –ize* are not stressed

ˈprosecute,   ˈsubstitute,   ˈgratitude,   ˈmultitude

ˈcriticise,   ˈexercise,   ˈrecognize

2.14.2.   Compound Words

By a compound word we mean a word made up of two words written in conventional spelling as one, with or without a hyphen. Stress on compound words in very complicated. A few common rules are given below :

a.   Single-stressed compounds are by far the most common e.g.,

ˈappletree,   ˈbookbinding,   ˈbystander,   ˈdaybreak,   ˈdiningroom,

ˈgrasshopper,   ˈpickpocket,   ˈschoolmaster, ˈsittingroom, ˈwaterproof

b.   The stress is on the first word when it means a new idea e.g.

ˈgreengrocer

c.   The stress is on the first word when the second is restricted by the first e.g.

ˈbirthday,   ˈcattleshow,   ˈsheepdog,   ˈfluteplayer

d.   A few isolated compounds have single stress on the second element e.g.

whenˈever,   himˈself,   hereˈafter,   throughˈout,   alˈready,

lookˈout,   shortˈcoming.

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e. , In a noun phrase like a *black'bird* the subsidiary stress is on *black* and the primary stress is on *bird*. But in the same compound *'blackbird* the primary stress is on *black*. Similarly we have

'earthquake,   'waiting room,   'fire-extinguisher

f. Double stress is used in compound adjectives when the first word is an adjective e.g.

'red 'hot,   'good 'looking,   'bad 'tempered,   'first 'class,   'second 'hand

g. Double stress is used when the second word has special importance e.g.

'gas'stove,   'arm'chair,   but 'churchyard and 'graveyard

h. Observe the following : 'train for Water'loo but 'Waterloo 'Station, 'red hot 'poker but 'just red'hot ; 'inside 'out but 'right in'side.

2.14.3.   Weak Forms

In a sentence like *It was too expensive for them to buy* the words *too, expensive* and *buy* are stressed : it wez 'tu : ik'spensiv feðem td 'bai. Notice the pronunciation of the words *was, for, them,* and *to.* All of them have the vowel / e / . If those words are pronounced alone and usually they are not stressed, and then the forms with / e / are used. We call these *weak forms* of those words.

The use of weak forms is an essential part of English speech and you must learn to use the weak forms of 34 English words if you want your English to sound English.

The following list of weak forms should be observed carefully :

Word	Weak form	
and	en	
as	ez	
but	bet	
than	ðen	
Word	Weak form	
that	ðet	(in phrases like *that man* it is ðæt)
he	i:	
him	im	
his	iz	
her	e :	(at the beginning of word groups hi:, hiz, he: should be used.)

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them	ðem
us	s
do	de (use the strong form hau du: ai neu)
does	dez
am	m, em
are	e, e r (before vowels)
be	bi
is	s, z, dʒ
was	wez
has	ez, s, z (hæz when final word in the group)
have	v, ev
had	d, ed
can	ken
shall	∫,
will	|, ,e|
a	e
an	en
the	ðe (ð i before vowels)
some	sem (sʌm when stressed)
at	et
for	fe, f er
from	frem
of	ev
to	te (tu: before vowels)
can	ken (kæn when stressed)

2.15. Intonation

By intonation we mean the rise and fall of the pitch of the voice when we speak. It varies from district to district and from speaker to speaker, but in general there are certain regular speech tunes which are very important in conveying meaning. We cannot consider intonation without thinking of stress also. However, if the intonation is right, the stress does not matter so greatly, for the result is an English tune ; whereas if the intonation is wrong, the result is not English, regardless of the stress.

In ordinary speech the pitch of the voice is continually changing. When the pitch of the voice rises, we have a *rising intonation* ; when it falls we have a *falling intonation.* When it remains on one note for an appreciable time, we have level intonation.

It is significant that intonation performs two major functions : (i) it expresses meaning and (ii) it conveys the mood or attitude of the speaker, for example 'Thank you' can be said with a falling tone or with a rising tone. When it is spoken with a rising tone it has the meaning of a matter of fact-acknowledgement of something. But it 'Thank you' is said with a falling tone it expresses a genuine gratitude.

From this we understand that the selection of the right intonation pattern is very important in communication from the semantic point of view. If a wrong intonation pattern is used, the listener might get offended even though the speaker does not intend to offend him.

Moreover, the choice of an intonation pattern indicates the speaker's mood or attitude, whether he is happy or annoyed or frustrated or disgusted and so on. Thus the learning of spoken English necessitates the learning of its intonation pattern also.

The two fundamental English tunes are known as Tune 1 and Tune 2.

Tune 1 (Falling Tune) : The stressed syllables form a descending scale, and within the last stressed syllable the pitch of the voice falls to a low level. Remember that it is the pitch of the stressed syllables that is most important. The unstressed syllables are not so important.

Before the stressed syllable where the voice falls we put (\ ) mark.

Observe the following :

(i)   He was in an appallingly bad 'temper. (How was John ?)

(ii)   He was in an appallingly 'bad temper. (Was John in a good temper ?)

(iii)   He was in an app'allingly bad temper. (Was John in a bad temper ?)

(iv)   He 'was in an appallingly bad temper. (He can't have been in an appallingly bad temper !)

TUNE 1 is used in statements which are complete and definite e.g.

it wez impcseb₁.

Si: mi : en 'θeːzdi

hi: wez 'rcŋ

TUNE 1 is also used in questions which begin with an interrogative word requiring an answer other than 'yes' or 'no'.

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wɛə ʃ el wi: ˈgev

wɑt erju: geviŋ te ˈdu: ebaut it

hau duju: ˈlaik mai nju: hæt

TUNE 1 is commonly used in short questions used as responses.

dʒenz cn ˈhclɛdi ‖ ˈiz hi:

ai wɛnt te ðeˈθieta ‖ ˈdid ju:

TUNE 1 is used in commands

ˈklɛuz ðe ˈdɔ:

ˈeupn ja: buks

ˈask im te kʌm hie

ˈsend it bæk

TUNE 1 is used for exclamations

gud ˈhevnz

ˈsplendid

ˈnɛnsens

[Remember *Thank You* comes in this class when it expresses real gratitude.]

TUNE 2 (Rising Tune)

TUNE 2 is used in questions requiring the answer 'yes' or 'no'

a: ju: m˳ærid

hev ju: ˌpcustid ðe ‖ete

kæn ju: bi hie bai f˳aiv

TUNE 2 is also used for greetings and for saying good bye

gud ˌmɔːnic

hʌ|˳eu

gud b˳ai

gud n˳ait

TUNE 2 is very common in requests

ˈdu: kʌm en ˌsi: es

ᴵduː kæv sem mcː ˌtiː

ᴵSend it ez suːn ez ju ˌkæn

TUNE 2 is used in exclamations which refer to something not very exciting or unexpected

ˌθæŋk ju ː

ˌgud

gud ˌʌk

ŋːÉ rˌait

TUNE 2 is used when it is intended to be soothing or encouraging

ai ʃ aːnt bi lˌcŋ (so don't worry)

ᴵd¥cn ! bi hie ˌsuːn (so please wait and don't worry)

ai ᴵweunt ᴵdraiv tuː ʃaːst (so don't worry)

2.16. Falling – Rising Tune

In the falling rising tune the pitch glides down first and then rises on the same syllable and rises an another syllable within the same tone group. If the tone falls on one syllable and rises an another it is called a divided falling rising tone.

If the statement is *not complete,* but leads to a following word-group the falling-rising tune is generally used :

ai ˇᴵukt et im (and recognized him at once)

ʃ iː ᴵtuk ðeˇkaː (and drove to London)

wenᴵever iː ᴵkʌmz te ˇvizit es (he tries to borrow money)

For statements which show reservations on the part of the speaker and which might be followed by *but* or by *you must admit* or *I must admit* the falling-rising tune is used :

hiːz ˇd¥eneres (but I don't rely on him)

hiːz ˇhænsem (you must admit)

ai kud ᴵteik ju ː ðɛe tcˇmereu (but not today)

If the statement is a correction of what someone else has said, the falling-rising tune is commonly used :

ˈfɔ : ti ˇsiks (he's forty-five)

ju: ˈju:s tə ˌlaik im (I like him a lot)

ju: ˈka:nt du: it ðæt ˌwei

The falling-rising tune is used if the statement is a warning :

ju:l bi ˇleit (so hury up)

ai a:nt ˈtel ju: əˇgen (so don't ask)

ju: ˈmʌstntˑ eik it tu: ˌmʌt (it might be spoilt)

If the statement has two parts, of which the first is more important than the second, the falling-rising tune is used with the fall at the end of the first part and rise at the end of the second:

ai went ta ˈ\ʌndən ən ˌmʌndi

ju: kən ˈki:p it if ju: riəli ˌwɔnt it

hi: wəz veri ˈwel wen ai la:st ˌsɔ: im

2.17. Exercises

A : 1. Is it necessary to set a standard of spoken English for India ?

2. What are the advantages of RP and what are its disadvantages ?

3. What difficulties does an Indian student encounter in his effort to communicate in spoken English ? Suggest some ways to overcome these difficulties.

4. It is said that our mother tongue speech habits constitute the greatest hindrance to learning English pronunciation. Discuss.

B : 1. Write the following words in *phonemic* transcription :

hallo, pleasure, yellow, truth, with, five, song, charge, green, copper, sure, sheer, bears, bars, boys, loud, load, board, bird, look, lick, caught, cut, cot, might, dose, meet, mate, much

2. *Bear* and *bare* are spelt differently, but pronounced the same / bɛə /. Make a list of ten similar other words.

3. Make a list of the sounds of your language and see how many phonemes it uses.

4. How many phonemes are there in the following words ?

write, through, measure, six

half, where, one, first, voice, castle

scissors, should, judge, father, lamb.

C : 1. What are the different actions that take place in the larynx ?

2. How does the soft palate affect the direction of the air stream ?

3. What does the tongue do in making the sounds ai, ɔi, au ?

4. Which sounds in your language are voiced, and which are voiceless ?

D: 1. Distinguish between a vowel and a consonant. Give examples of both.

2. What is the difference between a voiced sound and a voiceless sound ? Give five examples of each.

3. Classify the English Consonants according to the place of articulation.

4. Classify the English Consonants according to the manner of articulation.

5. What is the difference between a Plosive Consonant and a Fricative Consonant ? Give three examples of each.

6. What are affricates ? How do they differ from the ordinary plosives ?

7. Describe the following consonants :

p, b, m, t∫, d,, ʒ,   , Give examples.

8. What is the essential difference between f and v ?

9. Write a note on the nasal consonants.

10. Write briefly on :

   a) aspiration and aspirated consonants

   b) nasal plosion and syllabic plosion

   c) dark l and clear l

   d) gliding consonants

   e) linking r and intrusive r

11. Describe the function of the vocal cords.

12. What is meant by a glottal stop ?

E: 1. Distinguish between a pure vowel and a diphthong vowel.

2. Write a short note on Cardinal Vowels.

3. How are vowels classified ?

4. Describe the front vowels.

5. Describe the back vowels.

6. Describe the central vowels.

7. Describe the closing diphthongs. Give examples.

F: 1. Indicate how the mother tongue can cause difficulties in acquiring English vowels and consonants.

2. What is meant by stress ? Why is it considered so important in English.

3. How do we know where the stress is to be given ? Give at least six different ways of determining the stress position if English words.

4. What are weak forms ? Why are they important ? Discuss with appropriate examples.

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5. (a) Mention three different instances of where the falling tunes are to be used.

   (b) Give five different examples of sentences that require rising tune.

   (c) Where should one use falling-rising tune ? Give appropriate examples.

6. How many phonemes are there in the following words ?

   write,   through,   measure,   six,   half,   castle,   judge,

   lamb,   voice,   first,   sixth,   heaven,   shoot.

7. *Bear* and *bare* are spelt differently, but are pronounced the same way. Make a list of a few other words which are spelt differently but are pronounced in the same way.

8. Transcribe the following words phonemically :

   mat,   mate,   meet,   meat,   mate,   might,   mite,

   cot,   caught,   lick,   leak,   dose,   medicine,   board

   load,   loud,   boys,   bars,   bears,   sheer,   sure,

   grin,   green,   charge,   five,   with,   pleasure,   vision.

9. **Transcribe the following passage phonemically :**

   I bought the wood at the local handicraft shop, and I had plenty of screws. But I found my old saw, which had been left behind by the previous owner of the house was not good enough and I decided to buy a new one.

10. **Transcribe the passage phonemically :**

    When I went to work in the North of England, I stayed for some months in a fairly typical boarding house, and it was there that I met Mr Page. He was middle aged, small, quiet and rather timid. He'd been living in that same house for eighteen years. His was or appeared to be, a monotonous life and he had little enthusiasm for it. I was sorry for him.

11. Transcribe the following passage phonemically

    Tom :   *Mr Rabbit was walking along one day with his fine bushy tail and...*

    Frank : *But, Tom, rabbits' tails are quite short.*

    Tom :   *Am I telling the story, or are you ?*

    Frank : *Please go on, Tom. This rabbit had a fine tail.*

    Tom :   *Yes, he had a fine tail, and as he was going along he saw Mr Fox.*

    Frank : *And he ran away very quickly, didn't he ?*

2.18. Selected Readings

1. Daniel Jones : *An Outline of English Phonetics* (W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge, U.K.)

2. Daniel Jones : *The Pronunciation of English* (W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge, U.K.)

3. Peter Strevens : *Spoken Language* (Longmans Green & Co., London)

4. V. K. Gokak : *English in India : Its Present and Future* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay).

5. J. D. O'Connor : *Better English Pronunciation*, Cambridge University Press, London.

6. A. C. Gimson : *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*, Edward Arnold Ltd, London.

7. Armstrong & Ward : *Handbook of English Intonation*, Heffer, Cambridge.

8. Randolph Quirk : *An Outline of English Phonetics*, Haffer, Cambridge.

9. Roger Kingdon : The Groundwork of English Intonation, Longmans.

Unit 3 □ Morphology

Structure

1.0 Introduction

In the previous modules you have already learnt about what language really is, what is meant by language as a means of communication, how it differs from other systems of communication, etc. You have also got some idea about the history of human language, a sketch of its evolution as a very powerful means of human communication.

You will have also seen that any descriptive framework for language needs to look upon this complex and creative entity called·human language at different levels of linguistic

representation – Phonology (How various sounds are selected and organized in a particular language), Morphology (how words are structured in terms of units which are larger than speech sounds and which we call morphemes) and syntax (how words are combined to make phrases, clauses and sentences).

In the previous module you have got to know about the phonetics and phonology of English where we have talked about the English speech sounds (Phonemes) – both consonants and vowel – and described them from the articulatory point of view. You have also been taught about how these vowels and consonants are combined into syllables, words, tone groups/ rhythmic groups in utterances in English. In short, you are now in a position to identify, describe and explain the English speech sounds and their organizations. In other words, as a student of English language and literature you are now aware of the basic stuff that English is made of at the level of phonology.

The net higher level in this frame of linguistic description is Morphólogy and Morphophonemics. Morphology, as mentioned already, is the study of words and their structures. And morphophonemics, as a branch of morphology, deals with the phonological realisations of morphemes (we will explain the term 'morpheme' very soon in this lesson).

In this unit on English Morphology we will try to answer questions like the following

What precisely is a word ?

How to study the structure of a word ?

What are the processes of making new words in a language ?

Do all human languages form new words in the same way ?

1.1 The Morpheme

The traditional grammarians worked with two basic units of linguistic description – the <u>word</u> and the <u>sentence</u>. The assumption was that everybody was familiar with these two units and, therefore, these was no serious attempt at defining these terms. Sentences in the written language (the written form of the language was considered to be the language and the spoken form was looked upon as a deviant/corrupt form of language) are marked with various punctuation signs like the full stop of the note of interrogation or exclamation, etc. And words are separated from one another by spaces.

What is a word then ? It is really very difficult to define a word. If <u>time</u> is a word and <u>table</u> is another word, what will be the lexical status of <u>time-table</u> ? If <u>happy</u> is a word, is <u>unhappy</u> also a word ? Shouldn't we consider <u>happy</u> in <u>unhappy</u> as a word within a word ? Or, if <u>happy</u> is a word, <u>unhappy</u> should be explained as 'more than a word'. Shouldn't we have concepts like 'more than a word' or 'less than a word' (<u>un–</u> in <u>unhappy</u> is less than a word) ?

In order to overcome such problems and answer such questions modern linguists postulated a unit called the <u>morpheme</u>. Take for example the word <u>boys</u>. This can be divided into two constituents –<u>boy</u> and –<u>s</u>. Let us call these constitutents as 'morphemes'. So in this word <u>boys</u> there are two morphemes –<u>boy</u> and –<u>s</u>. Similarly <u>unhappy</u> is made of three morphemes – <u>un–</u>, <u>happy</u> and –<u>ly</u>. Thus we can define a morpheme as the following :

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A morpheme is a minimal meaningful unit in the grammatical system of a language.

In doorbell there are two morphemes – door and bell, because door has a meaning and bell has a meaning and the word doorbell derives its meaning from the meanings of door and bell. On the contrary, carpet, has a single morpheme. Though it can be broken into car and pet, its meaning is not derived from the meanings of these two morphemes. Going back to our earlier word boys, we can say it has two morphemes –boy and –s, because boy is a meaningful unit and –s is another meaningful unit which has the meaning 'more than one'.

Now compare the notion of morpheme with that of phoneme. You already know that 'a phoneme is a minimal distinctive unit in the sound system of a language'. Both the phoneme and the morpheme are smallest units – the phoneme is the smallest unit in the sound system whereas the morpheme is the smallest unit in the grammatical system. But while the phoneme is a 'distinctive' unit, that is, it can bring about a change in meaning but it does not have a meaning of its own, the morpheme is a meaningful unit. The morpheme $/p_x t/$ has a meaning but the phonemes in it –/p/, $/_x/$ and /t/ – do not have any meaning though they are combined to have the meaningful unit $/P_x t/$ which is a morpheme.

1.1.1 Review Questions 1 :

Write down the morphemes in the following English words :
1. wanted ....
2. disconnected ....
3. mysteriously ....
4. dehumanisation ....
5. undemocratic ....
6. irrepairable ....
7. bespectacled ....
8. blackboards ....
9. impossible ....
10. schoolmasters ....

Review Questions 2 :

What is the difference between phonology and morphology ? Give your answer with adequate illustrations. (50 words)

1.2 Free morphemes and Bound morphemes

A morpheme as a minimal meaningful grammatical unit can be of two broad categories – Free and Bound. A free morpheme is a morpheme which can independently occur in the language. For example, boy, good, girl, school –are all free morphemes as each one of them can occur on its own without the support of any other morpheme. On the other hand, a bound morpheme cannot occur on its own; it needs the support of a free morpheme. For example, –ly, –ness, –ity, –logy or pre–, un–, dis–, be–, etc. need to depend on other morphemes for their occurrence in the language as in happily, goodness, electricity, zoology, prefix, unfair, disallow, before. To distinguish between a free morpheme and a bound morpheme, we can say

He is hapy ('happy' is a free morpheme, so it can occur on its own).
but we cannot say

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* He is –ly (–ly can never occur on its own as a free form)

Bound morphemes are called affixes. An affix, therefore, is attached to a free or independent form which we call a <u>stem</u>. For example, in the word <u>unhappily</u>, the affix –ly is attached to the stem <u>unhappy</u>. Then again, un– is attached to the stem <u>happy</u>. But this stem <u>happy</u> cannot be split any further, that's why we call it a '<u>root</u>'. A root, therefore, is a free morpheme.

Let us have a diagrammatic representation of what we have just said.

```
                    unhappily
                   /         \
            unhappy           –ly
            (stem)          (affix)
           /      \
         un-      happy
       (affix)   (stem &
                   root)
```
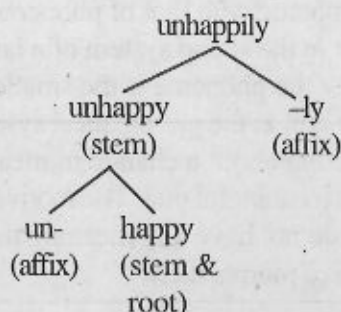
Alternatively, we can also capture it in the following way :

```
                 unhappily
                /         \
             un-         happily
           (affix)       (stem)
                        /       \
                     happy      -ly
                   (stem &    (affix)
                    root)
```
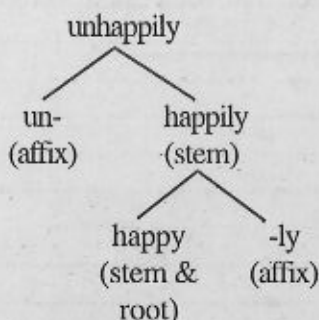
Please note here that these are the two possible and acceptable ways capturing the interrelations between the stems and the affixes in the structure of the word <u>unhappily</u> (Ignore the spelling variations like <u>happy</u> and <u>happily</u>.) For the sake of your convenience we have used tree diagrams where the branches of the tree will help you understand the hierarchical interrelations between a stem and its affix.

1.1.3. Suffix, prefix and infix

Affixes can be divided into three categories depending on their positions within the structure. Affixes which are attached to the stem at the beginning of the stem are called <u>prefixes</u> (the name is self-explanatory). For instance, <u>un–</u> in <u>undo</u> is a prefix. An affix which occurs at the end of a stem is called a suffix. <u>–ly</u> in <u>happily</u> is, therefore, a suffix. Look at the following sets of words :

A	B
<u>in</u>correct	correct<u>ly</u>
<u>ac</u>count	count<u>ing</u>
<u>be</u>hind	want<u>ed</u>
<u>im</u>possible	Marx<u>ism</u>
<u>en</u>courage	courage<u>ous</u>

You can easily find out that the affixes in the words under set A (in–, a–, be–, im–, and en–) occur at the beginning of the stems. On the contrary, the affixes in the words under Set B occur at the end of the stems (–ly, –ing, –ed, –ism and –ous are the suffixes). So under set A we have prefixes and under set B we have suffixes. You will have noticed that when written in isolation, Prefixes have a hyphen after them and suffixes have a hyphen before them.

There are some languages in which an affix is inserted somewhere in the middle of a stem. Such an affix occurring in the middle of a stem is called an infix (the name, again, is self-explanatory). Languages like Arabic, Tagalog and Charu have infixes. For example, Tagalog has a word / Pumi : lit / which means "one who takes effort". It has the stem /pt : lit/ (effort) which receives the infix / –um– / (one who does).

In Tagalog /–um–/ as an infix is also used as a Past tense form attached to a verb. For example,

/ lakad / → /lumakad/
'walk'   'walked'

Yet another example may be given from Latin :

The word /rump/ ('break') consists of the root/rup/ and the imperfective infix /–m–/
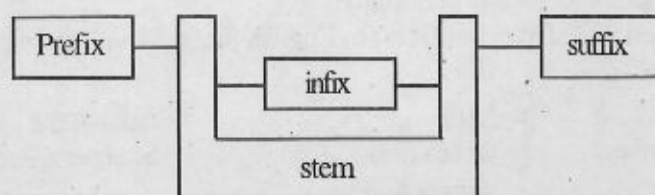
The positional occurrence of the prefixes, suffixes and infixes are shown above in the diagram.

In English, however, there is no infix. It has only prefixes and suffixes.

1.1.4. Inflectional affixes and Derivational affixes

As on the dimension of their position or occurrence in a stem we divided the affixes into prefixes, suffixes and infixes, on another dimension of their functional status we can classify affixes into inflectional affixes (or inflections) and derivational affixes (or derivations).

It is difficult to define and distinguish between inflections and derivations. Most textbooks on linguistics and grammar hold that inflections change the form of a word. For example, win, wins, won, winning are different forms of the same word win. So the affixes here attached to the stem win change the form of the word win. Thus these are inflections attached to the stem win change the form of the word win. Thus these are inflections attached to the stem and they serve to capture various grammatical relations such as tense, number, gender, etc. (In wins, for instance, –s is an inflection indicating Tense Present).

Derivation is said to be a process of word formation. While inflections change the form of a word, derivations create new words. (But this is not a satisfactory definition as the difineiotn of a word is itself unsatisfactory). According to this line of differentiation, disallow and allow are different words and, therefore, dis– is a derivation. But allow and allowed are two different forms of the same word allow and, therefore, –ed is an inflection (Tense past).

As this way of defining inflections and derivations are not quite satisfactory, we will try to define and describe them in terms of word paradigms.

A paradigm is a set of related items. The paradigm for the word <u>eat</u> would be

eat	—	eat + Tense Present (∅)
eats	—	eat + Tense Present (–s)
ate	—	eat + Tense Past (Vowel Change)
eating	—	eat + Present Participle (–ing)
eaten	—	eat + Past Participle (–en)

But within this paradigm of <u>eat</u> we cannot have <u>eater</u> (<u>eat</u> + <u>er</u>), because with the suffix <u>–er</u> <u>eater</u> has a paradigm of its own. So <u>–er</u> is not functioning within the paradigm of <u>eat</u> but <u>–er</u> has instead created a new paradigm. The paradigm of <u>eater</u> has the following forms :

eater	—	eater + Singular Number (∅)
eaters	—	eater + Plural Number (–s)
eater's	—	eater + Possessive case (–'s)
eaters'	—	eater + Plural + Possessive (–s) + (–´)

In modification of our earlier definition we can now say that inflections function within a paradigm but derivations create new paradigms.

The major inflectional affixes (suffixes) in English function within the paradigms of verbs, nouns and adjectives :

Noun	Verb	Adjectives
boy<u>s</u> (–s) (Number)	writes (–s) writing (–ing)	Sharper (–er) Degree
boy'<u>s</u> (–'s) (Case)	wrote (Past Tense) written (–en)	Sharpest (–est) Degree

1.1.5 Review Questions 3 :

Identify the root, prefix, suffix and stem in the following. You can use tree diagrams.

1. mathematical
2. nationalization
3. imperfection
4. humanity
5. antiestablishment
6. nonsensical
7. women
8. characteristic
9. scientific
10. endangering
11. hopelessly
12. predominantly

Review Questions 4 :

How would you distinguish between an inflection and a derivation ? Give the answer in your own English using your own examples from English. (100 words).

Review Questions 5 :

What are the dimensions on which we have classified affixes ? Write very briefly on these classifications. (60 words).

1.2 Class-Maintaining & Class-changing derivations

Derivational affixes in English can be both prefixes and suffixes. In the word <u>unfaithful</u> <u>un–</u> is a derivational prefix and <u>–ful</u> is a derivational suffix. But inflections in English are suffixes as they are categories like Tense (Past and Present), Case (Possessive and non-possessive) Number (Plural) and Degree (Comparative & Superlative).

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We can, therefore, formulate a rule now :

(i) All inflections in English are suffixes are not inflections.

(ii) All prefixes in English are derivations but all derivations are not prefixes.
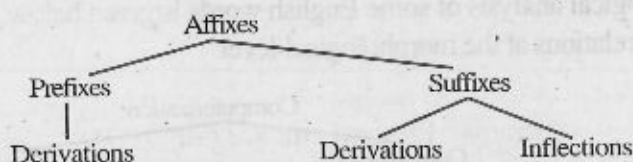
It should be mentioned here that inflections do not change the 'part of speech status' of the stem to which they are attached. The verb <u>want</u> remains a verb in <u>wanted</u> after the inflection (–ed) has been attached to it.

In the same way the noun remains a noun after it receives the plural inflection or the possessive inflection. So inflections are class-maintaining affixes as they function within the same paradigm.

On the other hand, derivations can be either class-maintaining or class-changing. This means some derivations do not change the part of speech status of the stem. See the following derivational prefixes which are class-maintaining :

<u>im</u>possible	<u>de</u>humanize
<u>in</u>correct	<u>un</u>natural
<u>ir</u>rational	<u>dis</u>proportionate
<u>il</u>legitimate	<u>bi</u>weekly

Class-changing derivational prefixes :

<u>en</u>corage – (noun becomes verb)

<u>be</u>fore – (noun/adjective becomes preposition)

<u>con</u>front – (noun becomes verb)

Class-maintaining derivational suffixes :

green<u>ish</u>	friend<u>ship</u>
coward<u>ice</u>	zoo<u>logy</u>
brother<u>hood</u>	citiz<u>en</u>
king<u>dom</u>	womar<u>hood</u>

Class-changing derivational suffixes :

beauti<u>ful</u>	select<u>ive</u>	perform<u>ance</u>
sing<u>er</u>	collect<u>or</u>	courage<u>ous</u>
fright<u>en</u>	figh<u>er</u>	sincer<u>ity</u>
devil<u>ish</u>	motion<u>less</u>	referent<u>ial</u>

We can now modify our previous diagram on English affixes :

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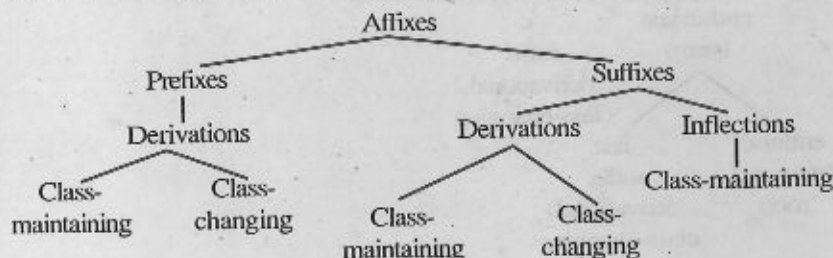
In order to capture the morphological structures of words these positional and functional properties or features of stems, roots and affixes will have to be clearly shown to bring out the hierarchical and linear interrelations between them.

The morphological analysis of some English words is given below. Study their structures to look into the interrelations at the morphological level.

1.

```
                         Computerization
            Computerize                    -ation
             (stem)                        suffix
                                           derivational
                                           class-changing
        Computer          -ize
         (stem)           suffix
                          derivational
                          class-changing
     Computer        -er
     (stem and       suffix
       root)         derivational
                     class-changing
```

2.

```
                         women's
            women                      's
            (stem)                     suffix
                                       inflectional
        woman          Plural
        (stem and      Suffix
          root)        Inflectional
```

3.

```
                         enthusiastically
            enthusiastical               -ly
              (stem)                     suffix
                                         derivational
                                         class-changing
        enthusiastic          -al
          (stem)              suffix
                              derivational
                              class-maintaining
     enthusiast          -ic
       (stem)            suffix
                         derivational
                         class-changing
  enthuse          -iast
  (stem and        suffix
    root)          derivational
                   class-changing
```

4.

```
                    buildings
                  /          \
          building            -s
           (stem)            suffix
                           Inflectional
          /        \
      build         -ing
   (stem and       suffix
     root         derivational
               class-changing
```

Notice that '–ing' here is derivational though it would be inflectional in <u>building</u> in a structure like :

He is building a house (Present Continuous form of the verb).

5.

```
                    antidisinvestment
                  /                  \
            anti-                disinvestment
       class-maintaining            (stem)
       derivational prefix        /         \
                            disinvest        -ment
                             (stem)      class-changing
                                          deriv. suffix
                          /         \
                      dis-           invest
                 class-maintaining  (stem and
                 derivational prefix   root)
```
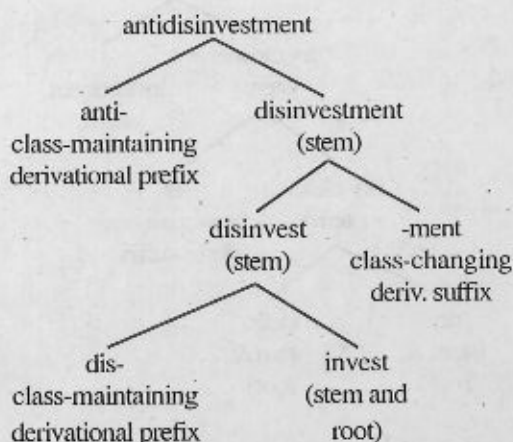
You may have noticed that in the examples given above we captured the interrelations between stems and affixes. This is known as the process the affixation where a stem receives affixes hierarchically one after another and ultimately we move up or down to the level of the root.

A second kind of word building process in morphology is also possible where two (or more) stems are combined with-one another. For example.

```
                time bomb
              /          \
          time            bomb
      (stem & root)   (stem & root)
```
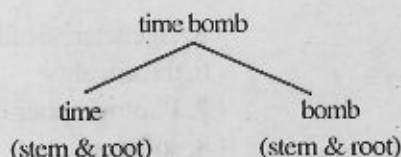
This process is called compounding. Traditional grammarians referred to it as compoind words. In all human languages, therefore, such processes of compounding and affixation lead to what we call linguistic creativity. Please study the structure of the following English words/ compounds.

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6.


```
                        Computer application
                   _____|_____
                  |                       |
              Computer                application
               (stem)                    (stem)
            _____|_____              _____|_____
           |           |           |               |
        Compute       -er        apply           -ation
       (stem &    class-changing  (stem &    (class-changing
        root)      derivational    root)      derivational suffi)
                     suffix
```
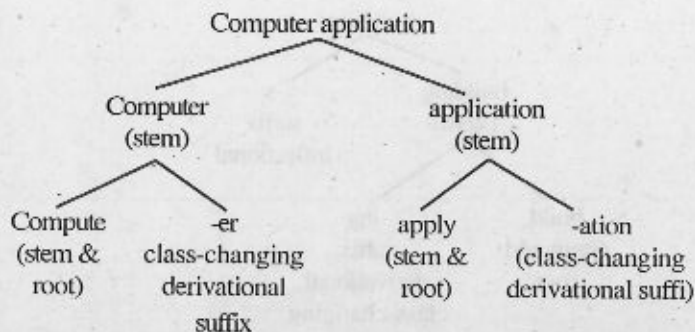
In this structure, we have compounding at the first level and then affixation at the second level.

7.


```
                              dry cleaners
                          _____|_____
                         |                 |
                    dry cleaner            -s
                       (stem)          Inflectional
                   _____|_____          suffix
                  |             |
              dry clean        -er
               (stem)      class-changing
            _____|_____      deriv. suffix
           |           |
          dry        clean
        (stem &     (stem &
         root)       root)
```
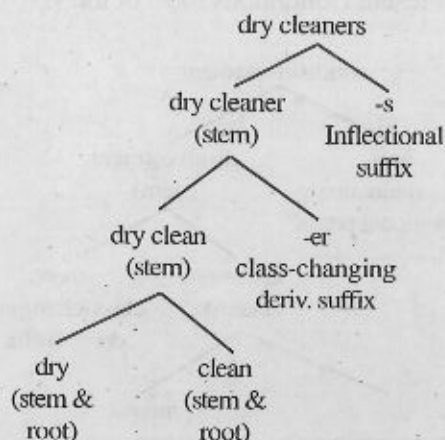
Notice that here you cannot have compounding first – <u>dry</u> and <u>cleaner</u> – because semantically a dry cleaner is one who dry cleans clothes and not a cleaner who is dry. Any linguistic description, needless to say, has to be syntactico-semantically valid because the meaning of an utterance is derived out of the way we understand the structural interrelations in the utterance. This is why language is called structure-dependent.

1.2.1. Review Questions 6 :

Give morphological analysis of the following English words with the help of tree diagrams :

1. personified
2. salesman
3. illogicality
4. convertibility

5. characteristically
6. theatricality
7. Photographer
8. software

1.3. Some other word-building processes

You have already seen that affixation and compounding are two major creative word-building processes and it is fascinating to see how a network of these two processes leads to create words and coinages in English. But there are also a few other morphological processes of word-formation. We will now look into some of these processes.

1.3.1. Reduplication

In many languages of the world it is a very common practice of repeating the entire root/ stem, the repetition or reduplication adding to the meaning of the root/stem. This process, therefore, adds material like any other form of affixation but the identity of the added material is determined by the stem/root.

Examine the following examples :

Turkish	:	/t ʃ abuk /	/t ʃ abuk t ʃ abuk /
		quickly	very quickly
Bangla	:	/ d hire /	/ d hire d hire /
		slowly	quite slowly
Indonesian	:	/ kursi /	/ kursi kursi /
		chair	chairs
Hindi	:	/ ahis t a /	/ ahis t a ahis t a/
		slowly	very slowly

1.3.2. Word-building by <u>modification of the base</u>

In human languages sometimes new words are created by bringing about certain kinds of phonological change in the base. Consider the following pairs of English nouns and verbs.

(i)   Sheath / ʃi : θ /   Sheathe / ʃi.ð /
      Noun   Verb

(ii) grease / gri : s /   grease / gri : z /
      Noun   Verb

(iii) wreath / ri : θ /   wreathe / ri : ð /
      Noun   Verb

These examples show that a voiceless consonant changes into its voiced counterpart in the verb form.

A similar and more common phenomenon is seen in various kinds of vowel mutation like <u>ablaut</u> or <u>umlaut</u>. In <u>ablaut</u> the vowel in the base is changed into an altogether different vowel.

English	:	abide	—	abode
		sing	—	song
		write	—	wrote
Icelandic	:	ber	—	bar
		'I carry'	—	'I carried'

In <u>umlaut</u> the vowel in the base is changed into its corresponding front vowel in the derived structure.

English	:	mouse	mice
		goose	geese
Icelandic	:	son.ur	syn.ir
		'son'	"sons"

1.3.3. Word-building without any change of form

In many languages, including English, derivational or inflectional affixes do not bring about any change in the form of the words in many cases. That is, after affixation the base remains unchanges. This is called <u>zero derivation</u> or <u>zero affixation</u>.

English	:	deer	deer
		(singular)	(plural)
		put	put
		(Present Tense)	(Past Tense)
Yoruba	:	gigun	gigun
		(long)	(length)

1.3.4. Shortening of bases

Sometimes in human languages a multisyllabic base is shortened to create a new word. In English we have a number of words like Prof. for Professor, lab for laboratory and doc for doctor. This process is called clipping.

1.3.5. Acronyms

Acronyms are made of the initial letters or sounds of a string of words as in the name of an institution or organisation or in the title of a scientific or technological expression.

WHO – World Health Organisation.

SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation.

Please remember that in acronyms the initial letters are pronounced not as letters but as a new word created out of the initials.

1.3.6. Blends

Blends are created from parts of existing lexical items and they pass on as new words in the lexicon of a language.

motel	←	motor + hotel
brunch	←	breakfas + lunch
smog	←	smoke + fog

This process of combining parts of two or more words and their meaning to create new words is also known as portmanteau words.

Both acronyms and blends are, therefore, alphabet based forms.

1.3.7. Back formation

It is "a process of word formation where a new word is formed by removing an imagined affix from another word". A word whose form is similar to that of a derived form undergoes a process of deaffixation. For example

resurrection	→	resurrect (through back formation)
editor	→	edit	,,
donation	→	donate	,,

It is fascinating to note that while convenor is derived from convene through affixation, edit is derived from editor through back formation (a reverse process of Reaffixation).

1.3.8. Cranberry morphs or unique morphs

There are some morphs which occur in fixed phrases or expressions only. Sometimes they look like free morphemes, as in kith and kin (kith is not used independently) and sometimes they look like bound morphemes, as in lukewarm (luke is not a prefix in the language). Their

morphological status is not distinctly captured by linguists. These are called <u>cranberry morphs</u> because of the example <u>cran</u> in <u>canberry</u>.

Sometimes some new words are formed from names. <u>Xerox</u> is used as a generic term though it is derived from a brand name. And words like <u>watt</u> are derived from names of scientists.

1.3.9. Review Questions 7 :
    (i) Give two examples of compounding from your mother tongue.
    (ii) Give five example of zero derivation/zero affixation from English.
    (iii) Give five examples of reduplication from your mother tongue.
    (iv) Explain with illustrations (a) Alphabet based formation (b) clipping (c) Blends.

1.4. Morphophonemics

Morphophonemics or morphophonology is a branch of morphology which deals with the interrelations between morphemes and their allomorphs. In other words, it is concerned with the various phonological realisations of morphemes. In your lesson on phonology you have been told about the notion of the phonemes and their allophones which is comparable to that of the morphemes and their allomorphs within the structuralist framework of phonology and morphology.

1.4.1 Morphemes and allomorphs

Let us consider the plural morpheme -s in the following English words

cat	/kχt/	–	cat<u>s</u> / k$_x$ t<u>s</u>/
god	/gδd/	–	god<u>s</u> / gσ d<u>z</u>/
bus	/bʌs/	–	bus<u>es</u> / 'bʌs<u>iz</u>/

The plural suffix in all these three words has the same meaning of 'plurality' or 'more than one'. But it is phonologically realized differently in them – / -s /, / -z / and / – iz./.

By studying English data in relation to the plural morpheme, the structural linguists have formulated certain rules about the occurrence of these three phonological forms.

    (i) /-iz occurs when it is attached to the stem ending in any one of the six sibilants -/s, ʃ, t ʃ, z, ʒ/ and / dʒ/. In other words, the plural suffix will be realized as /– Iz. when it is preceded by a sibilant. (Of the six sibilants, four are fricatives –/s, ʃ, z/ and / ʒ/ and two are affricates –/ t ʃ / and / d ʒ /). For example,

case	– cases	/keıs<u>ız</u>/
fac	– faces	/feıs<u>ız</u>/
bush	– bushes	/buʃ ız/
rose	– roses	/rð uz<u>ız</u>/
cause	– causes	/kɔ:z<u>ız</u>/
judge	– judges	/dʒʌdʒ<u>ız</u>/
church	– churches /t ʃð : t ʃ <u>ız</u>/

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| garage | – | garages | /gɑra : 3 ɪz/ |

(i) The /–z/ allomorph occurs when it is preceded by voiced sounds other than the three voiced sibilants –/z, ʒ/ and /dʒ. See the following examples :

dog	–	dogs /dɒgz/
law	–	laws /lɔ:z/
bill	–	bills /bilz/
cow	–	cows /kauz/

The /–s/ allomorph occurs when it is attached to a stem ending in (i.e. it is preceded by) voiceless sounds other than the three voiceless sibilants–/s, ʃ /and /tʃ /. For examples,

cap	–	caps / kχ p s/
mat	–	mats /mχt s/
book	–	books /buk s/
path	–	paths /pa : θ s/

Thus we can say that /–ɪz/, /–z/ and /–s/ are the allomorphs of the plural morpheme. Allomorphs are, we repeat, the phonological realizations of the morpheme. Allomorphs belonging to a morpheme are like members belonging to a family. This is once again comparable to the notion of allophones belonging to a phoneme.

Morpheme   Allomorphs
                                                           / -ɪz /
{ Plural }   / -z /
                                                           / -s /

(Please notice that a morpheme is represented within braces { } and an allomorph is put between slant bars / /.)

If you look into the distribution of the allomorphs carefully you will find that these three allomorphs of the plural morpheme are in complementary distribution with each other. That is to say, they occur in mutually exclusive environments. Where /–ɪz/ occurs /–z/ and /–s/ will never occur; /–z/ will never occur where /– ɪz/ and /–s/ occur and in the same way /–s/ will not occur in the environments of /– ɪz/ and /–z/.

It is fascinating to note that the distribution of the allomorphs of the morpheme Present Tense (–s in comes) and the possessive morpheme ('s in man's) are absolutely similar to the distribution of the allomorphs of the {Pl}. For example.

catch	–	catches	/kχ tʃ ɪz/
wash	–	washes	/wɔ ʃ ɪz/
eat	–	eats	/i:t s/
go	–	goes	/gɑu z/
	and		
Keats	–	Keats'	/ki:tsiz/
Shakespeare	–	Shakespeare's	/ se/kspɪɑz/
Eliot	–	Eliot's	/eliɑts/

We can capture the similarities between these three morphemes the same way.

morpheme   allomorphs
                                                           / - ɪz /
{ Tense Pres }   / - z /-
                                                           / -s /
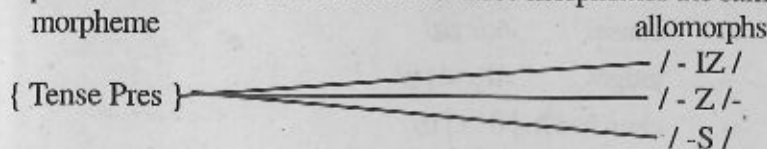
$$\{ \text{Case Poss} \} \quad \begin{cases} /\text{-IZ}/ \\ /\text{-Z}/ \\ /\text{-S}/ \end{cases}$$

These similarities between these elements and their distribution indicate that human language is highly systematic and organized and it also proves that there is an inherent drift towards simplification in every language.

Let us now consider another case of allomorphic variations in English. The past Tense morpheme –ed is realized as / –ld/, /–d/ and /–t/.

The rules of distribution of these allomorphs are as follows.

(i) /–id/ occurs when it is attached to a stem ending in (i.e. when it is preceded by) /–t/ or /–d/. For example,

board	–	boarded	/bɔ : d ɪd/
hund	–	hunted	/hʌnt ɪd/
guard	–	guarded	/ga:d ɪd/
wait	–	waited	/we t Id/

(ii) /–d/ occurs when {Past} is preceded by voiced sounds other than /–d/. For example,

dive	–	dived	/daiv d/
sigh	–	sighed	/sa ɪd/
sign	–	signed	/sain d/
mail	–	mailed	/meil d/
show	–	showed	/ʃ ðu d/
love	–	loved	/lʌvd/

(iii) /–t/ allomorph of the {Past} will occur when it is preceded by voiceless sounds other than /–t/. Here are some examples :

face	–	faced	/feist/
like	–	liked	/laɪkt/
cash	–	cashed	/kχ t/
laugh	–	laughed	/la:ft/
wash	–	washed	/w σ t/

1.4.2. Irregular allomorphs

So far we have talked about the major and regular allomorphs of the morphemes {Plural}, {T pres}, {Case Poss} and {T past}. But there are also a number of irregular allomorphs of these morphemes. For example, the {plural} morpheme has a number of irregular variants.

(i)   man   –   men   /men/

Here the vowel /x / in the stem is replaced by the vowel /e/. This is what we have already referred to as the morphological process of 'word-building by modification of the base'. This is also called process allomorph.

(ii)   child   –   children   /t I/drðn/

Here the allomorphic variant is more complex; we have process + the allomorph /–rðn/.

(iii)   sheep   –   sheep   / ʃi:p/

The {plural} does not have any visible phonological realisation here. We may call it /Ø/ allomorph (zero allomorph). This we have already called the morphological process of 'word-building without any change of form.'

Such irregular allomorphs of the other morphemes also occur.

(i) {T Pres} has ∅ (zero) allomorph when it is marked on the modal auxiliaries. {Past} is marked on the modals as process allomorph but {Present} does not have any phonological realisation. For example,

          {can} + {Pres} —   can
          {shall} + {Pres} —   shall
But   {can} + {Past} —   could
          {shall} + {Past} —   should

(ii)   {Tense Past} has / ∅ / allomorph in structures with the stems cut, put, etc.
          {cut} + {Past}   —   cut

But past morpheme has process alomorphs in structures with the stems like the following :

          catch – caught /kɔ : t/
          flight – fought/fɔ :t/
          run – ran /rχn/
          bring – brought/brɔ : t/

Now that we have already looked into the morphophonemic features of some affixes (or bound morphemes), let us look into the structure of some free morphemes now. Like the affixes, the free morphemes also have allomorphic variations. Some free morphemes in English have only one allomorph but some others may have more than one. For example, {bus} and {boy} have one allomorph each but morphemes like {leaf} and {house} have two allomorphs.

Let us look at the following forms :

{ house } ———————————————— / haus / in 'house'
                                          /hauz / in 'houses' / hauz iz /
{ leaf } ———————————————— /li:f / in 'leaf'
                                          /li:v / in leaves / li:v z/
{ wife } ———————————————— / waif / in 'wife'
                                          / waiv / in 'wives' / waiv z /

Here are some more English free morphemes which have more than one allomorph.
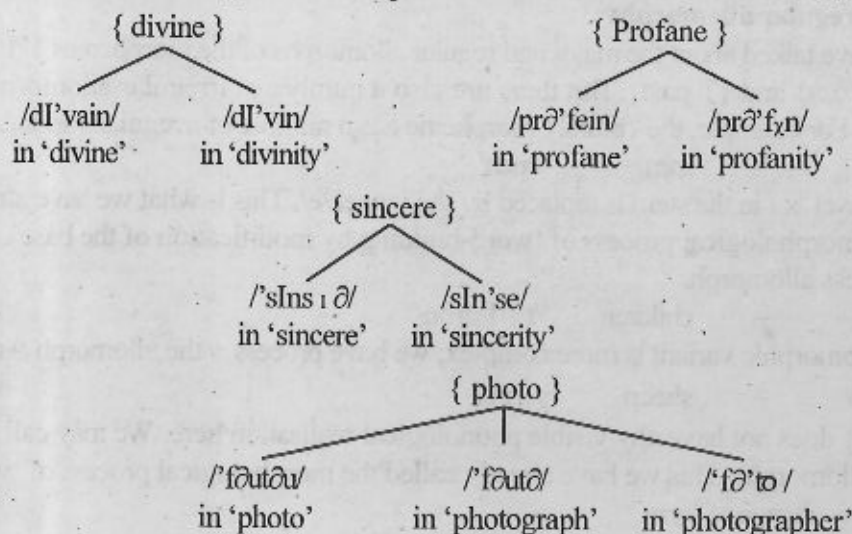
        { divine }   { Profane }

/dI'vain/   /dI'vin/   /prə'fein/   /prə'fχn/
in 'divine'   in 'divinity'   in 'profane' in 'profanity'

                { sincere }

        /'sIns ı ∂/   /sIn'se/
        in 'sincere'   in 'sincerity'

                { photo }

/'fəutəu/   /'fəutə/   /'fə'tɒ /
in 'photo'   in 'photograph' in 'photographer'

1.5. Some morphophonemic processes in English

1.5.1. Assimilation : When morphemes are combined (as in 'Sandhi' rules in Bangla, Sanskrit, etc.) the neighbouring phonemes become phonologically more like each other. For example,

$$/_1 n/ + /\text{'}p_I \, sibi|/ = /_1 \, m\text{'}p\text{$\upomega$} sibl/$$

Here /n/ becomes /m/ in the environment of or under the influence of /p/. That is to say, the alveolar nasal becomes a bilabial nasal in the environment of the bilabial sound /p/.

Here are some more examples.

English :   en+courage – /n/ – /ŋ/ in the environment
             of /k/ (alveolar becomes velar)
             in + correct – same   [ɪŋ]l

Bengali :   /pãc̲/ + /jon/ – /   jjon/– voiceless palatal
             becomes voiced palatal

1.5.2. Syncope : Syncope is a process of elimination of medial vowel(s) or consonant(s).

Hindi :   /   / + /i :/ – ∂sli: (real)

English
(colloquial) : /juː/ + /h∂v/ – /juːv/
/juː/ + /wud/ – /juːd/

1.5.3. Addition of phoneme or Epenthesis : When two or more morphemes are combined together a new phoneme may be added in the process. For example,

/strɒ ŋ/ + /∂/ – /strɒŋg∂/
/g/ is added here
/sl∂m/ + /aiz/ – /sʊl∂m n̲aiz/
/n/ is added in the structure

1.5.4. Loss of phoneme : A phoneme is lost in the basic allomorph when two morphemes are combined. This process is the opposite of 'Addition of phoneme'. Let us consider these examples.

/In–/ + /'mɒdist/ – /I'mɒdist/
Here/n/ in/ in–/ is lost.

/In/ + /rɒʃ ∂n∂l/ – /I'rɒ ∂n∂l/ – Here again /n/ is lost.

1.5.5. Stress-shift : It sometimes happens that when an affix is attached to a stem, the stress is shifted from one syllable to another.

'photograph	–	pho'tography	–	photo'graphic
'president	–	presi'dential		
'hesitate	–	hesi'tation		
'e'lectric	–	elec'tricity		
'demonstrate	–	demons'tration		
'theatre	–	the'atric – theatri'cality		

Please go back to your phonetics lesson once again and study the stress rules in English to see how affixation brings about stress-shift in English.

1.5.6. Summary : In this unit on English morphology we have tried to look into (i) the morphological structure of words and (ii) how morphemic units are phonologically realized in English. In order to do so we have tried to explain various notions like morpheme, word, compound, derivation, inflection, word paradigm, etc. in morphology and morpheme – morph – allomorph interrelations in morphophonemics. We have also seen some important word-building processes and certain morphophonemic processes. We have referred to some data of other languages wherever felt necessary. The chief objective of this unit was to acquaint you with the linguistic facts and phenomena at this level of linguistic representation called morphology the way you were acquainted in the previous module with linguistic phenomena at the level of phonology.

1.5.7. Review Questions 10 :

Study the morphophonemic processes in English and try to find out how many of them will apply to your mother tongue. Try to discover some new process(es) of morphophonemics in your own language, if you can.

[For the review questions (1 – 10) you need not look for any reference book. You can answer them if you study the lessons very carefully. Since many of the concepts we have dealt with here are new to you they might appear to be difficult but if you work hard and start finding interest in them you will find the issues fascinating and the tasks exciting. For answering these questions, therefore, you need to go back to the relevant portions of the lesson time and again. you will find it rewarding and this exercise is essential for students like you who are doing the course through the distant education mode.]

1.5.8. Books Recommended :

1. CIEFL PGCTE Course Materials : Introduction to Linguistics Block II Units 5-6. Dept of Distance Education CIEFL.

2. University of Burdwan : M.A. Part II English Study Material Paper VII option - C. Directorate of Correspondence Courses, B.U.

3. O'Grady, et. al. (1991) : Contemporary Linguistics : An Introduction. St. Martin's Press, New York. Chapter IV (PP 111-155).

4. Verma, S. K. et al. (1989) : Modern Linguistics : An Introduction. OUP Madras (Section III, Units 18-21, PP 58-78).

Unit 4 □ English Syntax

CONTENT

2.0. Introduction

In Module II and Unit 1 of Module III we have talked about linguistic units like phoneme, syllable, morpheme and word. You have also been made aware of how these elements function within the overall framework of a linguistic system. The various linguistic processes at different levels of linguistic reality which involve these linguistic units in a complex and creative network of functioning have also been introduced to you. And we hope that you must be getting more and more fascinated in discovering the various levels of linguistic – communicative operation in a human language which we use and understand so easily and which is so easily taken for granted.

The moment we take a serious look into this apparently simple human entity called language we begin to realise how complex this system is and how creative and communicatively effective this mechanism is.

After phonology and morphology we will now move upto the next higher level of syntax. At this level our concern is with the way words are organized into higher units like phrases, clauses, and sentences. At this level we will have to explain issues like linear relations between constituents of sentences along with the hierarchical interrelations between constituents. We will have to answer questions like why 'Poor John ran away' is a possible sentence in English but * John poor away rain' is not a sentence.

In this course on syntax we will try to capture the structure of phrases (like Noun phrases, Adj. phrases, Adverb phrases, Prepositional phrases, Verb phrases, Verbal groups, etc.) and clauses as well as sentences (like the simple sentence, the complex sentence and the compound sentence). And in doing so we will present the models of syntactic analysis of all the three paradigms of language study – the traditional, the structural and the transformational generative.

2.1. The Traditional School of Linguistics

The term traditional in linguistics today is used as almost a blanket term covering about 2500 years of language study beginning with the pre-Socratic philosophers till the beginning of the 20th century, i.e. the time of Ferdinad de Saussure. During this vast span of language study we had the Greeks, the Romans, the thirteenth century scholastic philosophers / speculative grammarians, the 17th century Port Royal Grammarians in France, the great 18th century grammarians Leibuiz and Sir William Jones due to whom we had the famous 19th century brand of linguistics known as comparative philology. Alongside this scholarly tradition of traditional linguistics we also had a tradition of school grammars which tried to capture the structural essence of linguisitc configurations in human languages. When we refer to traditional grammars and their limitations we precisely mean this school tradition of grammars.

Traditional grammar, thus defined, did present a model of linguistic analysis which had a number of intrinsic weaknesses and limitations which are now known as fallacies in traditional grammar. In fact, the traditional model of syntactic analysis has been rejected because of these fallacies.

2.1.1. The Latinate Fallacy : The traditional grammarians of English borrowed Latin grammar as the model for describing English or any other language. As a result, the grammar of English was written without any in-depth study of the linguistic facts of English. The English version of Latin grammar passed on as the grammar of English. For example, Latin has six case forms – Nominative, Vocative, Accusative, Genetive, Dative and Ablative. And as case is an inflectional category it is marked on the nouns in Latin. The traditional grammarians of English maintain that English also has six case forms, though actually we have two case forms for English nouns – John (unmarked case) and John's (marked or possessive case) – and three case forms for English pronouns – he, his, and him (nominative, possessive and objective respectively). This shows that the case system of English was borrowed from Latin and imposed on English. The underlying belief was that languages belonging to the same family would have similar features, structures, and grammatical categories.

This fallacy of using the grammatical model of one language for the description of another is known, therefore, as Latinate fallacy, Modern linguists would say every language is a unique system and, therefore, it has to be studied in its own right and merit.

2.1.2. The Semantic Fallacy : The traditional grammarians used meaning in the definition or description of grammatical categories. This use of meaning as a tool or criterion in linguistic description makes grammar unscientific because meaning itself cannot be scientifically captured. Meaning is vague; context-bound and subjective.

Let us consider the definition of an interrogative sentence in traditional grammar. "An interrogative sentence is one that asks a question." Now, a sentence like "Could you pass me the salt? is an interrogative sentence as we all know. But does it ask a question ? Of course, no. It is actually making a request. The point is that such meaning-based definitions are misleading, fallacious and, therefore, unscientific. The definition of an interrogative has to be form-based or structure-based and not meaning-bassed. This is true of many definitions in traditional grammar being only meaning-based & thus fallacious.

2.1.3. The Logical Fallacy : The traditional linguists held that the rules of grammar should be governed by the laws of logic. This belief they inherited from the speculative grammarians of the Middle Ages who thought that human language mirrored the universe and because the principles of logic governed the universe they governed language also.

But we find that in every human language there are expressions/utterances which may not be considered valid from the point of view of logic. Expressions like 'rounder' or 'more perfect' are very common for the speakers of languages (as in English) though they are not logically valid (as something can be either round or not/either perfect or not). Therefore, such expressions by the native speakers of their logical validity. In English, the traditional grammarian's observation that it has three tense forms – past, present and future – is an example of logical fallacy. As there are three times – past, present and future – there has to be three tenses. But we know that English has no future tense; futurity is expressed with the help of various linguistic devices, like the use of modals, like shall or will, etc. Tense is an inflection and there is no future tense marked on an English verb.

In Bangla, for instance, we have three tenses –

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khai	–	cat (I cat)
khelam	–	ate (I ate)
khabo	–	shall eat (I shall eat)

And all the tenses are marked on the root verb kha as inflections. But in English we have only the Present and the Past Tense. The logic that three times will have to be represented by three tenses is not linguistically validated.

Please note here that this traditional statement regarding three tenses in English is also an illustration of Latinate fallacy as well as semantic fallacy.

In modern linguistics we say that there need not be always a one-to-one correspondence between tense and time. Time is a semantic category and Tense is a grammatical category and there may not be a logical one-to-one correspondence between the two. This is true of sex and gender and countability and Number.

2.1.4. The fallacy of 'lack of explicitness' : Many definitions or descriptions in traditional grammar are not explicity. In other words, they are not clearly, precisely and unambiguously stated. For example, let us take Jespersen's definition or description of subject (and also predicate) in his famous book Essentials of English Grammar :

"In such a simple sentence as the dog barks – and naturally also in clauses like that the dog barks or when the dog barks – we call the dog subject and barks predicate."

The grammarian's description of the notion 'subject' is inexplicit and yet he assumes that the reader/learner understands what a 'subject' is.

2.1.5. The fallacy of mixing up different criteria : The traditionalists mixed up various criteria in their description of grammatical items and structure. Sometimes they used semantic criteria, sometimes formal and sometimes functional. Depending on the context, they would describe the same item in different ways and assign it different categorial status. For example, they would describe the same item in different categorial status. For example, they would describe 'science' as a noun, let us say, in a structure like He's studying science and would call it an adjective in a structure like He is studying in science college because in the latter sentence science functions as a modifier of the noun college. Thus they mixed up different criteria leading to a descriptive framework which does not remain scientific. Modern linguists, therefore, reject such a framework and they are in favour of a consistent and formal set of criteria for defining different word-classes.

2.1.6. The Written form fallacy : The traditional linguists used the written form of the language as their data and, therefore, their description of a language was the description of the written form of the language. The spoken form was completely ignored. From the modern linguist's point of view, this is a fallacy because speech is primary and the written form is only a codification of speech. This fallacy led to the neglect of phonology in traditional grammar. You will perhaps remember that we have already said that the traditional linguists dealt with two basic units in language – word and sentence.

2.1.7. The prescriptive fallacy : The traditionalists prescribed, in many cases, the norms of language use for the native speaker. For example, many grammarians had suggested that split infinitives should be avoided. But many native speakers use this structure; they would prefer 'to kindly grant me' to 'kindly to grant me'. A grammarian's job is to observe data i.e. native speaker's speech and then describe in faithfully and scientifically instead of prescribing norms for the speaker. In other words, linguistics, according to the modern linguists, should be descriptive and not prescriptive.

2.1.8. The fallacy of ignoring language variations : The traditional grammarians considered language 'monolithic'. They ignored different varieties of the same language – dialectal and register varieties – and paid attention to only one variety, the written language of great literary writers of the past. This is a huge fallacy because language is what people speak and all varieties of a language need to be scientifically studied.

2.1.9. Summary : We have touched on some of the major fallacies in traditional grammar. This we did in order to make you understand why this model of linguistic description was later discarded by the structural linguists of the twentieth century.

The traditional grammarians thus gave us a model of linguistic description which was based on 'parsing'. They described the parts of speech, grammatical form and function of a word in a particular sentence and then divided sentences into parts (i.e. different constituents, phrases, clauses, etc.) and described their grammatical forms and functions by capturing their syntactic interrelations. Though they came under severe criticism from the structuralists (1920s – 1960) they presented a model which, in spite of its intrinsic limitations and the fallacies in practice, did have insights that were used by the linguists after the structuralists.

The traditional grammarians used meaning and intuition in their descriptive framework as a tool but later linguists like Chomsky and the Chomskyans did utilise the native speaker's intuition as data, though not as a tool in their framework.

The structuralists' severe reaction against the traditionalists made the pendulum swing to the other extreme and it appears that the traditionalists' lack of "scientificness" made the structuralists 'scientific' with almost a vengeance and in the latter units we will look into this 'scientific' model of syntactic analysis in some detail and see what sort of reaction they attracted from their successors in the field, namely the transformational generativists.

As the course proceeds we will keep on seeing all these paradigms of the 20th century and affirming the ancient truth about science : The history of any science is a history of successive modifications. And when the modifications can no longer explain the truth a scientific paradigm is discarded and replaced or superseded by another.

2.1.10. Review Questions 1 :

(a) What is meant by a 'fallacy'?

(b) Answer in one or two sentence(s) on what you understand about the following

    (i) Latinate fallacy

    (ii) Written form fallacy

    (iii) Logical fallacy

(c) What fallacies of traditional grammar would you associate with the following statements ?

    (i) Noun is the name of a place, person or thing.

    (ii) 'I don't find none' – this sentence means 'I find someone because two negatives make an affirmative.

    (iii) Shall and will are makers to prove that English has a future tense.

    (iv) A speaker of English should say "It's I" in place of it's me.

(d) What role does meaning play in traditional grammar ?

2.2. Structural Syntax

Introduction : We have already seen that the structural linguists (1920s – 1960) rejected the traditional grammarian's model of linguistic analysis because of what they called 'fallacies'. In our units on phonology and morphology you have already seen how methodical the structuralists were and how structure-based their descriptions were (Please remember that our courses on phonology and morphology are basically structural phonology and structural morphology). At the level of syntax also they were highly meticulous about making linguistics a science and capturing the syntactic interrelations between the constituents rigorously scientifically without any dependence on meaning or 'logic'.

2.2.1. Immediate Constituent Analysis : The framework of syntactic analysis used by the structuralists is known as immediate constituent analysis. In this system their objective was to capture the interrelations between the immediate constituents in a structure, meaning, which elements are immediately related to each other in the structure. In other words, they made a distinction between constituents and immediate constituent. Let us consider the following sentence.

Sharmila likes mangoes.

There are three constituents in this sentence. But the syntactic interrelations between the three are different from each other. A constituent analysis (not immediate constitutent analysis) of this sentence might only capture the linear constituency relations between the three constituents. But how these three are hierarchically related will also have to be captured for which the structuralists postulated the framework of immediate constituent analysis. An illustration of the above sentence will help you understand the point. The sentence – Sharmila likes mangoes – has at the highest level of hierarchy immediate constituency relation between 'Sharmila' and 'like mangoes'. And then 'like' and 'mangoes' are immediate constituents of each other at the next lower level of hierarchy. We can represent this immediate constituency relation by using the following box diagram.
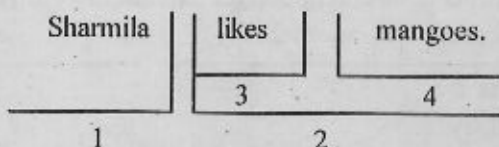
Here 1 and 2 are immediate constituents and 3 and 4 are immediate constituents. The important point is that 1 and 4 are not immediate constituents though they are constituents in the same structure. The basic presupposition is that all the constituents in an utterance do not carry equal syntactic load or enjoy equal syntactic status. Their syntactic status is determined by their position in the syntactic hierarchy.

You will have noticed from this diagram that the linguists have used bracketing convention to capture the IC interrelations. And this bracketing convention they have borrowed from mathematics.

This bracketing helps to disambiguate structures and their interrelations which are otherwise ambiguous.

Let us consider the following problem :

$$3 \times 2 + 7 = ?$$

The answer to this problem could be either 13 or 27 because this structure is ambiguous. The ambiguity lies in the order of application of the two processes – multiplication and addition. If we apply multiplication first and addition next we get 13 but if we apply addition first and multiplication next we get 27. In order to disambiguate the structure the mathematicians use the bracketing convention. For example,

(i) $(3 \times 2) + 7 = 13$

but (ii) $3 \times (2 \times 7) = 27$

See that the ambiguity is resolved and for (i) you can have only one answer 13 (and not 27) and for (ii) you can have only one answer 27 (and not 13).

This bracketing principle has been used by the structural linguists for resolving ambiguity in linguistic structures. Let's take the following linguistic structure :
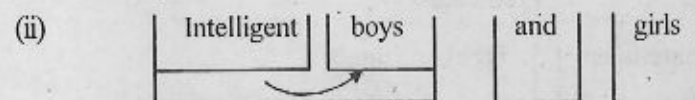
Intelligent boys and girls.

This is an ambiguous structure because 'intelligent' may refer to 'boys and girls' (both boys and girls are intelligent) or on the contrary, it might refer to only 'boys' and not girls (boys who are intelligent and girls). The ambiguity lies in the scope of modification of the adjective 'intelligent'.

By using the bracketing convention (box diagram is basically a bracketing convention) we can disambiguate this linguistic structure in the following way :

(i) Intelligent | boys | and | girls
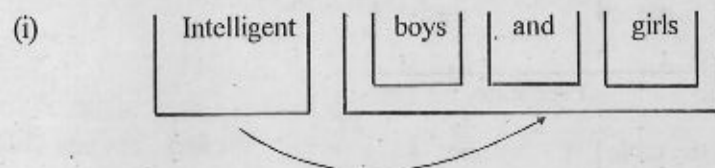
Here 'intelligent' modifies both boys and girls.

(ii) Intelligent | boys | and | girls

Here 'intelligent' modifies only 'boys' and 'girls' are outside the scope of modification.

This model of syntactic analysis is known as Immediate Constituent analysis (or IC analysis). And the structuralists not only capture the relations between the constituents in a structure by bracketing them but also by labelling them. Without the labels this bracketing system would be inadequate and inexplicit. The labels used by them can be categorical labels, like noun, verb, adjective, etc. or functional, like subject, predicate, verbal complement, head, modifier, etc. As functional labels in linguistic structures capture functional interrelations between the immediate constituents, they are more insightful and explanatory compared to categorial labelling.

And, therefore, in this course we have used this functional labelling. Let us now add functional labels to the diagrams given above.

(i) Intelligent | boys | and | girls

| | indepe-dent unit | co-ord-inator | Ind. Unit |

Modifier | Head

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(ii)

Intelligent	boys	and	girls
Modifier	Head		
Independent Unit		Co-ordi-nator	Ind. Unit
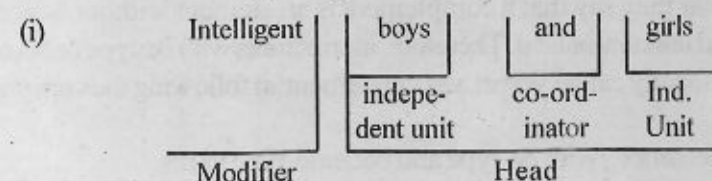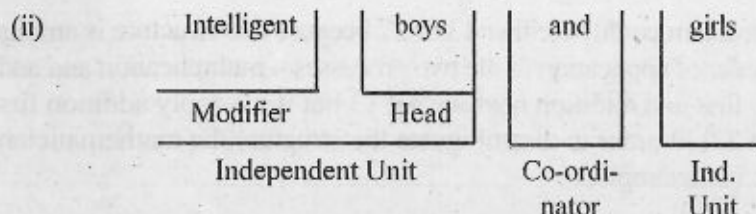
In our IC analysis framework we will follow the structuralists' five structures which they evolve in terms of five sets of functional interrelation.

1. The structure of predication.
2. The structure of complementation.
3. The structure of modification.
4. The structure of subordination.
5. The structure of co-ordination.

2.2.2. The structure of predication : In the structure of predication the structuralists use binary cuts to arrive at two immediate constituents will have to be subject and the other one predicate. (Here the structuralists have used these two categories more or less the same way as the traditionalists).

Now consider the following sentences :

1.

Yasmeen	passed	away.
Subject	Predicate	

2.

The book on the table	is mine.
Subject	Predicate

3.

That he is very intelligent	is beyond doubt.
Subject	Predicate

2.2.3. The structure of complementation

This is also a binary structure in which one constituent is 'verbal' and the other one is 'complement'. For example,

4.

John	is	a teacher.
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

In this structure the complement is grammatically a complement in the sense of traditional grammar. In traditional grammar they say that a complement is an element without which the sentence remains incomplete and ungrammatical. Therefore, in structures with be-type or become-type verbs the verb will be functionally called verbal and the element(s) following the verb will be complement.

Consider the following sentences with be-type and become-type verbs.

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5.

He	looks	tired.
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

('look' is a be-type verb)

6.

He	became	an administrator
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

7.

The milk	turned	sour.
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

('turn' here is a become-type verb)

8.

He	got	terribly annoyed.
	verbal	Complement
Subject	Predicate	

('get' is a become-type verb)

There are a number of such verbs which function as be-type/become-type verbs : 'look', 'appear', 'seem', 'turn', 'get', 'happen' etc.

In addition to complements being marked or labelled as 'complements', the structuralists treat objects also as complements. So a sentence with a transitive verb and its object(s) will be captured the same way. Look at the following examples.

9.

The teacher	loves	her pupils
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

10.

She	eats	fried cockroaches.
	verbal	complement
Subject	Predicate	

You have just seen that the verbal-complement structure is easy to capture when the verb is a monotransitive verb (a verb with one object). But it will be difficult to capture the interrelations between a ditransitive verb (a verb having two objects) and its two objects. If we treat the verb as verbal and the two objects together as complement then we will find it difficult to capture the syntactic relation between the two objects. Examine the following sentence :

11.

He	taught	me	linguistics.
		??	??
	verbal	complement	
Subject	Predicate		

Are the two objects me and linguistics really immediate constituents? Your sense of English

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and intuition about the structure will tell you that me is immediately related to taught as well as linguistics is immediately related to taught. (He taught me and he taught linguistics – appears to be the meaning). Therefore, me and linguistics cannot be immediate constituents. So the linguists capture the syntax of this sentence the following way.

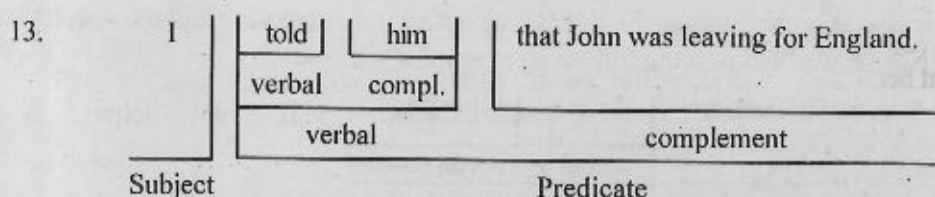| He	taught	me	linguistics.
	verbal	compl.	
	verbal		complement
Subject		Predicate	
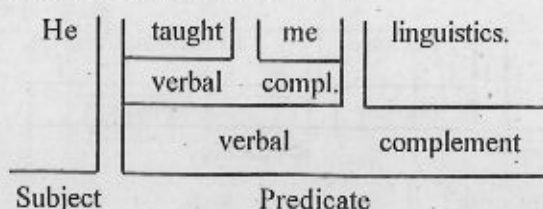
(Please note here that this is not very scientific to call the verb + the first object as the verbal but this is the better of the two options in the framework.)

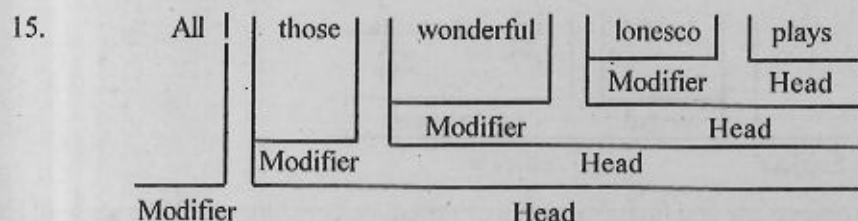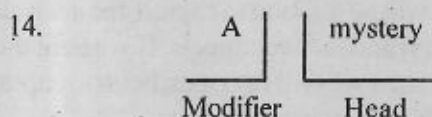Let us work out a few more sentences with this structure.

12.

He	asked	me	to do it immediately.
	vebal	compl.	
	verbal		complement
Subject		Predicate	
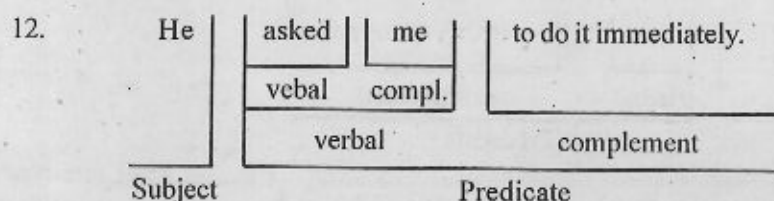
(The infinitival phrase 'to do it immediately' is the second object of the ditransitive verb 'asked'.)

13.

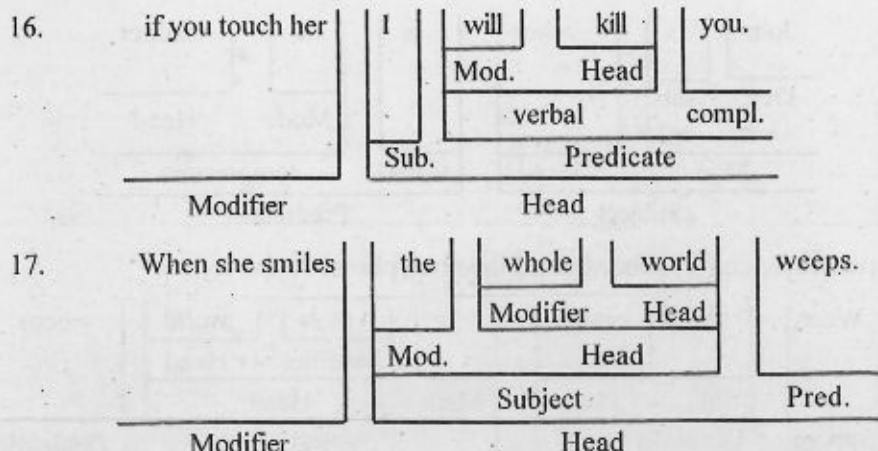| I	told	him	that John was leaving for England.
	verbal	compl.	
	verbal		complement
Subject		Predicate	

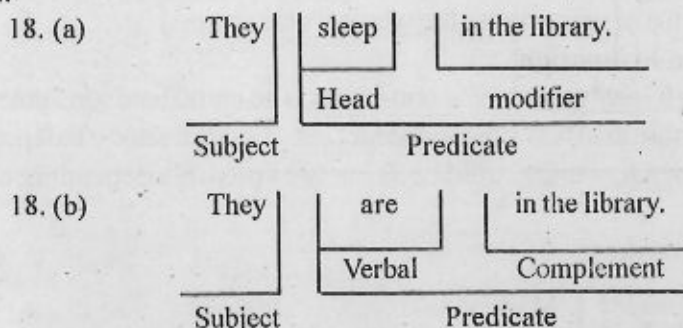Here the that-clause is the second object.)

2.2.4. The structure of modification

In this binary structure of modification we have two elements – Head and Modifier. Modifiers usually perform adjectival or adverbial functions. But any element modifying another will be called a modifier and that which it modifies will be called a head. Look at the following examples.
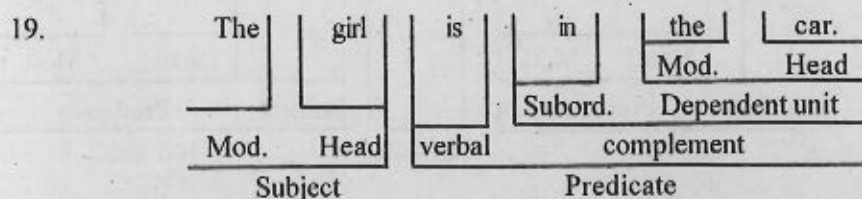
14.

A	mystery
Modifier	Head

15.

All	those	wonderful	Ionesco	plays
			Modifier	Head
		Modifier		Head
	Modifier		Head	
Modifier		Head		

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16.

if you touch her	I	will	kill	you.
		Mod.	Head	
		verbal		compl.
	Sub.	Predicate		
Modifier	Head			

17.

When she smiles	the	whole	world	weeps.
		Modifier	Head	
	Mod.	Head		
	Subject			Pred.
Modifier	Head			

Now let us examine the difference between the two apparently similar structures given below.

18. (a)

They	sleep	in the library.
	Head	modifier
Subject	Predicate	

18. (b)

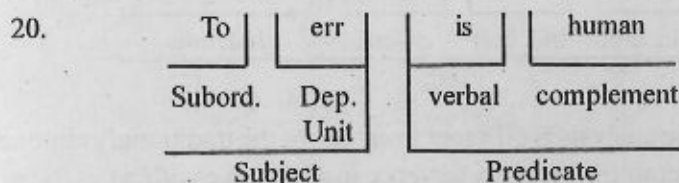| They	are	in the library.
	Verbal	Complement
Subject	Predicate	

In 18 (a) 'in the library' functions as a modifier of the Head verb 'sleep' and it is not a complement because we can stop after 'sleep'. But in 18(b) the same element is a complement as it occurs after the verb be (are). Thus the functional labelling in IC analysis helps us to capture the structural interrelations in a unique way.
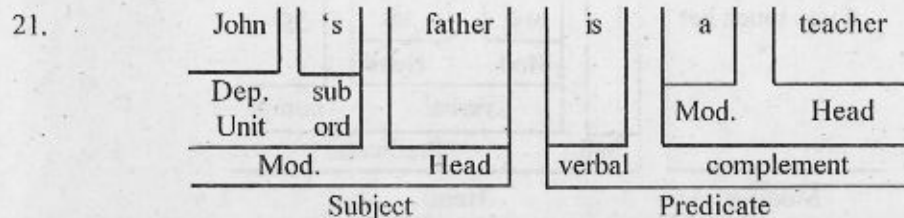
2.2.5. The structure of subordination

In this binary structure one immediate constituent is subordinator and the other is dependent unit. Look at the following examples.
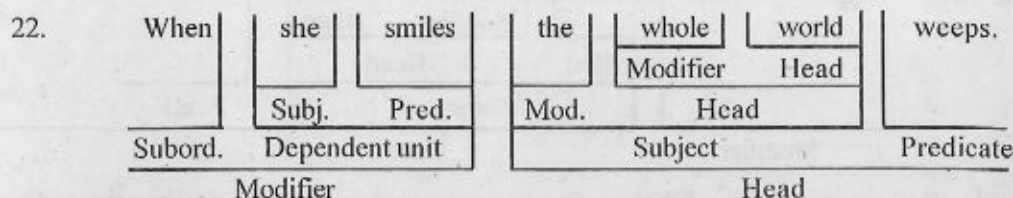
19.

The	girl	is	in	the	car.
				Mod.	Head
			Subord.	Dependent unit	
Mod.	Head	verbal	complement		
Subject		Predicate			

(The preposition in subordinates the following noun phrase the car.)s

20.

To	err	is	human
Subord.	Dep. Unit	verbal	complement
Subject		Predicate	

(Here the infinitive to subordinates the verb phrase err.)

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21.

John	's	father	is	a	teacher
Dep. Unit	sub ord			Mod.	Head
Mod.		Head	verbal	complement	
Subject			Predicate		

(Here the possessivizer('s) subordinates the noun phrase John).

22.

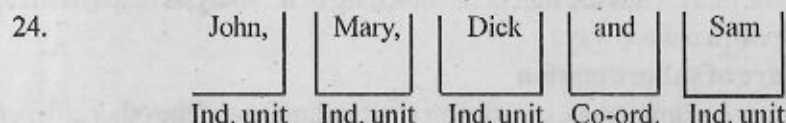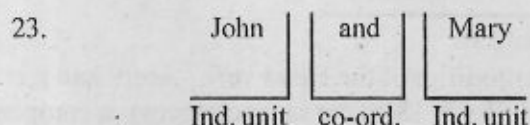| When	she	smiles	the	whole	world	weeps.
				Modifier	Head	
	Subj.	Pred.	Mod.	Head		
Subord.	Dependent unit		Subject			Predicate
Modifier			Head			

(Here the subordinating conjunction when subordinates the sentence she smiles which is reduced to a subordinate clause to the main clause the whole world weeps.)

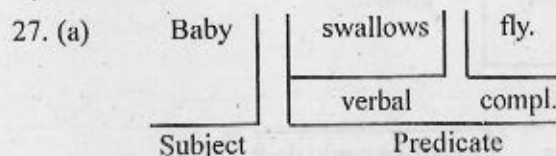## 2.2.6. The structure of co-ordination

This is the only structure in IC analysis which is non-binary. The immediate constitutents in this structure, therefore, will be more than two – Independent Unit – Co-ordinator – Independent Unit. The total number of independent units could be as many as possible depending on the structure.

Look into the following structures.

23.

John	and	Mary
Ind. unit	co-ord.	Ind. unit

24.

John,	Mary,	Dick	and	Sam
Ind. unit	Ind. unit	Ind. unit	Co-ord.	Ind. unit

25.

I	went	there	and	she	came	away.
	Head	Mod.			Head	Mod.
Subject	Predicate			Subject	Predicate	
Ind. unit			Co-ord.	Ind. unit		

26.

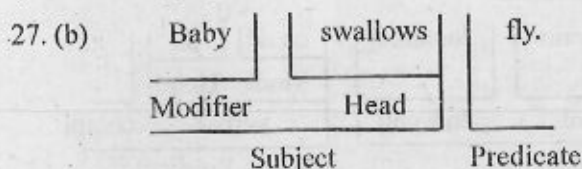| She	came	saw	and	conquered.
	Ind. unit	Ind. unit	co-ord.	Ind. unit
Subj.	Pred.			
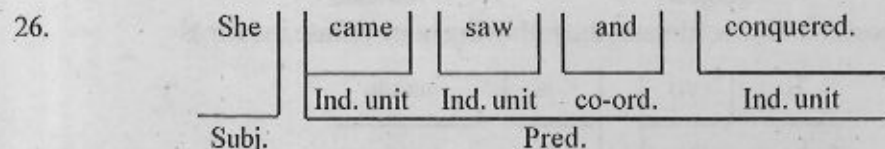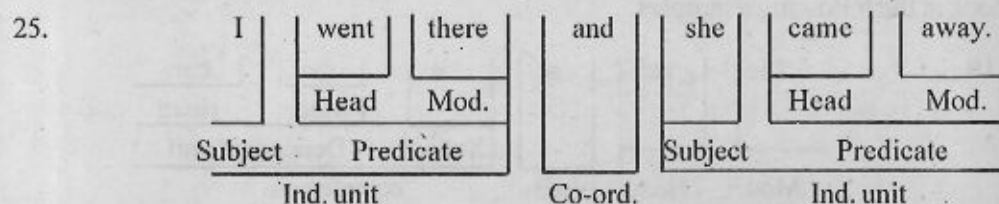
This framework of syntactic analysis is different from that of the traditional grammarians. The structuralists' claim that they could analyse any sentence in a language within this framework appeared to be valid during the heyday of American structuralism. Even this model of syntax
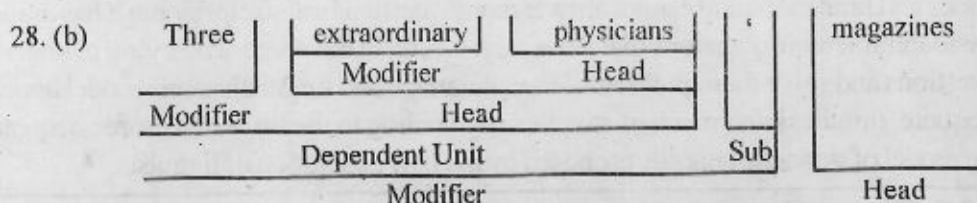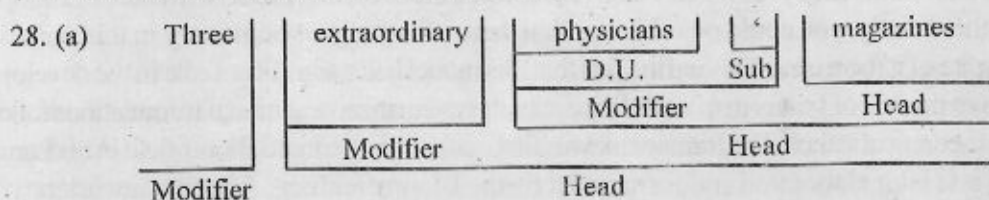
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could capture ambiguity and resolve it to a certain extent by showing two different sets of interrelations in two different IC structures.

27. (a)

Baby	swallows	fly.
	verbal	compl.
Subject	Predicate	

(The meaning captured is : Baby swallows the fly.)

27. (b)

Baby	swallows	fly.
Modifier	Head	
Subject		Predicate

(The meaning captured is : Small swallows fly.)

28. (a)

Three	extraordinary	physicians	'	magazines
		D.U.	Sub	
		Modifier		Head
	Modifier		Head	
Modifier		Head		

28. (b)

| Three	extraordinary	physicians	'	magazines
	Modifier	Head		
Modifier		Head		
	Dependent Unit		Sub	
Modifier			Head	

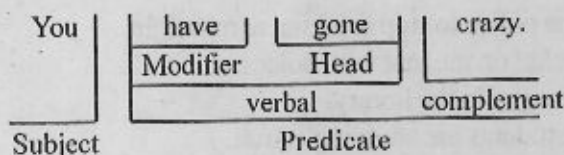## 2.2.7. Non-contiguous IC structures

Elements belonging to the same constituent may not occur in their normal word order always. This is true of all human languages. Sentences having such constitutents with displaced word order present certain problems in IC analysis. Consider the following interrogative sentence.

29. Have you gone crazy ?

Here the verbal unit have gone is non-contiguous because of the inversion. The auxiliary element have has been shifted from its normal position to the left of the subject NP you. In such cases the linguist would show the discontinuous elements first, rewrite them, and then label them.

Step 1 :

Have	you	gone crazy ?
	subject	
Predicate		Predicate
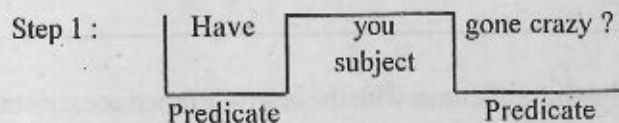
Step 2 : This sentence may be rewritten as

You	have	gone	crazy.
	Modifier	Head	
	verbal		complement
Subject		Predicate	

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Let us consider a few more sentences with discontinuant elements.

30.

| He | has | already | done it. |

Rewritten as : He has done it already.

31.

| Neither | John | nor | Jonathan could do it. |

Rewritten as :

John	neither nor	Jonathan	could	do	it.
			Mod.	Head	
ind. unit	co-ord.	ind. unit	verbal		compl.

Subject — Predicate

2.2.8. Summary : Now that we have presented the structural model of syntax in a simplified way rather briefly, you could possibly say that there is nothing revolutionary in this framework. But in spite of it there is no denying the fact that this model had a significant role in the development of the later models of syntax in modern linguistics. It systematized traditional formulations following its own theoretical stance. The framework was first outlined by Leonard Bloomfield in his Language (1933) and later elaborated and formalized by the Bloomfieldians. The framework has many weaknesses and limitations and cannot answer many questions satisfactorily but it has drawn our attention to innumerable questions that it has raised. And in the process of trying to understand these questions and solve these problems about language and linguistics, this model appears to be inadequate, mindless and mechanistic, thereby leading to the birth of a more adequate and effective model of syntactic analysis proposed by the new generation of linguists.

2.2.9. Review Questions 2 :

Give immediate constituent analysis of the following English sentences. Use topless box diagrams.

(i) Drink wet cement and get really stoned.

(ii) As you sow so you reap.

(iii) Whenever I feel the world is moving too fast I go to the post office.

(iv) His wife asked him to clean the dishes.

(v) I told her not to play on the railway lines.

(vi) He seems to be an honest politician.

(vii) But honesty is the best policy.

Review Questions 3 :

Capture the ambiguity in the following structures with the help of immediate constituent analysis.

(i) She gave her dog biscuits.

(ii) The mayor asked the police to stop drinking at midnight.

(iii) She wanted the bucket on the mat with holes in it.

(iv) He wants to meet the girl in the library.

(v) The report that the students are studying is true.

2.3. Transformational Generative Syntax

2.3.1. Introduction : In the preceding part of this unit on syntax you have had some idea about the model of syntactic analysis within the structuralist paradigm. This model continued to be the most dominant model of syntax during the four decades of the twentieth century – from the twenties through the fifties. But the inherent weaknesses of this framework started showing themselves in different levels and with respect to various syntactic structures. As a result of this, the basic assumptions of this approach were questioned and its theoretical foundations were shaken. A completely new model of syntactic analysis was proposed as an alternative to the structuralist model by Noam Chomsky in his famous book Syntactic Structures in 1957. This proposal came in the form of a challenge to American structuralism and hence known as Chomsky revolution. In the following sections we will try to look into this Chomskyan model of syntax and see why this model is called revolutionary.

2.3.2. Limitations of the structuralist model : The model of linguistic analysis proposed by the structuralists had its foundations in Behaviourism in Psychology. As a result, the structuralists' notions about language, linguistic data, objectives of linguistic study and procedure used in linguistic analysis were firmly rooted in their commitment to the behaviouristic model of understanding language, language use, language organization and language acquisition.

(i) The structuralists looked upon language only as a form of behaviour – they called it 'verbal behaviour' – and they never believed in anything 'mentalistic' or 'cognitive' about language. They thought, as Bloomfield says in his Language (1933), "language is the totality of utterances made in a speech community." So language for them was the total number of sentences produced by the native speakers of a language.

But Chomsky rejected this notion about language. Under the influence of cognitivism, he understood language as a mentalistic activity. The sentences or utterances produced are only what Ferdinand de Sanssure called 'parole'. Language is not merely the product but, more importantly, the process responsible for the product. This innate, intuitive judgment about sentence formation, about the well-formedness of utterances is language and this is what Chomsky calls 'competence'. And, therefore, the scientific description of language has to be a scientific description of this 'language competence'.

(ii) For the structuralists, data for linguistic analysis would be a 'linguistic corpus' – a phonetically transcribed version of native speakers' speech collected through informants which the linguist considers to be a representative sample.

But the Chomskyans would consider the whole of a language as data. For them the data is also 'linguisite competence'.

(iii) The goal of linguistics for the structuralists was to identify data, record it, describe it within their descriptive framework, and finally classify data into categories or classes at different levels of representation. You will remember that they did apply this principle of identification and classification at the level of phonology – speec sounds first identified and then classified as vowels / consonants, high vowels/low vowels, plosives/fricatives/nansals, etc. At the level of morphology and syntax the same practice continued and we had various classifications of morphemes, words and constituents of a sentence. The structuralists did perform this activity

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of classification quite rigorously and meticulously in order to make linguistics and autonomous science:

But is classification or should it ever be the ultimate goal of a science ? Chomsky calls it a lower level science as it is taxonomic (classificatory). It fails to caputre what a schience (or an empirical sciene) does. So the chomskyans would say that linguistics has to construct a comprehensive theory on language, if it has to be a science in the real sense of the term. The structural linguists have failed to give us any emprical theory which would explain language organisation and language acquisition.

Only a transformational generative model of grammar could adequately capture language through empirical theory construction and raise linguistics to the level of a science.

(iv) And the procedure for language study, therefore, cannot be the structuralists' procedure which is highly ambitious (they used 'discovery procedure') but a procedure which is less ambitious and workable (the Chomskyans call it 'evaluation procedure').

The structuralists, therefore, had a 'physicalist' approach to language (language as 'verbal behavior'). They could conceive of language only in its sentential reality or surface reality. For them the utterane or the sentence as produced was the only reality to be captured. So the sentence was explained by them in terms of the linguistic interrelation that was visible or perceivable at the level of the surface reality. This led to their inability to account for innumerable linguistic structures in which surface level evidence was inadequate for explaining them.

In order to show that dependence on the surface level of the sentence is in itself a limitation for the real or adequate explanation of the syntactic reality, Chomsky presents a few cases of structural interrelations.

2.3.3. Cases of structural ambiguity : We saw earlier that certain cases of structural ambiguity could be resolved within the structuralist syntactic framework. But there are other cases of structural ambiguity which cannot be explained in terms of the available surface interrelations between the constituents / immediate constituents of a sentence. For example, let us example, let us examine the following structure :

Visiting	relatives	can be a nuisance.
Modifier	Head
Subject		Predicate

The structuralist would capture only one meaning of the ambiguous structure – visiting relatives – in the above way of treating visiting as modifier of the Head relatives. And, as we can see it, the meaning captured is – Relatives who visit (someone) can be a nuisance. But any speaker of English intuitively knows that this structure has another meaning – For someone to visit (his) relatives can be a nuisance. And this second meaning cannot be captured by the structuralists in their IC analysis framework.

This shows that the grammar of the language fails to capture what the native speakers perceive. The grammar can give us only the half-truth, and, therefore, according to the transformationalists, is not an adequate model of scientific description. An effective model of grammar must capture the two meanings (on the basis of two different sets of interrelations between constituents) : (i) relatives subj and visit verb (ii) visit verb and relatives object. Then only the structural ambiguity in this sentence can be accounted for the resolved.

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2.3.4. Cases of constructional homonymy

When two structures are similar but are not understood similarly they are said to have constructional homonymy. Look at the following sentences.

Jonathan is easy to please.

Jonathan is eager to please.

These two sentences are structurally similar. Both have the construction –

Subj. Noun Phrase + Verb + Adjective + Infinitival Phrase

Jonathan + is + easy/eager + to please
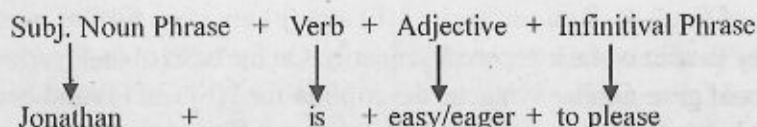
But in spite of this apparent similarity these two sentences are understood differently. The first sentence, as you know, means – "It is easy to please Jonathan" but the second one means – "Jonathan is eager for (Jonathan to please someone)". This meaning difference is due to the difference of the syntactic relations between Jonathan and please in the two structures. Whereas in the first please is the verb and Jonathan is its object – (someone pleases Jonathan), in the second Jonathan is the subject and please is its verb (Jonathan pleases someone). The structuralists, it is argued, cannot capture this difference in their syntactic analysis of these sentences; they would treat them similarly as they appear to be similar in the structure on the surface. So structural syntax fails to capture once again (as in the cases of structural ambiguity) what the native speakers capture intuitively.

Please consider the following cases of constructional homonymy.

1. (a) The plucking of flowers
   (b) The rising of the moon
2. (a) The visitors are asked to leave the hall by the president.
   (b) The visitors are asked to leave the hall by the side door.

2.3.5. Cases of deletion

Sometimes in a language two different sentences appear as one due to the deletion of some elements from their basic structures.

'Mary loves linguistics more than her husband.' This sentence appears to have structural ambiguity because it has two meanings. But this ambiguity can be resolved if we can reconstruct the sentence in its original structures (two structures).

(a) Mary loves linguistics more than her husband. (loves linguistics).

(b) Mary loves linguistics more than (she loves) her husband.

From these two sentences – (a) and (b) – the elements in the brackets have been deleted, thereby leading these two sentences to the same structural configuration. Thus the ambiguity in the sentences can be resolved in terms the feature of deletion.

But the structuralist explanation for this sentence would not be able to capture the ambiguity as they have no mechanism to retrieve deleted elements because of their theoretical position that a sentence is what appears as the speaker's speech and not what the speaker intends to speak. They do not believe in anything 'understood' or 'underlying' or 'deleted' in a structure.

Once again, the structuralist model of syntax fails to capture the native speaker's intuition about cases of deletion.

2.3.6. Cases of paraphrase relation

Let us consider the following sentences.

1. (a) The police diverted the traffic.
   (b) The traffic was diverted by the police.
   (c) The traffic was diverted by the country road.

Sentences 1(a) and (b) are constructionally different but they are understood similarly by the native speakers of English. And sentences 1(b) and (c) are very similar in structure but understood differently in spite of their apparent similarity. On the basis of their surface similarity the structuralists would give similar syntactic description for 1(b) and (c) and because of the structural difference between 1(a) and (b) they would give different structural configurations for 1(a) and (b). This means the grammar goes contrary to the native speaker's intuition. We know that 1(a) and (b) are active and passive counterparts of the same sentence and they have paraphrase interrelations between them. On the other hand, in 1(b) the prepositional phrase by the police is understood not as a mere prepositional phrase but as the by + NP structure in a passive construction where the NP following by is the real agent subject; in 1(c) by the country road is understood as a prepositional phrase (indicating direction) and the agent is not present in the structure. This fundamental difference is perceptible to the native speaker and therefore, has to be captured in the syntactic configuration. But the structural grammarians fail to capture it. They fail because they can't capture paraphrase relation between 1(a) and (b) and constructional homonymy between 1(b) and (c).

2.3.7. Summary : These and many other kinds of syntactic structure the structural linguists fail to analyse the way the native speakers understand them primarily because they analyse sentences as they are in their surface manifestations. But the surface structure is a level, as we have seen already, where the real or logical interrelations between elements in a sentence are not always captured. The surface structure hides a lot of things which the native speaker's intuition can find out and, therefore, an adequate and scientific model of grammar should also find out. If the surface structure is not a reliable level for verification of actual relations or undistorted relations between the constituents of a sentence, the grammar needs to go to a level where these are visible and capturable.

Following this line of argumentation Chomsky realises that the complete dependence on the surface structures of sentences is the reason for the structuralist syntax to have been so inadequate, incomplete and, therefore, 'unscientific' in the right sense of the term.
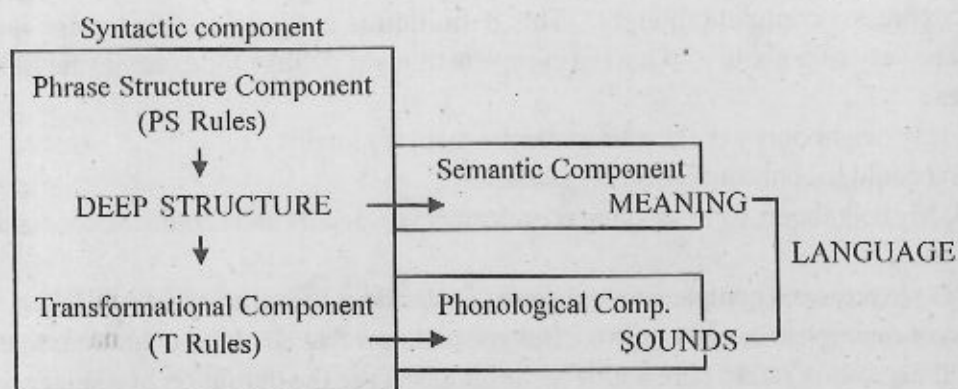
Please notice here that the pendulum has once again swung to the other extreme. Those who rejected the traditional framework on the ground of its 'unscientificness' are being discarded by the linguists of the latter school on the same ground. Chomsky's argument seems to be that the structuralist model is inherently incapable of handling human language which has various levels of understanding and syntactic interpretation.

That is why Chomsky says that a really adequate grammar of a language has to be "an 'externalisation' of native speaker's 'competence'. We have to assume, therefore, that the 'surface' reality of a sentence is not the only reality; there is another linguistic reality of a sentence beyond this surface reality. And Chomsky calls this reality the 'deep structure' reality. So he postulates that every sentence has to be studied and captured in terms of these two levels of

representation – the surface structure level and the deep structure level. We need the deep structure representation of a sentence because the surface structure does not give us the 'whole truth' about a sentence. And our postulation of the deep structure would help us to identify and explain all kinds of sentences – actual as well as potential.

For Chomsky, therefore, the deep structure is the level for semantic representation, it is that level where all real and logical interrelations between elements in a sentential configuration are captured. So it is this level that helps us to capture all the meanings of a sentence.

But Chomsky's postulation has a number of implications. In order to capture semantic representation at the level of the deep structure the linguist has to construct a set of rules (syntactic rules) which will 'generate' the deep structure of a sentence ('generate' in generative grammar means not to produce, but "to explain or enumerate explicitly"). At that level semantic interpretation(s) will take place and after that the deep structure will be mapped on to its surface structure with the help of another set of syntactic rules. The first set of rules Chomsky calls Phrase Structure Rules (PSR) and the second set of rules are Transformational Rules (TR). So his scheme of grammar is something like the following :

Syntactic component

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Phrase Structure Component  │
│        (PS Rules)            │
│            ↓                 │   Semantic Component
│     DEEP STRUCTURE  ──────→     MEANING ┐
│            ↓                 │           │   LANGUAGE
│ Transformational Component   │   Phonological Comp.  │
│        (T Rules)    ──────→     SOUNDS ┘
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

This somewhat detailed discussion was necessary for you to understand the theoretical position of the framework called TG (Transformational Generative Grammar). It was also relevant for your understanding of the development of grammar during the last several decades. Now you are familiar with all the three schools of linguistic analysis and their strengths and weaknesses to a certain extent. You have already seen that TG is not a modification of structural grammar. It is a replacement of the structural framework. Therefore you will see from now on a different approach in syntactic analysis where we will capture or try capture interrelations between elements at the level of the deep structure.

2.3.8. Review Questions – 4

(i) Mention two major weaknesses of structural grammar. And briefly explain why we call them weaknesses. (100 words)

(ii) What is constructional homonymy ? Give 2 examples. (60 words)

(iii) What is the difference between ambiguity in structural ambiguity and ambiguity due to deletion of elements ? Give examples and illustrations. (60 words)

(iv) What does Chomsky mean by 'deep structure' in transformational grammar ? What are the motivations for postulating 'deep structure'? (150 words)

2.4. Introduction

Now that you are familiar with the theoretical position of the generative grammarians, we can get into the details of their practical analytical framework. We have told you already that this framework tries to capture a structure the way the speakers of the language understand it.

Our plan is to begin with the parts of the sentence like the noun phrase, the verbal group, the verb phrase, etc. and their constituents and then capture the sentence as a higher unit. And in doing so we will not get guided by the surface relations but by the deep structure relations. And the most convenient device for doing so will be the use of the tree diagram. The tree and its branches will give us the constitutional picture of the sentence from the point of view of the native speaker's intuition about the sentence.

2.4.1. The Noun Phrase (NP) Structure

We have already mentioned that a Noun Phrase is a part of a sentence. but before discussing the noun phrase we must clearly state what we mean by a sentence. Many traditional grammars (traditional school grammars, to be precise) define a sentence as a group of words which "express a complete thought". This definition is not very satisfactory because we may not be very sure about : "What is a complete thought ?" Take for example the following sentences :

(1) my neighbours were shouting at each other very loudly.

(2) I could not concentrate on my studies.

(3) My neighbours were shouting at each other very loudly and I could not concentrate on my studies.

If (1) expresses a complete thought and (2) also does the same, what is (3) then ? Does it express one complete thought or two ? But you all know that all of these three are sentences. We find the question raised here a little disturbing because the definition of a sentence as an expression of a complete thought is meaning-based and, therefore, vague. The structuralists banished meaning from the domain of linguistics because of this. But we know that the transformational generativists reinstated meaning, though very cautiously, in linguistics. They recognized meaning as an important element in language but did not use meaning as a criterion or tool for analysis.

In our syntax course, therefore, we will define 'sentence' by trying to capture its features, both functional and structural, in a variety of ways at the same time Collins Cobuild English Grammar (1990) has the description of sentence in the following way :

Sentence : a group of words, which express a statement, question or command. A sentence usually has a verb and a subject and may be a simple sentence, consisting of one clause, or a complex sentence, consisting of two or more clauses. A sentence in writing has a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop, question mark, or exclamation mark at the end.

So 'sentence' is defined comprehensively in terms of (i) functions (statement, question, command) (ii) constituents (verb, subject) (iii) types (simple, complex) and (iv) punctuation.

A sentence, thus, can be of three (or may be four) types– simple, having one independent clause complex, having one independent clause and one or more dependent clause(s), compound,

having more than one independent clause and compound – complex which has more than one independent clause and one or more dependent clause and one or more dependent clause(s).

Simple sentence : John loves Mary.

Complex sentence : If you work hard, you will do better.

Compound sentence : John loves Mary but Mary hates John.

Compound-complex sentence : He is a fool and you know that fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

This classification of sentences are similar to that in traditional grammar to a great extent. But there are differences also. In modern syntax we use terms like clause and phrase very differently. For us, a clause is more comprehensive and inclusive. Verbal structures with –ing and structures with the infinitive to + verb phrase will be treated as clauses. For example, the following sentences have clauses in them which the traditionalists would call phrases :

(a) She wants to live for hundreds of years.

(b) She enjoys listening to music.

(The underlined elements are clauses in modern grammar). These two sentences in our syntactic analysis, therefore, are treated as complex sentences and not simple sentences.

Phrases will be used in the sense of parts of a clause. So a sentence has (or may have) clauses, clauses have phrases and phrases are made of words. So a noun phrase, prepositional phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, etc. function as parts of clauses and when the clause itself is an independent sentence the phrases naturally are parts of that sentence.

2.4.2. Basic sentence (or clause) patterns

The basic sentence patterns in English are of the following types.

(1)   Jyoti   sings. (Subject - Verbal)
             S   V

(2) She   is   a teacher. (Subject - Verbal - Complement)
      S   V   C

(3) He   loves   cricket. (Subject - Verbal - Object)
     S   V   O

(4) Father   bought   me   a shirt. (Subject - Verbal - Indirect object - Direct obj.)
      S   V O_i O_d

(5) John   made   Mary   his secretary. (Sub - V - obj. - obj. compl.)
     S   V   O   C

It we expand these constituents of the basic sentence types we can do it by expanding the phrases under these functional categories into clauses. So a subject NP can be expanded into a

clause (or sentence for that matter) an object NP or a complement can also be expanded in the similar way.

In the basic sentence type, therefore, we have the essential elements which are obligatory elements or nuclear elements (like S, V, O, C) without which the sentence would be ungrammatical. But it is also possible to have optional or marginal elements in a sentence which can be dropped and yet the sentence would remain 'grammatical' or 'acceptable'. Such marginal elements are called adjuncts. Examine the following sentences :

(a) She   was listening to   my lecture   attentively.
     ___   _____   _____   _____
      S   V   O   Adjunct

(b) She   slept   in the library.
     ___   _____   _____
      S   V   Adjunct

In these two sentences the adjunct is a grammatically (not semantically) redundant element. But even then, an adjunct can also be expanded into a clause.

After this brief discussion on the sentence and the basic sentence patterns along with various functional units in a sentence you would like to come back to the Noun Phrase (NP).

A phrase, we repeat, is a group of words which constitute part of a clause (or sentence). A noun phrase then is a group of words in which the head is a noun.

In the same way, an adjective phrase has an adjective as its head, an adverb phrase an adverb as its head, a prepositional phrase a preposition as its head. And in a verb phrase we have a verb (or a verbal group, to be precise) as its head.

When we say that in a noun phrase the noun is the head, what are the other elements in it other than the head ? The other elements, if any, would naturally be the modifiers of the head noun.

Let us take a few examples.

1. girl (NP consisting of a noun only without any modifiers)

2. a beautiful girl (NP consisting of the head noun 'girl' and the premodifiers 'a' and 'beautiful')

3. girls from a respectable family (NP consisting of the head noun 'girls' and the postmodifier which is a prepositional phrase 'from a respectable family')

4. a beautiful girl from a respectable family (NP consisting of a head noun, premodifiers and post-modifiers).

You will have realized that a premodifier occurs before the head noun and a post-modifier comes after the head noun. And they can be more than one on either side of the head noun.

2.4.3. In this course we will discuss six major structures of the noun phrase.

The NP with premodifiers (s) : We said already that an NP can occur without any Pre- or Post-modifiers. In that case we will capture the structure of the NP the following way with the help of a tree diagram :

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```
        NP
        |
        N
        |
      girls
```
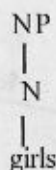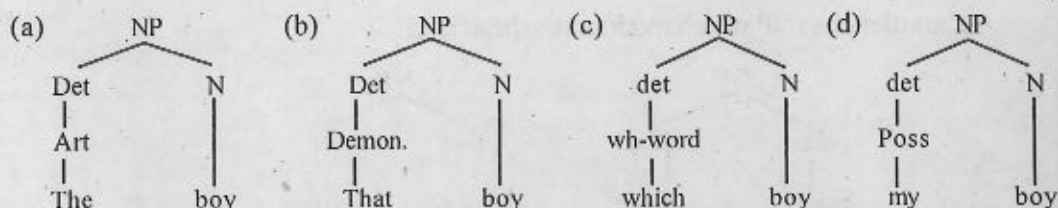
Now if an NP has premodifiers, they will be captured in terms of branches coming from the node NP at the left hand side of the head noun. For example,

(i) NP – Determiner – N

```
         NP
        /  \
      Det    N
       |     |
      Art   boy
       |
       A
```
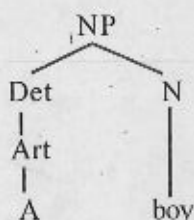
Determiners can be of four types – Articles (a, an, the), Demonstratives (this, that, these, those), wh-words (which, what) and the possessive.
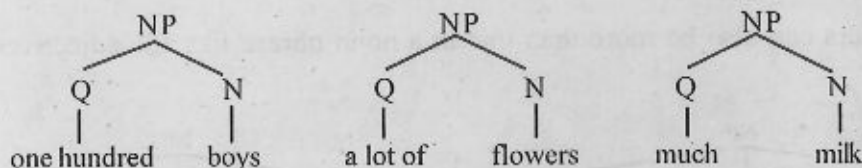
```
(a)      NP          (b)       NP          (c)       NP          (d)       NP
        /  \                   /  \                   /  \                   /  \
      Det    N               Det    N               det    N               det    N
       |     |                |     |                |      |               |      |
      Art   boy             Demon.  boy           wh-word  boy            Poss   boy
       |                      |                      |                     |
      The                   That                   which                  my
```

NP – ordinal – N

An ordinal refers to the serial number, like first, second, third, fourth, next, last, etc.

```
         NP                              NP
        /  \                            /  \
      ord    N                        ord    N
       |     |                         |     |
     First  boy                      next  class
```

NP – Quantifer – N

Quantifier refers to quantity, number, amount, etc. and it includes what some linguists refer to as cardinal.

```
            NP                      NP                      NP
           /  \                    /  \                    /  \
          Q    N                  Q    N                  Q    N
          |    |                  |    |                  |    |
    one hundred boys          a lot of flowers          much  milk
```

NP – Adj. Phrase – N

The adjective phrase occurs before the Noun and modifies it. The adjective phrase can also contain its own premodifer which is called and Intensifier (or Adverb). For example,
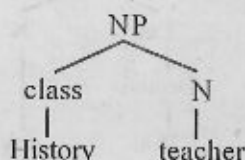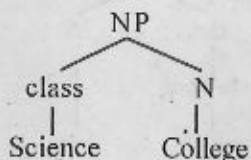
473
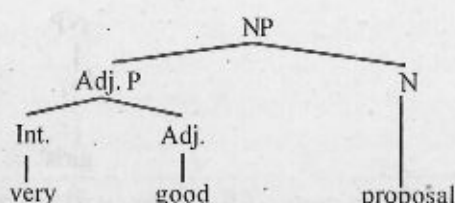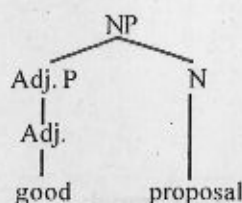
Sometimes an NP can be premodified by more than one Adj. P. In other words, two separate adjective phrases modify the same head noun. So this is structurally very different from the intensifier – adj. structure.
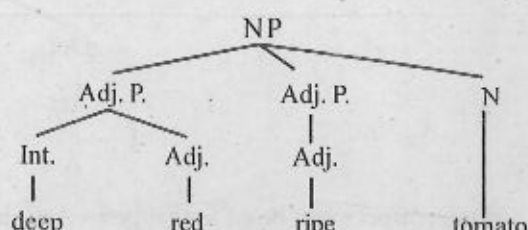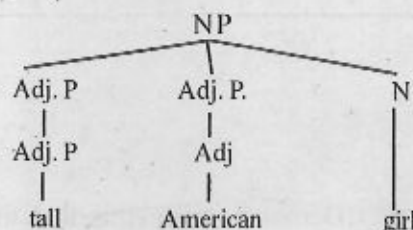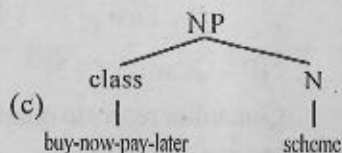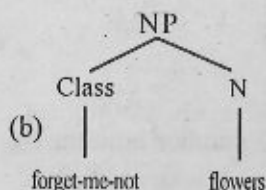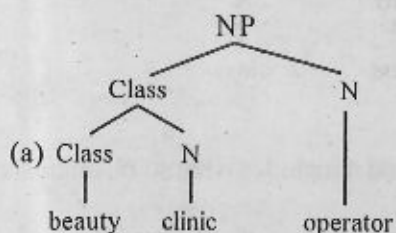

NP – Classifier – N

A classifier is an NP which modifies the head noun.

Please distinguish between this structure and the one with Adj.P– N structure.

A classifier an also be a compound NP, a 'clubbed' sentence (a sentence reduced to the status of a phrase) or even 'clubbed sentences' (more than one sentence reduced to a phrase) :

Classifiers can also be more than one in a noun phrase like the adjectives alread mentioned.

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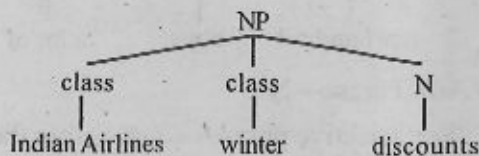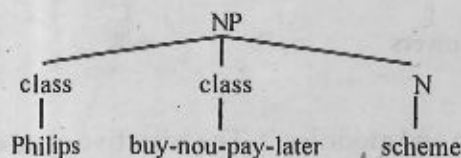
Both the classifiers modify the headnouns in these structures.

While capturing these structures, you will have to depend on your sense of the constituency relations between the elements in an NP. Make sure if the premodifiers are two separate classifiers or one classifier containing a classifier & a noun as under (a) above.

Now, these premodifiers an occur individually in an NP structure as we have seen in the examples or they might occur in combinations between themselves. But their order of occurrence has to be systematic, as shown in the following phrase structure rule.

NP – (Det) (ord) (Q) (Adj. P) (Classifier) N

Notice that the brackets indicate optionality. The elements in the brackets may occur in an NP structure or may not.

Sometimes an element (or elements) may occur before the determiner which is called a predeterminer. For example, see the structure of the following NP.
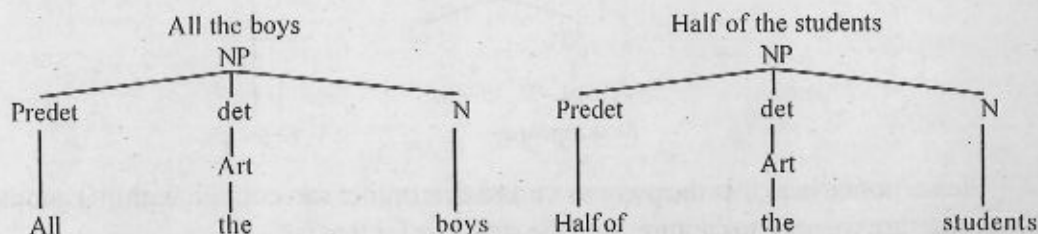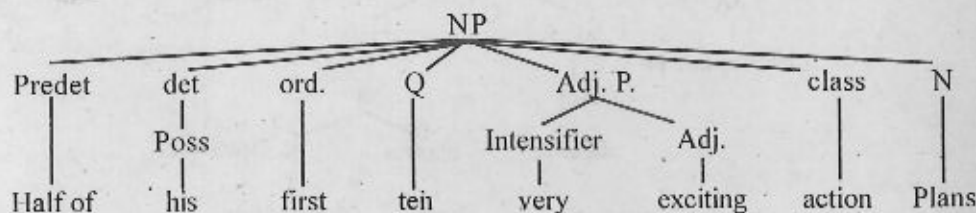

As it appears, the predeterminer is an item which occurs only when there is a determiner after it. Otherwise it would pass on as a quantifier (Q).

Let us now examine the fullest expansion of the NP.

NP – (Predet) (det) (ord) (Q) (Adj P) (class) Noun

Half of his first ten very exciting action plans

This NP structure with premodifiers, therefore, may have all the premodifiers present in the structure or none of them present in the structure, leaving the headnoun singly as the NP.

Consider the noun phrase structures of some NPs worked out. This will help you in understanding the possible variations in the structure.

1. An absolutely honest politician

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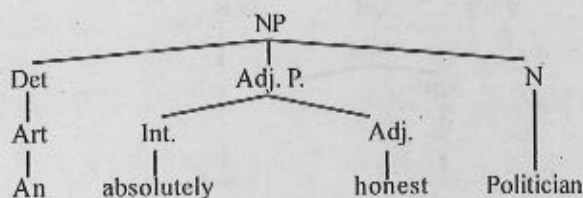
2. Those exciting football matches
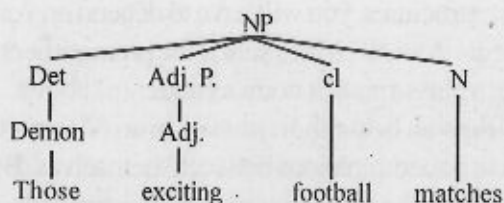
3. None of Shakespeare's tragedies
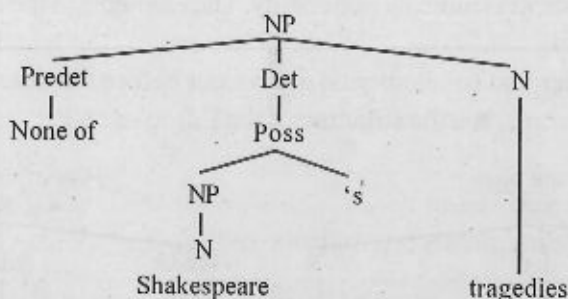
Please notice here that the possessive as a determiner can contain within it another NP whose structure we need to capture. And the structure for that is :

Det – Poss

Poss – NP–'S

(This is exactly the structure of the NP above.)

4. A large number of effective forest conservation measures

5. (a) Those while women's hostels. (ambiguous)

(The hostels are white)

(b)

NP
Det — N
Poss
NP — 's — hostels
Det: Demon: Those
Adj. P: Adj.: white
N: women
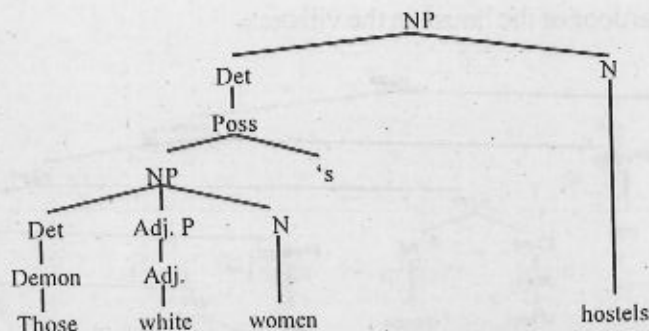
2.4.4. Review Questions 5 :

Show the noun phrase structures of the following NPs with the help of free diagrams.

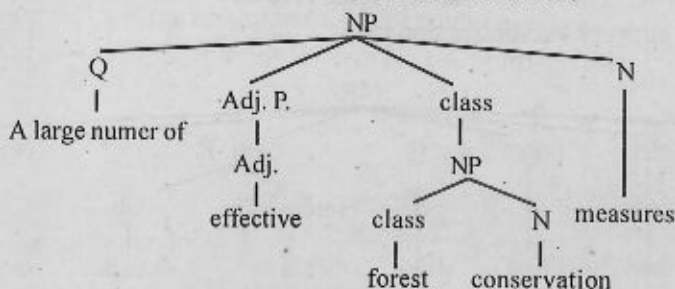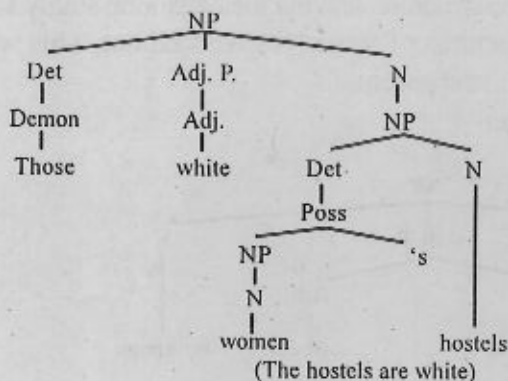1. Those wonderful Ionesco plays.
2. Many of your highly ambitious projects
3. Keats' principle of beauty in all things (ambiguous)
4. 50% of the Department's girl students
5. The last supper
6. A very young petroleum transfer engineer
7. Some of yours
8. A lot of them
9. UGC pay scales implementation issue
10. The queen of England's supporters

2.5.2 The noun phrase with prepositional phrase

As we have Noun Phrases in which the head noun has a numer of premodifiers, we can also have noun phrases with postmodifiers. The PSR for this NP structure is :

NP → NP PP
PP → Prep. NP

NP
NP — PP
Prep — NP
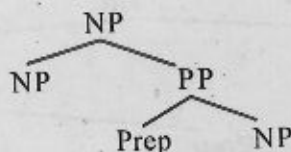
Take for example the following NPs.
1. The man in the university library

NP
NP — PP
Det: Art: The
N: man
PP: Prep: in
NP: Det: Art: the — class: university — N: library

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2. The paint on the door of the house in the village

```
                                    NP
         NP ───────────────────────────────────────────
      Det    N        PP
      Art    │     Prep                              NP
      The   paint    on                                 PP
                          NP                              NP
                       Det    N      Prep                    PP
                       Art    │      of      NP              NP
                       the   door          Det    N    Prep    NP
                                           Art    │     in   Det   N
                                           the  house       Art   │
                                                            the village
```
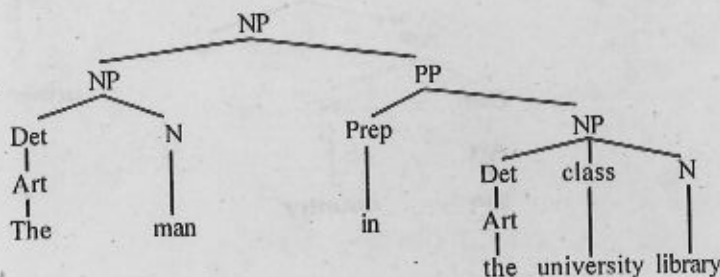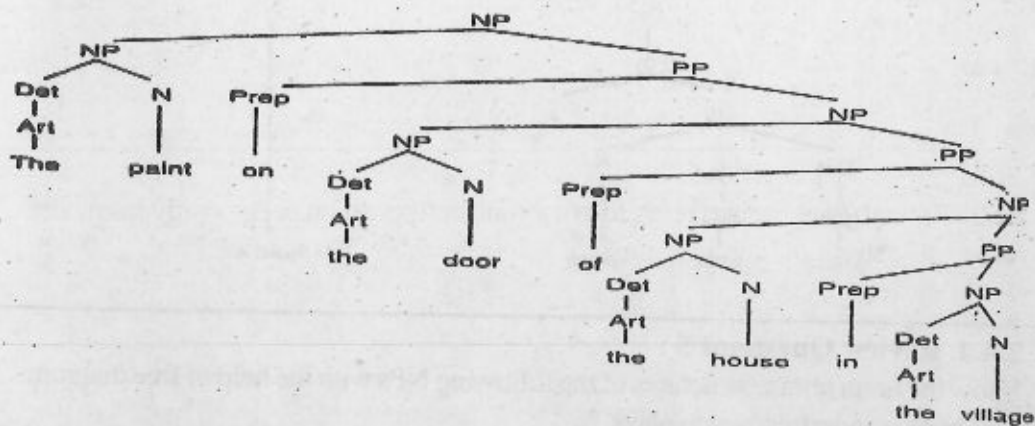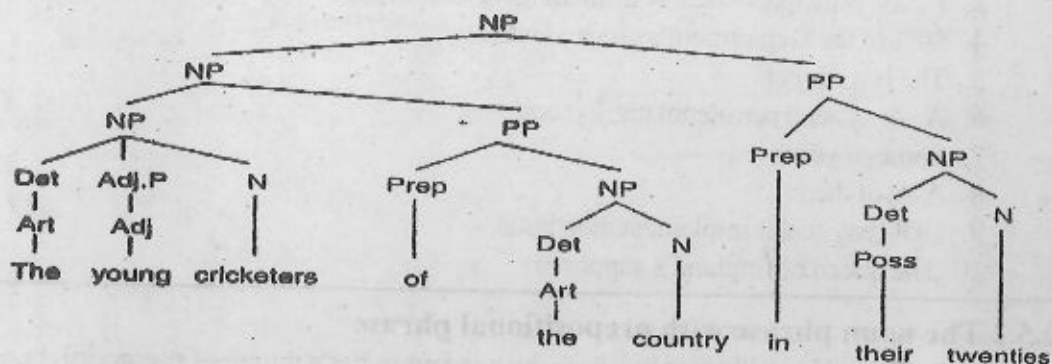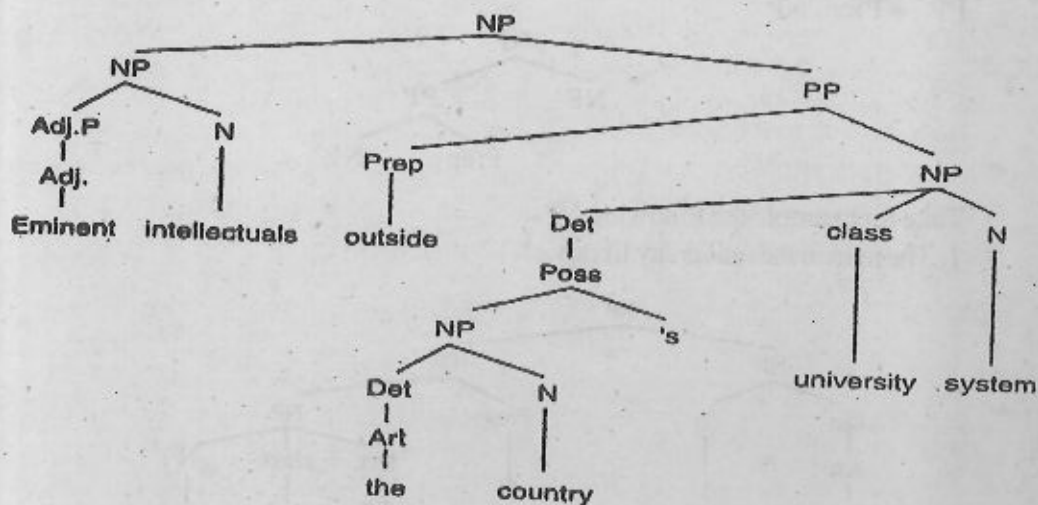
3. The young cricketers of the country in their twenties

```
                              NP
              NP ──────────────────────────────
         NP                          PP
    Det  Adj.P   N        Prep            NP            Prep      NP
    Art   Adj    │                    Det    N                 Det    N
    The  young cricketers   of       Art    │          in    Poss    │
                                     the  country           their twenties
```

4. Eminent intellectuals outside the country's university system

```
                                   NP
             NP ──────────────────────────────────────
         Adj.P    N                                    PP
          Adj.    │        Prep                              NP
        Eminent intellectuals  outside    Det               class    N
                                          Poss
                                      NP        's
                                   Det    N                university system
                                   Art    │
                                   the  country
```
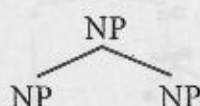
2.5.1. NP modified by another NP as a post modifier

This structure is the following.

NP → NP-NP

Here the NP at the right end functions as a post-modifier of the head NP at the left. This is what the traditional grammarians referred to as Noun in Apposition or Appositive structure. This has a very simple structural configuration. Look into the following examples :

1. Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India.
2. John, the Baptist.
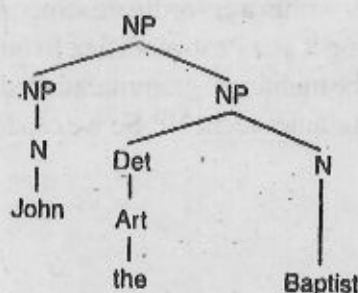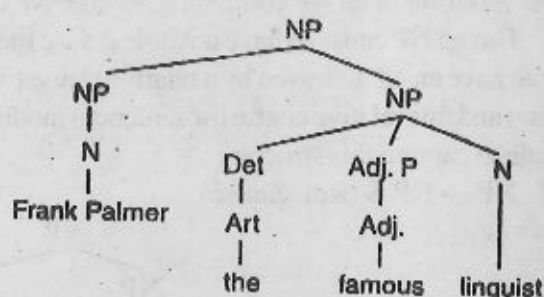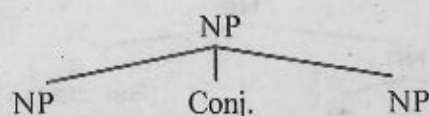3. Frank Palmer, the famous linguist.

(1)
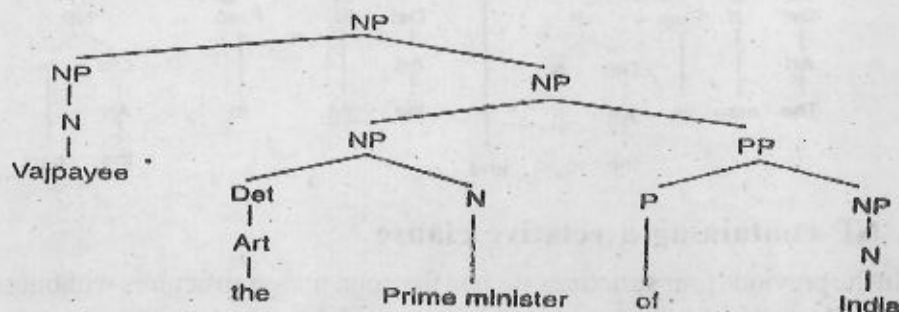
(2)

(3)

2.5.2 Two or more noun phrases conjoined

As a recursive property of language, two or more NPs can be conjoined with each other by a co-ordinating conjunction.
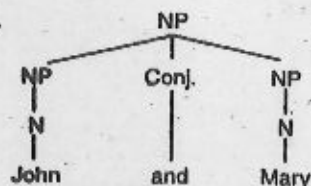
NP → NP - Conjunction - NP

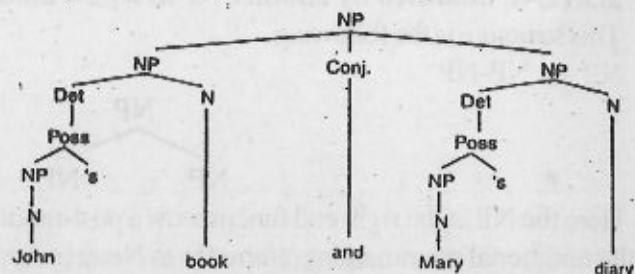Take, for instance, structures like :

1. John and Mary
2. John's book and Mary's diary
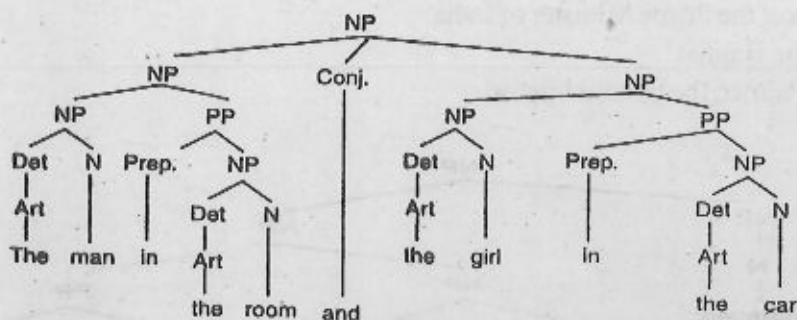3. The man in the room and the girl in the car

1.

```
           NP
    ┌───────┼───────┐
   NP     Conj.    NP
    │       │       │
    N       │       N
    │       │       │
  John     and    Mary
```

2

```
                      NP
        ┌──────────────┼──────────────┐
       NP            Conj.            NP
    ┌───┴───┐          │          ┌────┴────┐
   Det      N          │         Det        N
    │       │          │          │         │
   Poss   book        and       Poss      diary
  ┌─┴─┐                         ┌─┴─┐
 NP  's                        NP  's
  │                             │
  N                             N
  │                             │
 John                         Mary
```

3.

```
                               NP
          ┌─────────────────────┼─────────────────────┐
         NP                    Conj.                  NP
     ┌────┴────┐                 │            ┌────────┴────────┐
    NP        PP                 │           NP               PP
 ┌───┴──┐  ┌───┴───┐             │        ┌───┴──┐        ┌─────┴─────┐
Det  N  Prep.   NP               │       Det   N        Prep.        NP
 │   │   │    ┌──┴──┐            │        │    │          │        ┌──┴──┐
Art  │   │   Det    N           │       Art   │          │       Det    N
 │   │   │    │     │            │        │    │          │        │     │
The man  in  Art  room         and      the  girl       in       Art   car
              │                                                    │
             the                                                  the
```

2.5.3. NP containing a relative clause

In the previous four structures we had the noun phrase structures without any clause (or sentence). They all had only phrases within them modifying the NP either as a premodifier or as a post-modifier or an NP containing another NP or NPs within a co-ordinate structure.
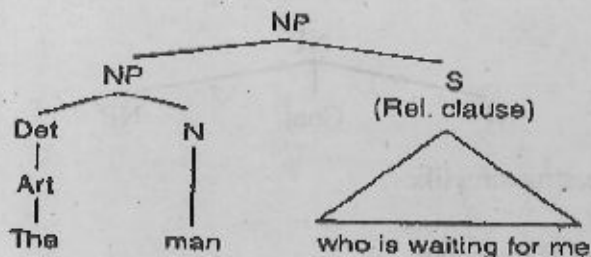
But an NP can also have a whole clause modifying it as a Post-modifier. In other words, we can have an NP followed by a relative clause (what the traditional grammars called Adjective clause) and this relative clause (or sentence) modifies this antecedent NP. So we can formulate a PS rule to capture this structure :

NP → NP-S (Rel. clause)

```
        NP
     ┌───┴───┐
    NP       S
         (Rel.clause)
```
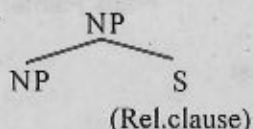
Let us examine the following structures.
1. The man who is waiting for me

```
                 NP
         ┌────────┴────────┐
        NP                  S
    ┌────┴────┐        (Rel. clause)
   Det        N           ╱────────╲
    │         │          ╱          ╲
   Art        │         ╱            ╲
    │         │        who is waiting for me
   The       man
```

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The details of the sentence (or the relative clause) we ignore now because the sentential structure we have not yet introduced to you. We will show the details of it later when we will be drawing deep structure tree diagrams for sentences. Until then just remember that the right hand side S in this structure is a relative clause which contains a relative pronoun (who in this case) and this clause modifies the NP occurring before it.

Let's work out a few more problems.

2. The example that you set.

```
                        NP
            NP                      S
       Det      N             (Rel. clause)
        |                          /\
       Art                        /  \
        |                        /____\
       The    example         that you set
```
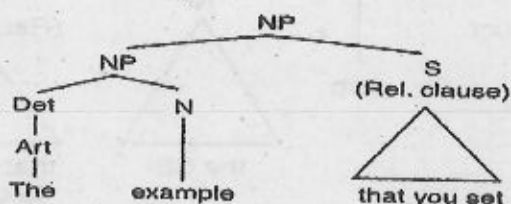
Sometimes we see the relative pronoun being deleted in the surface structure. This does not mean that the relative pronoun is not there ; it is very much there but it is not realized in the structure. So the structural configuration of an NP – 'The example you set' will be the same as above.

It is also possible to have a further reduced relative clause, as in the Noun phrase –

The man waiting for me.

The sentence in the deep structure is a fully developed relative clause / sentence but in its derivation from the deep to the surface structure the relative pronoun (who) along witht the verb be has been deleted by a transformational rule.

The man who is waiting for me.
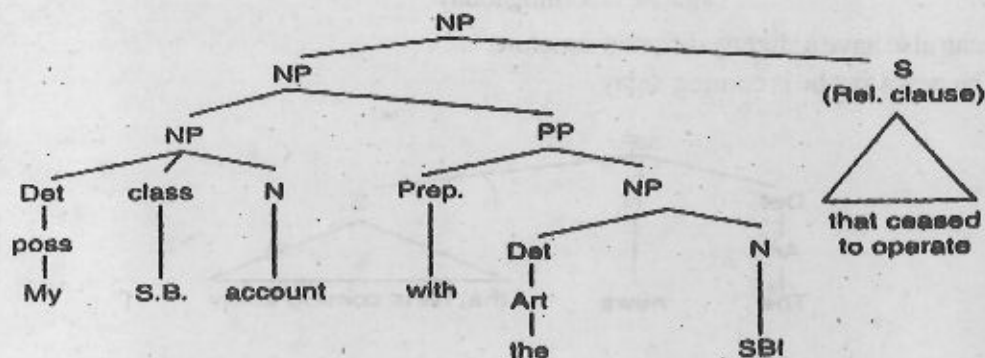
Rel. Pronoun + be deletion ⇒ The man waiting for me

So the structure remains the same as under (1) above.,

Please don't worry too much now. Your doubts will be clarified when we show you in detail the derivational history of this sentence as we proceed in this course on syntax.

While describing and explaining relative clause structures, please be sure of the scope of relativezation and make sure which antecedent NP (if there is more than one NP before the clause) the relative clause modifes.

See the following structure.

My SB account with the SBI that ceased to operate

```
                              NP
               NP                                  S
                                             (Rel. clause)
         NP              PP                       /\
   Det  class  N    Prep.      NP                /  \
    |                       Det      N          /____\
   poss                      |                that ceased
    |                       Art                to operate
    My  S.B. account  with   |
                            the         SBI
```

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Notice that the relative clause here does not modify the NP 'SBI' but the NP 'my SB Account with the SBI'. This is the reason why we can't have the following structure.
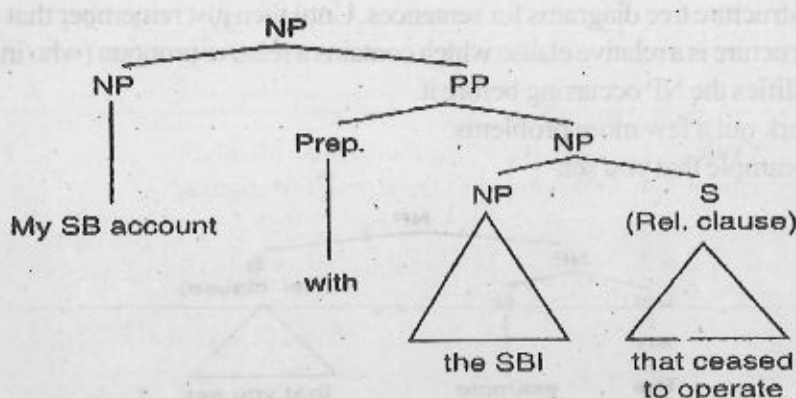
Here the meaning captured is the SBI ceased to operate though the intended meaning is my SB account ceased to operate.

(Please note that the asterisk (*) indicates an unacceptable form.)

2.5.4. NP as a complement clause

In a complement clause (or sentence) structure the NP itself is the complement clause unlike what we have seen in an NP structure having a relative clause. The difference between the two, therefore, is : A relative clause modifies an NP but a complement clause is an NP. The traditional grammarians called it (comp. clause) a noun clause because of this.
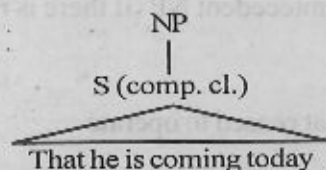
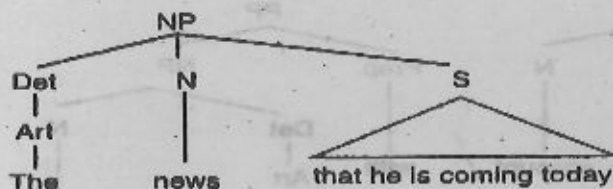This structure is represented by the PS Rule

NP → S
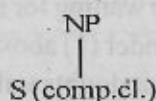
For example, let us examine the structure of the following NP.

1. That he is coming today

We can also have a slightly different structure.

2. The news that he is coming today

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Notice here that the complement clause is the NP itself –the news. That's why we have the structure NP → Det – N-S. So complement clause has two possible structures :

$$NP \rightarrow \begin{cases} Det \quad N\ S \\ S \end{cases} \quad \text{which means} \quad \boxed{NP \rightarrow (Det)\ (N)\ S}$$

You will have noticed that we used the rule $\boxed{NP \rightarrow NP\text{-}S}$ for relative clause which is different from the rule for the complement as mentioned already.

The complement clause structure has three manifestations.

(i) That clause (we have seen this already in the given example)

(ii) For .... to clause which in the surface structure has the appearance of an infinitival phrase.

3. For John to reach there

or, To reach there / To err

NP
|
S (compl. cl.)
For John to reach there

NP
|
S (compl. cl.)
To reach there

NP
|
S (compl. cl.)
To err
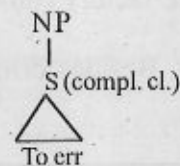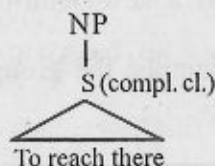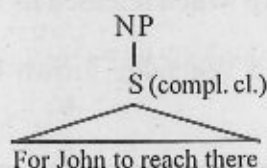
(iii) Poss ..... ing structure as in the NP below.

4. John's reaching there

NP
|
S (compl. cl.)
John's reaching there
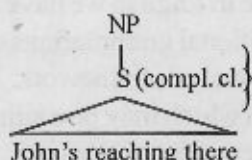
You will see later that all these three surface structure forms of the complement clause have the same deep structure configuration (as in 1 (or 2), 3 and 4) having completely reconstructed complement sentences. For capturing the NP structure we are only using a triangle to show the complement clause only; its details will be captured when we will work out deep structure tree diagrams for various sentences in complete detail.

Now, you must have an awareness of the six different types of noun phrases that we have shown you with illustrations. Remember that these six structures have the possibility of incorporating each other in the structure of complex NPs. This structuring and restructuring are the manifestations of linguistic creativity. And this is not a property of the NP alone, but a feature of human language.

2.5.5. Review Questions 6 :

Analyse the structures of the following noun phrases :

1. The man on the deck whose identity is not known :
2. The men in the village across the river behind the mountain :
3. All the four very good hits to the boundary :
4. The history of short story genre in Australia :
5. The Asian Team Championship to be held in China :
6. The vast fund of ill-will existing in the world at this moment :
7. The designer's modest beginning in the eighties with a handful of dresses :

8. The Nehru Gold Cup socer Tournament played at Kochi

9. Anita Desai's novel, Voices in the City

10. A servile existence within the rigid confines of a traditional Hindu family

Review Questions 7 :

Read the following passages and then capture the structures of the underlined noun phrases.

(i) To avoid a traffic bottleneck I turned around in the driveway of one of our town's
            1   2
banks. On my way I saw a prominently displayed sign. It read : "we wish you would use our
                                    3
bank as much as you use our driveway.
            4

(ii) Perhaps the most damning evidence of environmental contamination around
                                        1
the UCIL factory comes from Srishti, a New Delhi-based group which released its report
                                            2
recently. Besides drinking water sampls. the group analysed vegetable grown in the
                            3   4
area ....

2.6. Verb phrase

In the basic structure of a simple sentence in English we have a subject Noun phrase and a verb phrase. The verb phrase is what the traditional grammarians call predicate and even the structuralists also call it the predicate in their IC analysis framework. The verb phrase (known as the VP) contains an obligatory element verbal (which may be a single word unit or a group of items together called the verbal group) and other optional elements. These elements are, as we have seen in the basic sentence patterns, etc.), indirect object, direct object (the objects are noun phrases), adjuncts (which can be prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, etc.). We call all these elements optional because we can have a sentence without them and the only element without which we can't have a sentence or a VP is the verbal or the verbal group. For example, we can have a sentence – 'John died' the structure of which can be captured in the following way :

(i)
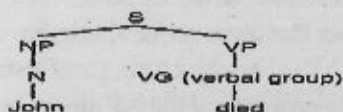
But if we add a few more adjuncts to it the VP will be expanded. Consider the following sentence.

i. (a) John died peacefully in his village home in Kerala in May.

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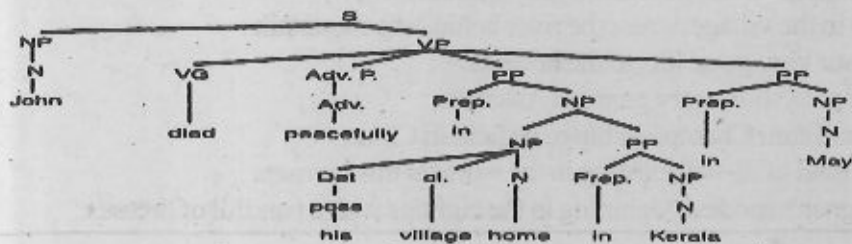
2.6.1 Structure of the VP

Before looking into the structure of the VP in some detail, let us look into the deep structure configuration of the VG first.

The VG is the verbal group because it may contain a number of auxiliary elements other than the main verb. The auxiliary verbs in English occur in the verbal group in a complex but systematic way. Consider the following structures :

(ii) They eat onions.

(iii) They can eat onions.

(iv) They have eaten onions.

(v) They are eating onions.

If you look into the verbal groups in these sentences you will easily identify 'eat' as the main verb in each of them. In (ii) eat is the verbal unit having only the main verb eat, in the next, can eat consists of the modal auxiliary can and the main verb, in (iv) have is the auxiliary which marks the perfective along with the past participle –en attached to the main verb eat and in (v) the auxiliary is the progressive be along with the present participle –ing attached to eat.

But in all these sentences Tense is also a very important element of the VG. It is marked in the VG and without it we cannot have a VG; it is an obligatory element in the VG, therefore in the VP and, therefore in the sentence. The point we are trying to make is that we cannot have a sentence without Tense.

In (i) Tense Present is marked on the main verb eat and because of the English subject-verb agreement rule it has no phonological realisation (you remember zero affixation?). In (iii) Tense is marked on the modal can (and you know that the modals are not inflected in Present tense form). In (iv) Tense is marked on have which is the perfective (auxiliary) and in (v) Tense is marked on be which is the Progressive (auxiliary) and here the realisation is in the form of are.

All these show that Tense is marked on the first element in the VG: See the following VG structures :

(vi) He writes.	:	He wrote.
(vii) He can write	:	He could write.
(viii) He has written	:	He had written.
(ix) He is writing	:	He was writing.

(x) He could have written.

(xi) He could have been writing.

(xii) He had een writing.

As Tense is marked on the first element in the VG, in interrogative sentences the tense carrying element undergoes Inversion. ('Inversion' means the Tense carrying element is shifted to the front across the subject NP.) For example, see the structures of the interrogative counterparts of these sentences.

vii (a) Can he write ?

viii (a) Has he written ?

ix (a) Is he writing ?

x (a) Could he have written ?

xi (a) Could he have been writing ?

xii (a) Had he been writing ?

(Some of these sentences you may not use in real contexts, but these are the appropriate grammatical forms for the invesion in these sentences).

It means, therefore, that the inversion rule operates very systematically in English in structures where we have one or more auxiliaries because the inversion process involves the first auxiliary element as it needs the Tense to be inverted. But what about sentence (vi) where there is no auxiliary and the Tense is marked on the main verb eat ? Will the main verb along with the Tense be inverted ?

vi (a) Writes he ?

We know this is not acceptable in English today though it was an acceptable form in Shakespeare's time : "Like you the play ?"

In modern English the inversion rule for such a sentence without auxiliary will invert only the Tense across the subject NP and then this Tense will be given a lexical support with 'do'. So vi(a) will have the structure : Does he write ?

T pres → He writes. → T pres. He write → do + T pres he write

As Tense can move either with auxiliaries or with the support of do (In negative sentences also we have the similar phenomenon : He does not write in place of* He writes not.), in modern grammar Tense is also captured as an auxiliary, as a separate movable item within the VG.. And the moment we say that Tense is auxiliary, we are saying that the auxiliary is an obligatory element of the verbal group. So the basic VG structure can be represented now as the following.
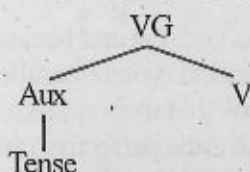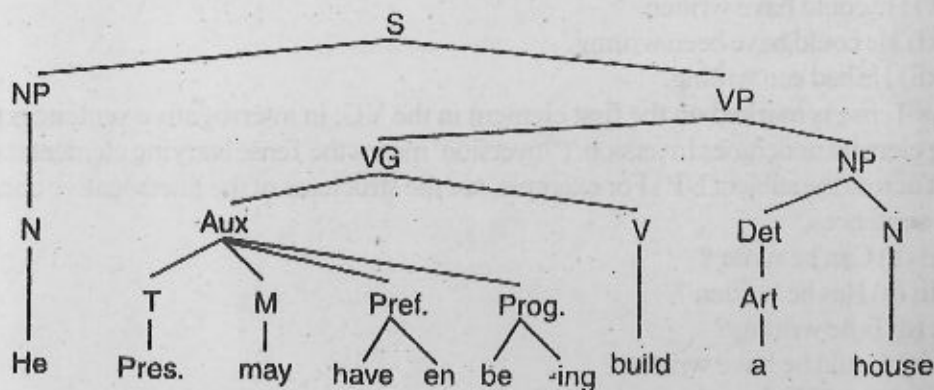

And the other auxiliary elements will occur as optional elements and their order of occurrence will be the following. See the PS rules below.
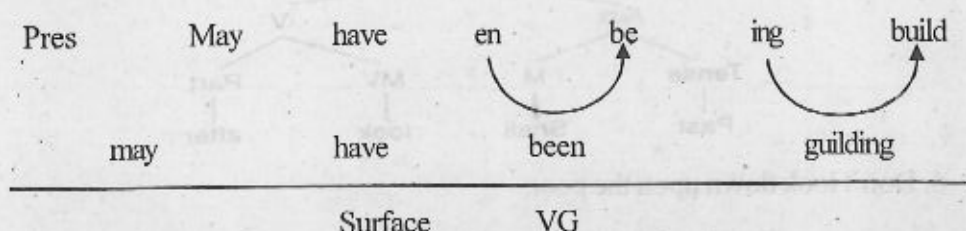
VG – Aux V.

Aux – Tense - (Modal) - (Pref.) - (Prog.)
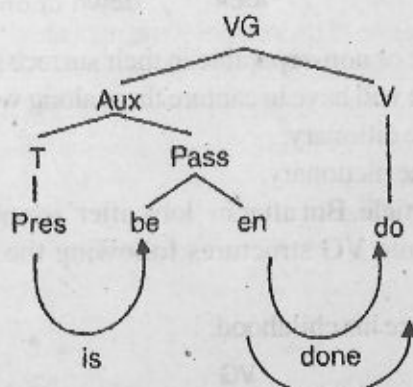
2. He may have been building a house.

This is a deep structure tree diagram. That is why the affixes are not in their surface structure slots.

In the derivation from the deep to the surface structure the affixes will be attached to their right hand side elements (stems/roots):

Pres	May	have	en	be	ing	build
may		have		been		guilding

Surface VG

When a passive is introduced in the structure we have the passive as another auxiliary element whose structural configuration is be-en :

3. It is done.

```
                    VG
             _____|____
           Aux                 V
         ___|___                |
        T       Pass            |
        |      __|__            |
      Pres    be    en         do
        |_____|  |_____|
            is            done
```
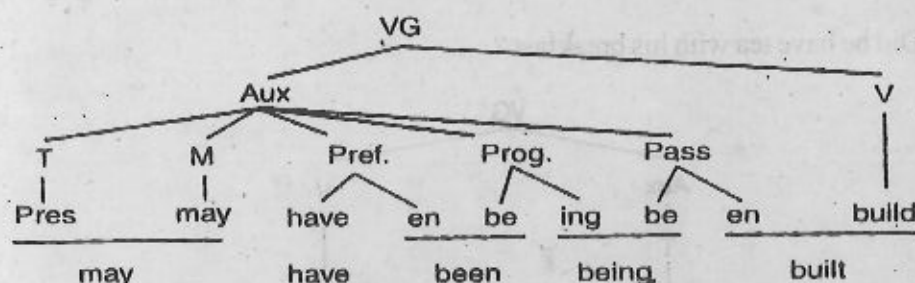
The fullest expansion of the auxiliary, thus, would be

Aux → Tense - Modal - Pref. - Prog. - Pass

Now look at the following sentence :

4. The house may have been being built.

```
                          VG
         _____|_____
        Aux                                          V
   _____|_____              |
  T    M    Pref.   Prog.    Pass                   |
  |    |    __|__   __|__    __|__                  |
Pres  may  have en  be ing  be  en               build
  |    |   |____|  |____|   |____|                  |
 may  may  have    been    being                  built
```

The verbal in the VG can also have element(s) other than the main verb. This happens in the case of the phrasal verbs which the traditional grammars refer to as the group verbs. In a phrasal verb we have the main verb and a particle. And the meaning of the phrasal verb may not necessarily be derived from the meanings of the main verb and the particle. For example, look after is a phrasal verb but its meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of look plus the meaning of after.

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5. You should look after your parents.

```
                        VG
             _____
           Aux                        V
      _____              _____
    Tense        M            MV           Part.
      |          |            |             |
    Past       Shall        look          after
```
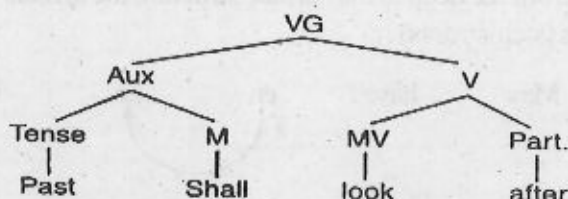
6. Don't look down upon the poor.

```
                    VG
          _____
        Aux                    V
         |              _____
         T            MV            Particle
         |            |                |
        Pres        look          down upon
```
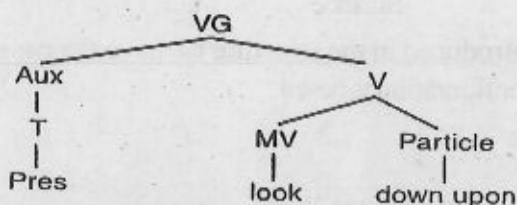
Particles can be separable or non-separable in their surface structure forms. But in their deep structure representation we will have to capture them along with the main verb.
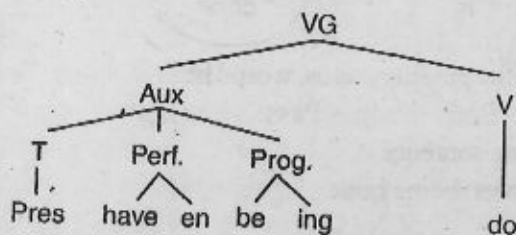
7. Look up the word in the ditionary.

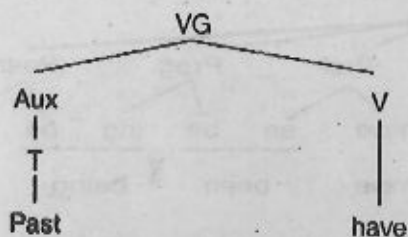or, Look the word up in the dictionary.

Here up is a separable particle. But after in 'look after' is a non-separable particle.

Let us now work out some VG structures following the framework we have been using:

8. He has been doing it since his childhood.

```
                      VG
           _____
          Aux                            V
      _____                    |
     T     Perf.    Prog.                 |
     |      /\       /\                    |
    Pres  have en   be ing                do
```

9. Did he have tea with his breakfast ?

```
                    VG
          _____
        Aux                    V
         |                     |
         T                     |
         |                     |
        Past                 have
```
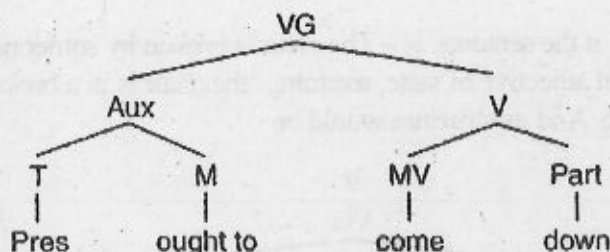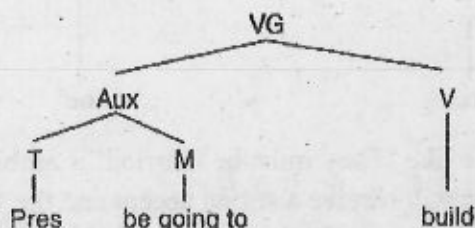
('do' is not shown here as it is not a lexical verb, but only a 'dummy' for carrying Tense after inversion.)
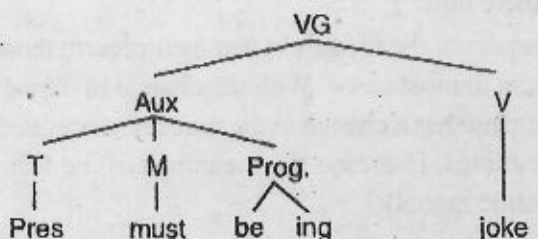
10. Prices ought to come down now.

```
                    VG
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        Aux                      V
     ┌───┴───┐              ┌─────┴─────┐
     T       M             MV          Part
     │       │              │            │
    Pres   ought to       come         down
```

11. He's going to build a house.

```
                    VG
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        Aux                      V
     ┌───┴───┐                   │
     T       M                 build
     │       │
    Pres   be going to
```

Here be going to is treated as a modal as go here is not a lexical verb and the meaning of the modal is 'planning' to build.

12. You must be joking.

```
                        VG
            ┌────────────┴────────────┐
          Aux                          V
     ┌──────┼──────┐                   │
     T      M    Prog.               joke
     │      │    ┌─┴─┐
    Pres  must  be  ing
```
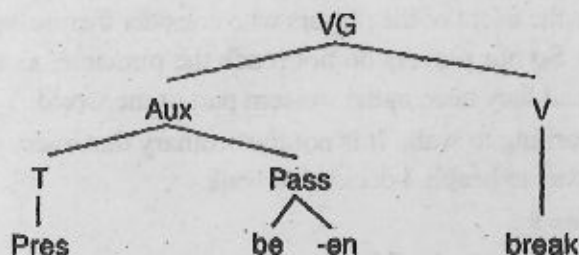
Sometimes the passive structure of a verb might be understood differently as verb be + Past participle adjective: In such cases we might get ambiguous structures.
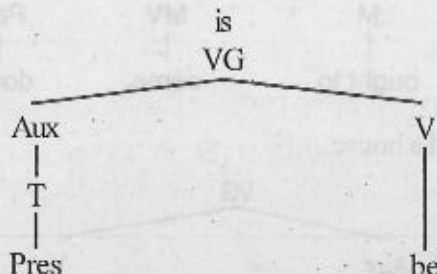
13. The chair is broken.

If we understand it as a passive sentence the VG would be is broken for which the structure is

```
                    VG
          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
        Aux                      V
     ┌───┴───┐                   │
     T      Pass               break
     │      ┌─┴─┐
    Pres   be  -en
```

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(Here the meaning of the sentence is – The chair is broken by someone.)

But if 'broken' is an adjective of state, meaning 'the chair is in a broken state', we have only is as the verbal group. And its structure would be

```
                        is
                        VG
              _____/    _____
           Aux                      V
            |                       |
            T                       |
            |                       |
          Pres                      be
```

14. Similarly, a sentence like 'They must be married' is ambiguous. In the sense of compulsion or obligation, must will receive a strong accent and the VG will have a passive configuration with marry as the main verb. But in the sense of a logical conclusion, must be will be the VG and married will be an Adj. coming from the VP.

Here is a list of important modals in English : Shall, will, may, can, must, have to, be going to, ought to, used to, need/need to, dare, let, let's, etc. Some linguists treat be to also as a modal (as in 'I am to ber there now'.)

One more important aspect of the modals is that their present tense and past tense forms are semantically very different in most cases. With the change of Tense the modality changes and very rarely the change of tense has a change in the time reference. Secondly, modals express a wide range of varying meanings. Examine the meanings of the following sentences with reference to the modal (the same modal).

15. It will rain today. (Simple futurity)

16. Pigs will eat anything. (empty use)

17. She will sit there for hours doing nothing. (habitual/characteristic use)

18. Examiners will please collect their remuneration. (request)

19. He will leave today. (insistence, with a strong accent on it.).

2.6.2 Review Questions 8 :

Analyse the structure of the verbal groups in the following passages :

(i) Publicity spoils the talent of the players who consider themselves much stronger than what they actually are. So our players do not reach the pinnacle, as they should be. They would have reached it had they been in the western part of the world.

(ii) I have been learning to walk. It is not the ordinary that every child does. What I'm learning is to walk my way to health. I decided to walk.

Review Questions 9 :

Analyse the verbal groups in the following sentences :

1. Holders of complimentary tickets will not have to be kept waiting.

---

2. The main force of the enemy seemed to be withdrawing.

3. People from all parts of the country were expected to attend the funeral.

4. The cargo in the ship's hold went on burning.

5. Those interested ought not to attend the meeting.

6. We were looking forward to the party so eagerly.

7. He arranged with John for Mary to come at once.

8. He was reminded of the agreement.

9. Good use has been made of the house.

10. The building was not being built at that time.

11. The army was strongly opposed to the new system.

12. All countries might soon be clamouring for such a leader.

13. Workers will have to fight for their rights.

14. Let's do it then.

15. Don't get involved in it.

2.7. Structure of the sentence

Now that we have looked into the structure of some major constituents of a sentential configuration. Let us take into consideration the structural configuration of the 'sentence'. First, we will look into the interrelation between the constituents of the sentence as they are intuitively understood and interpreted by the native speakers (i.e. we will capture their hierarchical and linear interrelations at the level of the deep structure with the help of tree diagrams) and then try to examine how this deep structure string is mapped on to its corresponding surface structure by the application of Transformational rules. And this we will do within the framework of the standard Theory or, more precisely, the Chomskyan model proposed in 1965 in his Aspects.

In 1965 Chomsky moved away from his earlier model of 1957 which was a toy model to substantiate his arguments in favour of a transformational generative model of grammar. In 1965 he had a 'generalised phrase marker' which explained and improved on many of his earlier assumptions. It tries to show the sentential configuration as it is interpreted by the native speakers. For example, if a sentence has two meanings, the framework will give us two different deep structure phrase markers to capture the two meanings and then will show how two different sets of transformations will apply on these two phrase markers to arrive at the same surface sentence. In other words, it will capture and resolve ambiguity or many other kinds of structural complexity. Let us examine the following to explicate our point.
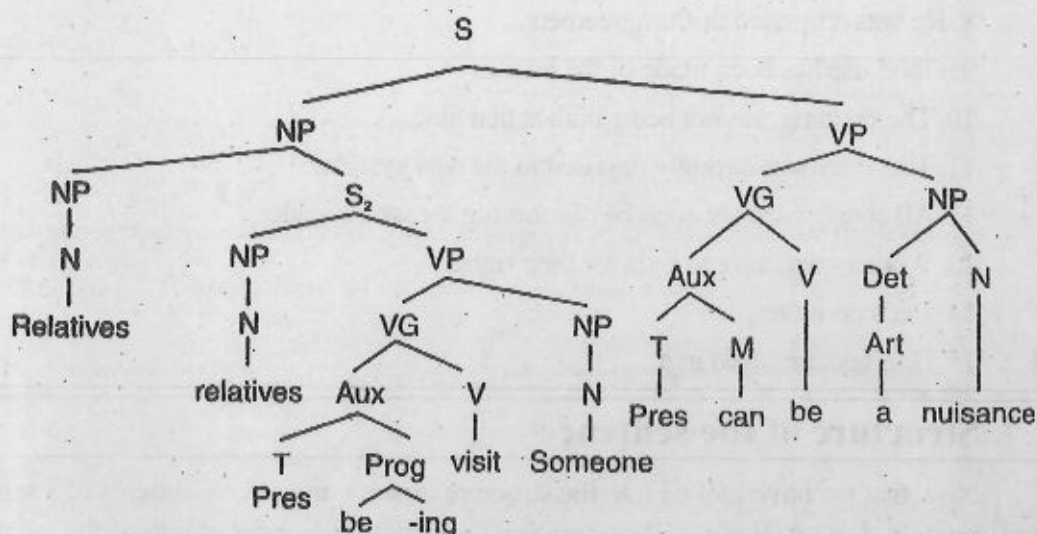
1. Visiting relatives can be a nuisance.

This is an ambiguous sentence which has two different meanings.

M_1 (The) visiting relatives can be a nuisance.

M_2 Visiting (the) relatives can be a nuisance.

These two meanings are derived from two different ways of understanding the structure. For M_1 the deep structure would be the following.

```
                                    S
                _____|_____
               NP                                         VP
        _____|_____                           _____|_____
       NP            S₂                           VG            NP
       |       _____|_____                    __|__         __|__
       N      NP            VP                  Aux    V     Det    N
       |      |       _____|_____             |     |      |     |
   Relatives  N      VG            NP            T     M     Art    |
              |    __|__           |             |     |      |     |
          relatives Aux  V         N            Pres  can    be  a  nuisance
                   __|__  |        |
                  T  Prog visit  Someone
                  |   |
                Pres  __|__
                     be   -ing
```

On this deep structure the T-rule apply in the following way to generate the surface sentence – 'visiting relatives can be a nuisance'.

D. structure : Relatives (relatives pres be ing visit someone) pres can be a nuisance.

TR_1. Relative

Pronoun substitution ⇒ Relatives (who pres be ing visit someone) pres can be a nuisance.
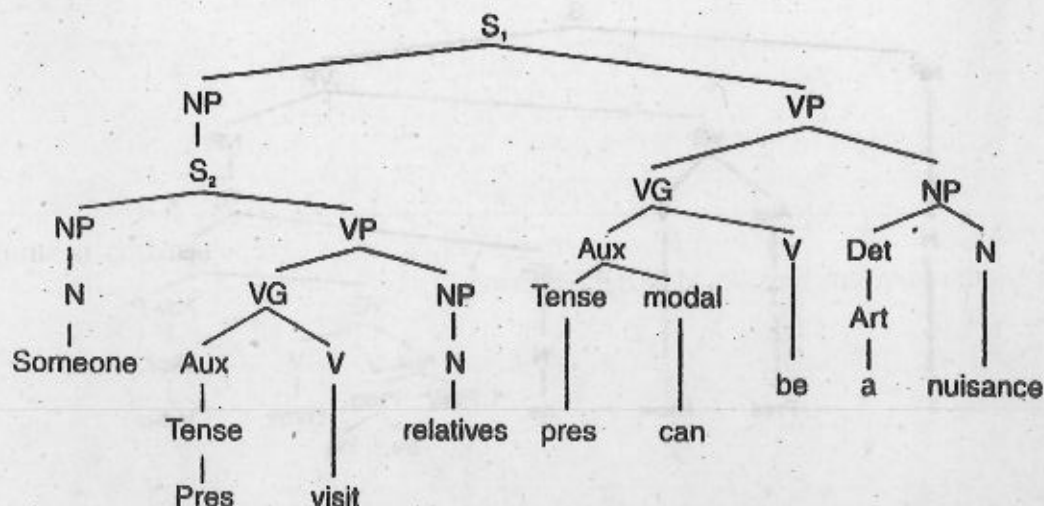
Tr 2. Rel. Pronoun + be deletion ⇒ Relatives (–ing visit someone) pres can be a nuisance.

Tr 3. Someone deletion ⇒ Relatives (-ing visit) pres. can be a nuisance.

Tr 4. Rel. cl. (Adjective) Fronting ⇒ (-ing visit) relatives pres. can be a nuisance.

Tr 5. Affix switch ⇒ $\dfrac{\text{visit–ing}}{\text{visiting}}$ relatives $\dfrac{\text{can–pres}}{\text{can}}$ be a nuisance.

On the other hand, the second meaning (M_2) can be derived from the following deep structure of the same sentence :

```
                                    S₁
                    ┌───────────────┴───────────────────┐
                   NP                                    VP
                    │                         ┌──────────┴──────────┐
                   S₂                         VG                    NP
         ┌──────────┴──────────┐      ┌───────┴────┐        ┌───────┴───────┐
        NP                    VP     Aux           V        Det              N
         │            ┌────────┴──┐  ┌──┴───┐      │         │
         N           VG          NP Tense  modal   be       Art
         │        ┌───┴───┐       │   │      │               │
      Someone    Aux      V       N  pres   can     a              nuisance
                  │       │        │
                Tense   visit  relatives
                  │
                 Pres
```

On this deep structure the following T-rules apply to derive the surface sentence.

Deep Str : (Someone pres. visit relatives) pres. can be a nuisance TR₁ Complementizer.

Placement (Poss-ing) ⇒ (Someone – Poss ing visit relatives) Pres. can be a nuisance TR₂ someone (+ Poss) deletion⇒ (ing vist relatives) Pres. can be a nuisance

TR₃ Affix switch ⇒ $\dfrac{\text{visit–ing}}{\text{visiting}}$ relatives $\dfrac{\text{can–pres}}{\text{can}}$ be a nuisance.

Notice that in the deep structure for meaning 1 we have a relative clause configuration in which relatives is the subject NP for the verb visit whereas in the structure for M₂ we find a complement clause configuration in which relatives is the object NP for the verb visit. This explains the ambiguity. And after the ambiguity is captured at the deep structure level the application of the Transformational rules (which are different) ultimately map these two different deep structures on to the same surface sentence – 'Visiting relatives can be a nuisance'.

This model, therefore, becomes an 'externalization' of native speaker's 'competence'. In other words, the grammar structurally interprets the syntactic interrelations the way the native speaker does it.

Here are some examples worked out for you to look into the deep structures of sentences.
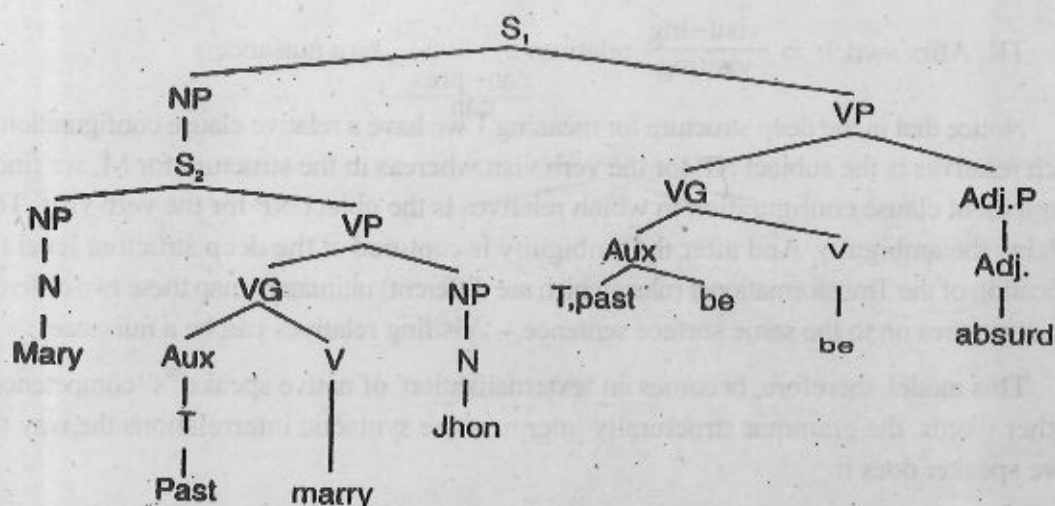
(i) Complement clauses :
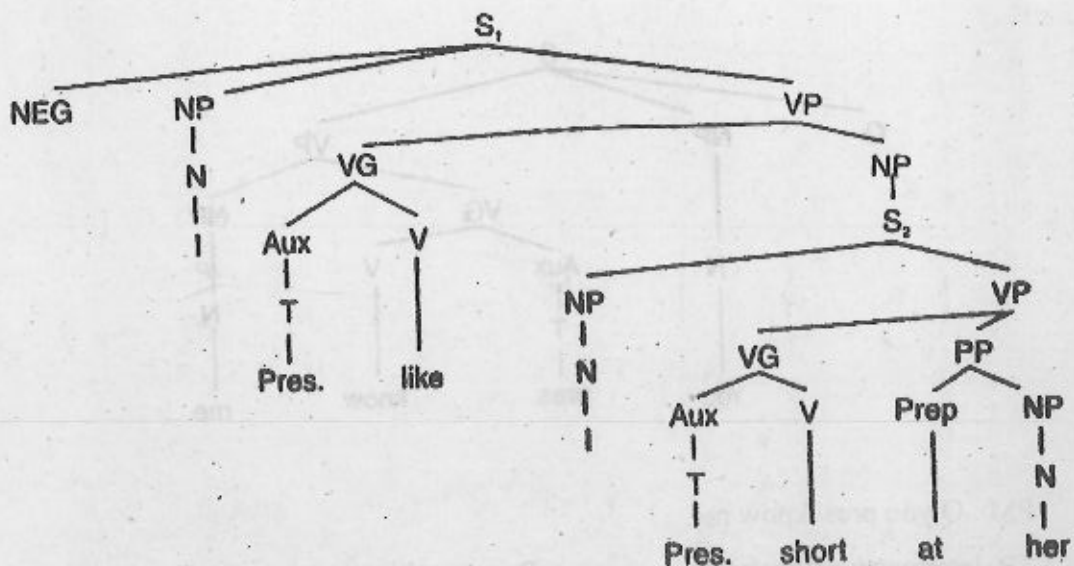
1. I know that he is coming today.

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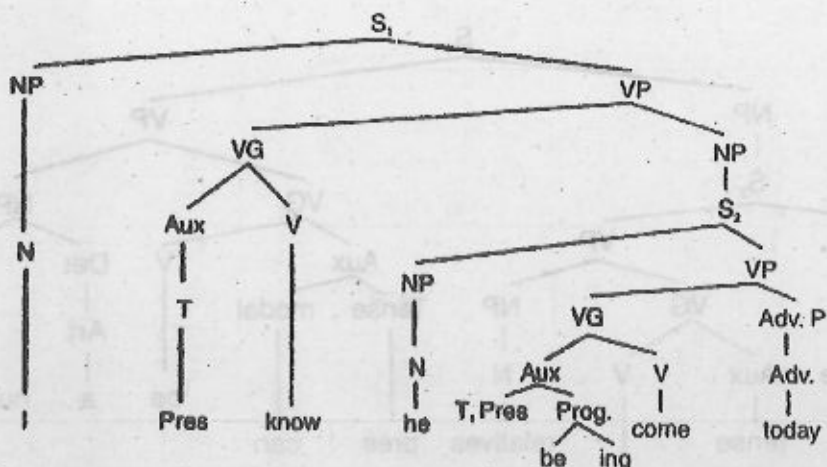
On this deep structure complementizer placement rule will place that complementizer before the complement clause (S_2) and then the Affix switch rule will apply.

2: For Mary to marry John was asurd.

On this deep structure phrase marker complementized placement rule will place for...to complementizer in the p.m. and then the affix switch rule will apply.
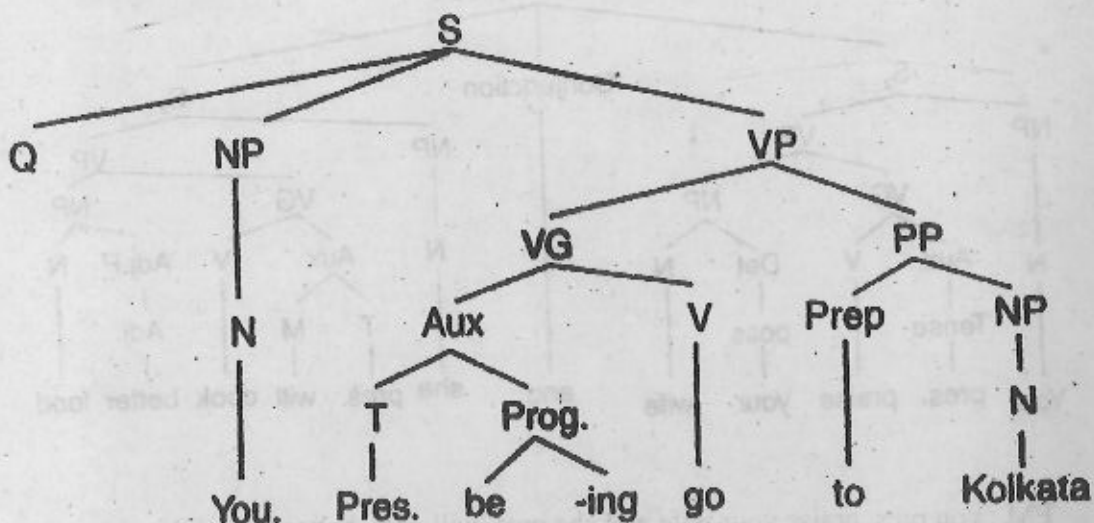
3. I don't like shouting at her.

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S₁ tree diagram with nodes:

NEG   NP   VP
N   VG   NP / S₂
I   Aux V   VP
T   Pres. like   NP / VG / PP
N   Aux   V   Prep   NP
I   T   Pres.   short   at   N
her

Neg I pres. like (I pres. shout at her)

On this deep structure the complementizer Poss.........ing will be placed in the S₂ and other T-rules including rules of negation will apply to derive the surface sentence.

(ii) Interrogative structures :

4. Are you going to Kolkata ?

S tree diagram with nodes:

Q   NP   VP
N   VG   PP
Aux   V   Prep   NP
T   Prog.   N
You.   Pres.   be   -ing   go   to   Kolkata

Here the T-rules for interrogation will apply first which will invert Tense Pres along with the aux be across the object NP you. And then the affix switch rule will apply to derive the surface form of the sentence.

5. Do you know me ?

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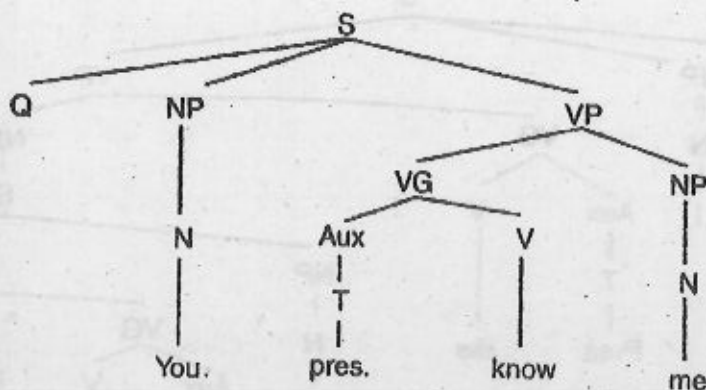
PM : Q you pres. know me

TR$_I$ Interrogative (Inversion)	$\Rightarrow$	Pres. you know me.
TR$_{II}$ Do-support	$\Rightarrow$	Pres. do you know me
TR$_{III}$ Affix Switch	$\Rightarrow$	$\dfrac{\text{Do - pres.}}{\text{Do}}$ you know me

(iii) The structure of co-ordination :

6. Praise your wife and she will cook better food.
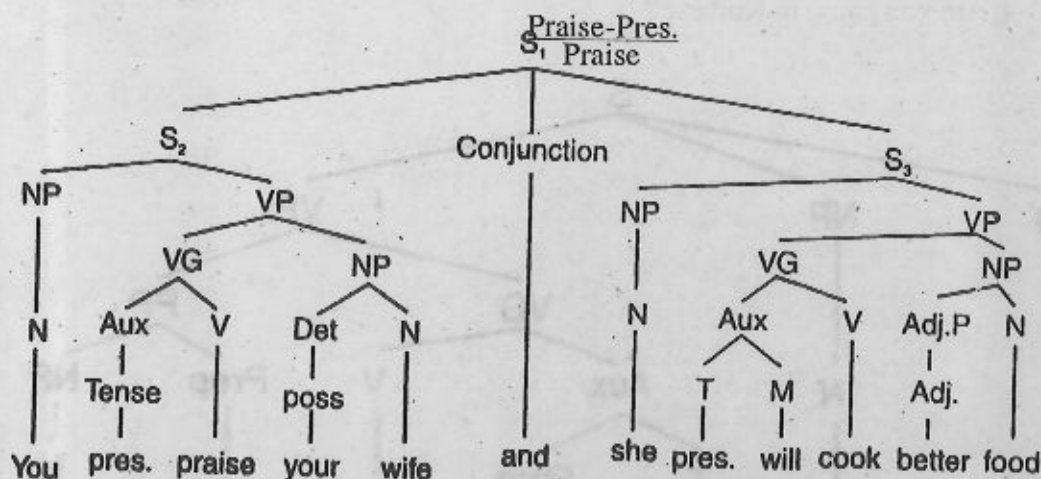
PM : you pres. praise your wife and she pres. will cook better food TRI.

Pronoun del $\Rightarrow$ Pres. praise your wife and she pres. will cook better food.

Affix Switch   your wife and she   cook better food.

(iv) Complex sentence with adverbial clause :

7. If you work hard you will pass the examination.

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S₁

Adv (Cond.)   S₂

S₃

NP	VP		NP	VP	
	VG	Adv. P		VG	NP
N	Aux	V	N	Aux	V	Det	N
	T		Adv.		T	M		Art	
You	pres.	work	hard	you	pres.	will	Pass	the	exam
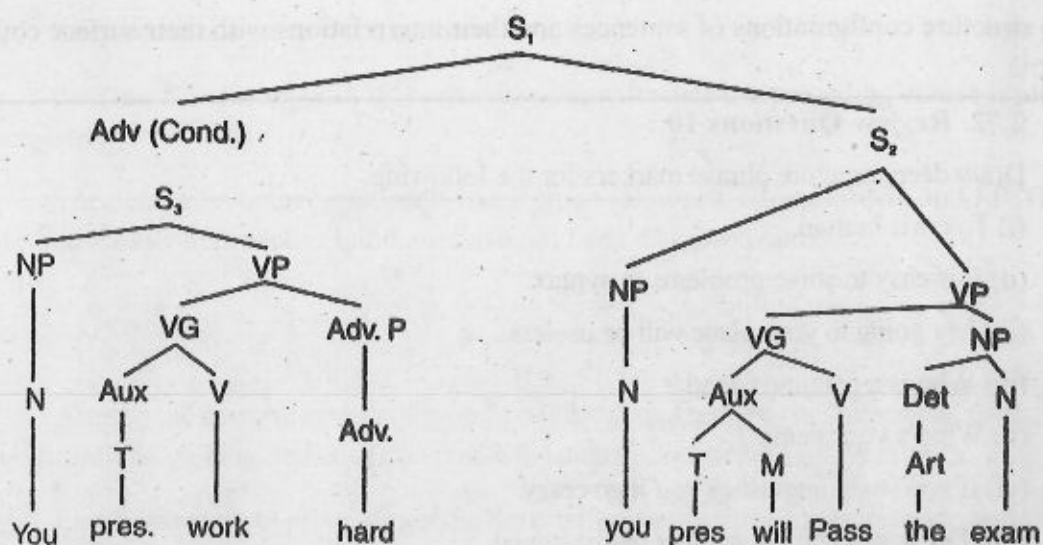
A T-rule will place the conditional marker if at the beginning of the adverbial clause (S₃) and then the affix switch rule will apply to generate the surface sentence.

In the 1965 model, therefore, Chomsky gave us a detailed description of the base component with the introduction of a number of new sets of rules, like strict subcategorization rules which will apply after the PS rules (PS rules have also been modified now), selectional restriction rules and lexical insertion rules. These rules he had to postulate in view of the emerging needs for a more and more adequate and sophisticated model of linguistic description. As a result, the grammar became more and more complex. This process of modification continued through the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties.

As we said earlier, the history of any science is a history of successive modifications. And linguistics is no exception. Transformational theory in the 1990s has moved far ahead of the standard Theory formulations of the 1960s. But, for an introductory course on modern syntax this standard theory framework is a very relevant and useful framework. This gives you the insights for looking into sentence structures in a way which is never found in the earlier models. As students of English syntax you now have the awareness about the 'nuts and bolts' of the language. After this introductory course is completed you will learn more and more about the later developments in the field within the Chomskyan paradigm.

2.71. Summary : In this unit on English Syntax we have tried to examine (i) the inadequacies of the traditional framework, (ii) the structuralist model of Immediate Constituent Analysis and how far or whether it is a better substitute for the traditional grammar, (iii) the intrinsic limitations of the structuralist model and (iv) the Transformational Generative model of grammar. Within the TG framework we concentrated on the standard Theory model for practical reasons. We have shown how this model operates in capturing

deep structure configurations of sentences and their interrelations with their surface counterparts.

2.72. Review Questions 10 :

Draw deep structure phrase markers for the following.

(i) To err is human.

(ii) It is easy to solve problems in syntax.

(iii) My going to your place will be useless.

(iv) Who is a genuine friend ?

(v) What's your name ?

(vi) If you study linguistics you'll go crazy.

(vii) Drink wet cement and get really stoned.

2.8. Books Recommended

1. Chomsky, N. (1957) : *Syntactic Structures,* Mouton and Co., The Hague.

2. (1965) : *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass.

3. Verma, S. K. And N. Krishnaswamy (1989) : *Modern Linguistics,* Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Unit 1 □ Language in Use

Structure

1.0 Objectives :

After going through this module, you will become familiar with

*   various aspects of language use and perspectives for such analysis

*   the concept of stylistics and

*   some rhetorical devices and their patterning within a text.

1.1. Introduction :

Language is an indispensible feature of human life. In our everyday life, we use language for getting things done, for social interaction, for communicating, for gathering knowledge and information, for speculating, for solving problems and for other activities. It is such an integral part of our existence that we often take it for granted.

But it is possible to study systematically such uses of language. In the earlier modules you may have seen how language operates as a 'system'. In this module you will find out how such a system operates as a code for conveying messages.

1.1.1. The 'reach' of English :

English, originally the language of England, is today no longer confined to the country of its origin. In fact, it is referred to as a "world language". Let us see what this phrase means.

First of all, geographically, English is spread all over the world. It is used in both the hemispheres, and in all the continents. English is spoken as a first language (= native variety or mother tongue) in a large number of countries including Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, South Africa and U.S.A. Further, it is used as a second language (= non-native variety) in about 75 countries including Bangladesh, India, Malayasia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka. In countries like China, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, West Germany and other European countries, English has the status of a ":foreign language". As a consequence, an estimated number of about 1500 million people are exposed to English in one way or another. This "spread" of English across geographical, linguistic, political and socio-cultural bounderies has led to a complex situation where its function and use vary along multiple dimensions.

Exploratory Questions :

1. a) What is a 'first' language ?

   b) Can you think of another name for it ?

   c) Do you have a first language ?

   d) If yes, what is it ?

2. a) What is a "second" language ?

   b) Do you have a second language ?

   c) If yes, name that language.

1.1.2. Native and non-native varieties of English :

In this section we will try to look at some of these factors in some detail.

A 'first language' [= a native variety] in respect to a particular person is usually the language he or she learns at home and uses in the family and at home. It is also referred to as the mother tongue, L_1, the native or source language of that person. In monolingual countries like England or Germany, the first language is also the official language and the language of education, administration, and everyday use. In countires where-English is used as a first language, we find a native variety of English.

Any language learnt in addition to the first language is sometimes referred to as a second language or an additional language. Depending on the sequence of learning, it is possible to speak of third or fourth languages. However, the term "second language" has taken on another dimension as well. It is now widely accepted that a non-native language learnt and used in the sociolinguistic context of a nation has the status of a second language in that country. In this sense English is a second language in India. The focus for indentification here is not on personal use as such, but on use in a wider context. For example, an Indian may use Spanish in India and this may be his or her second language, but Spanish is not used as a second language in India.

It was Professor Braj B. Kachru, an eminent applied linguist of international repute, who first characterized a second language in this way. According to him, such use constitutes an "institutionalized" variety the main characteristics of this variety or second language are the following :

i) It has an extended range of uses within the country where it is used.

ii) It has an extended register and style range (these tems will be explained later on)

iii) In this variety a process of nativization of the registers and styles has taken place, both in formal and contextual terms.

iv) A body of nativized English literature has developed [Also see 1.1.3]

In contrast, a foreign language is one which is used with reference to a community outside national boundaries. It has a highly restricted functional range in specific contexts, for example, in tourism, commerce and international transactions. In this sense, Japanese, French, German, Spanish and Chinese are foreign languages in India.

Prof. Kachru (1983) further points out that an 'institutionalized' variety (= a second language) always begins its life as a 'performance' variety (= a foreign language). It then acquires various features which gives it a different status. The main features of an institutionalized variety seem to be the following :

*   the length of time in use

*   the extension of its use

*   the emotional attachment of the users with this variety

*   functional importance

*   sociolinguistic status

Exploratory Questions :

3. i)   Do the five features of an "institutionalized" variety apply to English in India ?

     ii)   Consider each feature separately.

     iii)   In your view is English in India a second language or a foreign language ?

1.1.3.   English in India :

English in India then has the status of a 'second' language not because a large number of people learn it after they learn their mother tongues, but because it operates within the country in a certain way.

First of all, English has been in existence in India for more than 200 years. In the beginning its use was restricted to specific contexts, but gradually the range of use was extended. It is

now used for amny purposes and in various contexts within the country (some of these will be explained in the next sub-section, 1.1.4)

Some of these functions and uses have assumed a great significance in the day-to-day lives of a section of the people. As a consequence, this section has developed an emotional attachment to the language. In the process, English has achieved a socio-cultural status, so that its acquisition and use is looked upon favourably.

1.1.4. The uses of English in India :

For what purpose or purposes is English used in India ? All uses of language within a society take place within a context. This context of situation is an amalgam of a large number of factors – linguistic, social, political, geographical and economic. The framework of sociological context helps us to understand the functional uses (= the work it does) of English in a second language situation. B. B. Kachru suggests that in India, indeed in the whole of South Asia, English is used for four broad categories of functions, the instrumental, the regulative, the interpersonal, and the imaginative / innovative.

The instrumental function : English is used as a means for achieving something. This function is performed by English when it is used as a medium of instruction and learning in the education system of a country. Countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan illustrate the instrumental function of English.

The regulative function : This function is involved in contexts where a language is used to regulate conduct. The use of English in administration and in the legal system are examples of such a function.

The interpersonal function : Such a function operates in two ways, First of all, English provides a link between speakers of mutually unitelligible languages within a country. For instance, English acts as a link between speakers of Hindi and Tamil, Bangla and Malayalam, Gujrati and Mizo and so on. Secondly, at a personal level, English provides a 'code' which symbolizes "modennization" and "elitism".

The imaginative / innovative function :

This function refers to the use of English in various literary genres. Non-native users of English have shown great creativity in this function. They hae deftly used English in "un-English" contexts. The growing body of commonwealth literature and Indian writers writing in English is a testimony to this phenomenon. You are perhaps already familiar with the works of writers like R. K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Amitava Chowdhury,

Kunal Basu, Jhumpa Lahiri, Vikram Seth and many others, who have used English for this creative function.

Exploratory Questions :

4.   Within which of the four functions will you include Newspapers published in English ? Give reasons for your answer.

1.1.5   Contexts of Use :

In what contexts or situations is English used in India ? This of course is related to the four functions mentioned in the previous subsection 1.1.4. If we look around us and consider the situations where English is usually employed in India, we can identify at least some of the following :

advertisements	education
newspaper	legal transactions
official use	government
administration	medical practice
social interaction	science and technology
business and commerce	e-mail
letters	literature

This is not an exhaustive list. Can you think of some more contexts in which English is used ?

Arrange the uses already mentioned under the four functions mentioned.

1.1.6.   The position of English in India :

During the colonial rule, English was learnt by a relatively small number of people, and such people were routinely absorbed in the administrative and colonial machinery of the empire. Since Independence, the situation has changed somewhat. The rapid spread of education has exposed many more people to English. Immediately after Independance, English was declared to be the associate official language of India. It was envisaged that after 15 years or so, its use in education and administration will be discontinued and English will remain a "library" language, used for gathering knowledge and information. For various reasons, this has not happened. English continueds to be used in administration, business, the legal system,

medical education, science and technology, higher education, newspaper, TV, radio, advertisements and so on. Some states like Nagaland have adopted English as the State language. Other states teach English through the school system. The recent trend of using computers and accessing the internet suggests that more people will need to use English in the coming years.

1.2. Varieties of Language and Languages Use (variations in language) :

A language in not a single uniform or monolithic entity. Within any language there are variations of different kinds. All these variations together make up a language. In this section we will consider the various parameters or dimensions along which languages vary, with special reference to English.

1.2.1. Temporal Variations :

It is a characteristic of all natural languages that they change with time. The change is slow and gradual and almost unnoticeable at the time of change. But within a span of 25 or 30 years, the changes can be detected. These changes take place in the areas of pronounciation, vocabulary, grammar and meaning. Over a period of hundred years or more, such changes are clearly noticeable. For example, English at the time of King Alfred is very different from the English used by Chaucer. Shakespeare's English is different from that of Chaucer, and modern English differs in many ways from Shakespeare's English. So we can say that language varies with time, or time is a parameter along which language varies.

1.2.2. Geographical variation :

English used in America and the English spoken in England are not the same. English spoken in Australia differs from both of these. Even within England, the English spoken in the South of England differs from that spoken in the Midlands or the north of England. These are regional or geographical variations and are known as dialects.

Can you think of regional variations for Bangla and Hindi ?

1.2.3. Standard vs non-standard variation :

Of the many regional varieties found in a language, one usually comes to have more prestige and is utilised for providing education, writing text and other books, publishing newspapers, for broadcasting on T.V. and radio and creating literature. Such a variety is referred to as the Standard variety. The other regional varieties are then referred to as non-standard varieties. Within English, the English used in and around London, the capital of England, developed to become the Standard. There may, however, be more than one standard form for the spoken language. So, there is only one standard variety for written English all over the world, but there are several standard varieties of spoken English : British, Scottish, American, Australian and so on.

Exploratory Questions :

5.   Is there a standard variety for Bangla ?

6.   If yes, is there a name for it ? What is this name ?

1.2.4. Social or Class Variation :

In England, the variety spoken by the aristrocratic or upper class English men and women differs from that spoken by the members of the working class and cuts across regional distinctions. R. P. or the southern educated variety of English is one such example. The use of this variety (sometimes referred to as BBC English) marks its speaker as belonging to an educated upper class stratum of society.

1.2.5. Caste Variation :

Some languages show a distinction according to caste. For example, the variety of Tamil spoken by Brahmins is distinct from that used by non-Brahmins. Since among native speakers of English there is no caste system, English does not have this variation.

1.2.6. Gender Variation :

In some communities the male members use a variety not used by the females. In reverse, in the Sylhet district of Bangladesh, we find the women using Naggar, a script not used by men. In English, such gender distinction has been found to operate in the range of adjectives used by men and women.

1.2.7. Pidgins and Creoles :

A pidgin is something referred to as a trade or market language. This is a reference to the origin and context of use of this variety. When two linguistic communities come in contact in circumstances where there is a limited relationship, pidgin languages evolve. Such circumstances are typically a market place or a master-slave relation in a plantation. Neither of the groups speak the other's language. The groups continue to speak their own language inside their own communities and learn the pidgin within the contact situation. Hence a pidgin in not a native language of either group.

In form, a pidgin involves the mixture of two or more languages. Sometimes the grammatical system is based more or less on one language and the vocabulary is largely taken from another. In all cases, the grammar is simplified, that is, many features of the base language are dropped.

Pidgins have evolved in many parts of the world, from trade and colonizing endeavours. Some of these are Nigerian Pidgin English, Papuan Pidgin English, Vietnamese Pidgin French, New Guinea Pidgin German, Kenya Pidgin Swahili and many others. The names indicate which language started the process of pidginization. To the writer's knowledge two pidgin varieties exist in North East India : Bazaar Hindi in Shillong, Meghalaya and Nagamese in Nagaland. The former is based on Hindi and the latter on Assamese.

Pidgins can develop further. You will remember that pidgin is not a native variety. However, there are situations when there is intermarriage of a couple whose languages are different but who both speak a pidgin. In such cases, the pidgin is spoken at home and learned by the children as a first or mother tongue. This leads to an extension of the range and functions of the language. Instead of being limited to contact functions, this variety is required to deal with an increasingly wide range of soical needs and functions. This process is known in linguistics as creolization. The language expands and develops, acquiring greater phonological and grammatical complexity. Some examples are Haitian Creole and Hawaiian Creole English. New Guinea Pidgin English, adopted as the official language of Papua and New Guinea, has evolved into the Creole Tok Pisin.

Typically, pidgins and creoles lack formal recognition and are looked upon as inferior varieties.

1.2.8. Summing Up :

All the variations mentioned so far except temporal variation, are features of a speaker or user. That is, depending on the variety a person uses, he or she can be identified as

belonging to a particular region, a particular social class or a particular caste or gender. For example, it is possible to identify an English speaker as originating from Yorkshire and belonging to the working class. So these are variations according to the user.

1.3. Language Variation according to use :

So far we have seen how one speaker of a language can differ from another speaker of the same language. In this section we will consider the situation where one single speaker uses different varieties of the same language depending on the situation and purpose. Such variations are said to be the consequences of language use. An example will make this clear. The English used by a lawyer in a courtroom is different from the English he uses in discussing the same points with his colleagues in his chamber or in explaining the legalities to his client. Similarly, a lecturer in chemistry will use language in the classroom to lecture to his students in a way different from the language he is likely to use for explaining the same concepts to his twelve year old child at home.

M.A.K. Halliday, a noted British linguist, labels the variety of language according to use as register. For example, a sports commentary, a church service and a school lesson are linguistically (= in grammar and vocabulary) quite distinct, and hence belong to different registers. Such distinctions help us to identify differences in the type of language selected for a particular context and purpose. This relates to the appropriateness of a particular piece of language.

All languages have the convention that a certain kind of language is appropriate to a certain use. Because of this, we can identify a piece of language as occurring in a certain context and domain. For example, the phrase "Mix well" is likely to occur in a recipe whereas the phrase "Mixes well" is likely to occur in a testimonial. So we find registers specific to different domains : legal, sports, newspaper headlines, advertising, education and so on.

According to Halliday, registers differ primarily in form : "the crucial criteria of any given register are to be found in its grammar and lexis" (1964 : p 68). Registers can be distinguished along three parameters : i) Field of discourse, ii) Mode of discourse and iii) Style of discourse.

1.3.1. Field of discourse :

Put very simply, "field" of discourse refers to what is going on, that is, to the area where a language activity is taking place. Hence it can refer to the topic or subject matter, and alternatively can refer to the whole event, e.g. lecturing. Hence field of discourse is manifested

mainly through lexis or vocabulary (e.g. technical and scientific terms, legal phrases, special vocabulary related to a profession or an area of activity). Field of discourse also includes "domain" or the area of operation e.g. the domain of education or advertising.

1.3.2. Mode of discourse :

Mode of discourse refers to the medium or mode of language activity : whether it is written or spoken, being read aloud, written for being spoken, etc. Within either mode, subclassifications are possible — spoken forms for instance, can include conversation, lecture, speech, discussion, seminar, debate and so on. In the written mode, the register of journalism can be sub classified into reporting, editorial comment, features writing etc. The point to be remembered is that a difference in medium is manifested in a difference in language forms. In refusing an oral invitation, it is possible to say "Thanks a lot - sorry. I can't make it", but if the refusal is in writing, such a response will be inappropriate.

1.3.3. Style of discourse :

This refers to the relations among the participants or the speaker(s)/sender(s) and hearer(s)/receiver(s). Since these relations "affect and determine features of the language" (Halliday 1964 : p92). they contribute to the appropriateness and effectiveness of the language. Such relationships suggest a distinction between colloquial (or relaxed or less careful) and polite (formal, careful) forms of language. However such differences are extremely difficult to specify clearly. Such relationships are therefore seen as a scale or a cline, one gradually changing into the other, rather than watertight compartments. The terms or categories usually used for distinguising the 'style' of discourse are casual/informal, intimate, neutral, formal (deferential) and frozen.

1.3.4. Summing up :

In order to define and identify register, we need to amalgamate the three dimensions of classification : field, mode and style of discourse. The accurate use of each will result in an appropriate and effective register. You must remember that registers are part of our everyday use of language, both written and spoken. In fact literature can be looked upon as a special register, having a special function and purpose.

1.3.5. Recommended Reading :

1. Halliday, M.A.K., Mcintosh and Strevens, 1964 *Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching.* Longman

2. Kachru, Braj B., 1982. *The Other Tongue, English across Cultures.* Paragon Press.

3. Kachru, Braj B., 1984. *The Indianization of English : The English Language in India.* Oxford University Press.

4. Leech, Geoffrey N., 1968. *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry.* Longman.

5. Quirk. R and Gabriele Stein, 1990. *English in use.* Longman.

Unit 2 ❏ Stylistics

Structure

2.1. Stylistics : Introduction

The genesis of Stylistics as a branch of study can be attributed to linguistics. At present it is considered to be a part of Applied Linguistics. The use of systematic analysis for understanding the working of language made people hopeful that one of the special uses of language, that is literature, might also be amenable to systematic study.

Students of literature have to be familiar with literary criticism and are expected to be able to make critical analysis of pieces of literature themselves. Most students beginning to study literature discover to their dismay, that making a critical analysis of a literary text is neither easy nor can it be "picked up" automatically. Further, the interpretation provided by a literary critic does not tell the readers how the critic arrived at it. If another critic or reader arrives at a different interpretation, deciding between the two is extremely difficult since there does not seem to be any clear-cut criteria for the purpose. Students begining to study literature have no clue as to how to go about such a task. [Genral aesthetic principles normally evoked for critical analysis are notoriously difficult to apply]. Linguists were interested in exploring this seemingly confusing and chaotic area, hoping to bring in some amount of systematicity and learnability. And this is how stylistics came to be born.

2.1.1. Style and stylistics :

Stylistics is often defined as the systematic study of 'Style'. However this word has several meanings. It can refer to the linguistic habits of a particular writer as in the "Style of

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Dickens". It can be applied to the way language is used in a genre, particular period or school of writing as in "Epistolary Style", "early eighteenth century style", "euphuistic style", "the style of vitorian novels" and so on. Stylistics however, is concerned with the style of texts. As Leech and Short point out, style is "the linguistic characteristics of a particular text" (1981, p 12). According to H.G Widdowson, an eminent Applied Linguist, "The purpose of stylistic analysis is to investigate how the resources of a language code are put to use in the production of actual messages. It is concerned with pattern of use in given texts". (1974, p 202).

This definition tells us that stylistics need not necessarily be confined to literary texts. In fact all uses of language can be the object of stylistic analysis. Since you are students of literature, the following sub-sections will focus on the efforts to apply stylistic analysis to literary texts.

2.1.2. Early Efforts : M. A. K. Halliday and others :

In the early phase of stylistics efforts were made to analyse literary texts by applying to them the categories and methods of description as used in linguistics. These early exponents were not concerned with the interpretation or the aesthetic evaluation of the literary texts. For example, Halliday considers the verbal groups in Yeats's poem Leda and the Swan and tabulates the results. But neither does he relate the organization of the verbal forms to other kinds of patterning in the poem, nor does he draw any conclusion as to the relevance of his findings to the interpretation of the poem as a whole. Understandably, teachers of literature have ridiculed and rejected such a 'mechanical' approach to the analysis of literature.

J. Sinclair uses a similar approach for analysing Philip Larkin's poem First Sight. His analysis is given in a tabular form and the interpretation is left for the reader. He however mentions two aspects of linguistic organization which play an important part in establishing intra-textual patterns in literary texts. These relate to syntactic patterns. When a predictable pattern is interrupted, and its completion is delayed by intervening linguistic units, we have an instance of arrest. When a pattern is extended after all grammatical predictions have been fulfilled, we have an instance of release. In Larkin's poem, in the lines

> Lambs that learn to walk in snow
> When their bleating clouds the air
> Meet a vast unwelcome...

the Noun Phrase (lambs that learn to walk in the snow) and the verb phrase (meet a vast unwelcome) is interrupted by the adverbial phrase (when their bleating clouds the air). This is an example of arrest. In the line

They could not grasp it if they knew,

the clause begining with if is releasing element since the preceding clause is already complete.

There are a few other exponents like Roman Jakobson, Samuel Levin and J.P. Thorne who show other approaches but these have not been discussed here.

2.1.3. Geoffrey N. Leech :

Among the many theoreticians and practitioners, Geoffrey N. Leech has contributed significantly in making Stylistics acceptable to teachers and students of literature.

Leech attempts to relate linguistic description with critical interpretation and tries to show how interpretation can benefit from linguistic description. He identifies three features of literary expression representing different dimensions of meaning and uses them to analyse and interpret a literary text, specially a poem. These features he labels as cohesion, foregrounding and cohesion of foregrounding.

1. Cohesion : refers to the intra-textual relations of a grammatical and lexical kind. These bind the various parts of a literary text into a complete unit and convey the meaning of the text as a whole. Repetitions, parallelism and the use of semantically related words operate as a means of cohesion. Leech demonstrates this with the help of Dylan Thomas's poem This bread I break. There is lexical cohesion in the repetition of the words 'oat' and 'break' and in the connection between items which share common semantic features as in bread-oats-crops, wine-tree-fruit-grape-vine-drink, day-night-summer-sun etc. Leech further points out that cohesion is not a unique property of poetry but is a property of all types of text.

2. Foregrounding : This is a feature where a particular use is made prominent, or made to stand out from the surrounding items. This is acheived through the deliberate deviation from the rules of the language code or from the accepted conventions of its use. There can be lexical, grammatical, phonological graphological, semantic or dialectal deviations, as well as deviations of register, leading to foregrounding. All foregrounding is significant and draws attention to some aspect of the total meaning. In Dylan Thomas's poem, expressions like 'The oat was merry', 'Man broke the sun', '...pulled the wind fown' are examples of foregrounding. There are syntactic parallelisms in the lines "Man in the day and wind at night' and 'My wine you drink, my bread you snap."

3. Cohesion of foregrounding : This refers to the way in which deviations in a text are related to each other to form intra-textual patterns. For example, the deviant expression

"broke the sun" is foregrounded, but is related to deviations of a similar kind found in the poem : "broke the grape's joy", "pulled the wind down". Another intra-textual pattern is found in the expressions "the oat was merry", "desolation in the vine" and "sensual root".

2.1.4. Summing up :

We thus see that stylistics by drawing attention to the utilization/use of language in a literary text, can provide a clue to its interpretation and can support, confirm or disconfirm a reader's intuitive response to literature.

2.1.5. Recommeded Reading :

Fowler. R., 1966. *Essays on Style and Language*. RKP. Leech, Geoffrey N. *A Linguistic Guide to English*. Poetry Longman.

Leech G. and M Short, 1981. *Style in Fiction*. Longman.

Nowotting W. 1962. *The Language Poets Use*.

Sebeok. T.A, 1960. *Style in Language*. MIT Prem

Turner, G.W., 1973. *Stylistics*. Penguin

Widdowson, H.G. 1974, *'Stylistic'*. In The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistic. Vol 3. Oxford University Press.

Unit 3 ☐ Rhetoric

Structure

3.0. Introduction

3.1. Repetition and figures of speech

    3.1.1. Transference of meaning

    3.1.2. Summing up

3.2. Conclusion

3.3. Recommended Reading

3.0. Introduction :

Dictionaries define rhetoric as the art of persuading or influencing people. In other words its is a particular "use' of language for a particular purpose. For such purposes certain linguistic devices are used for achieving the desired effect. Such devices are usually referred to as 'figures of speech'. These bring about cohesion, foregrounding and patterning in a text. So a consideration of figures of speech can provide and entry to the interpretation of the text.

3.1. Repetition and figures of speech :

Repetition of words and phrases in various positions in a line, sentence or utterance have been given different names.

1. EPIZEUXIS =   immediate repetition e.g. "come away, come away death" 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom"

2. PLOCE =   intermittent repetition, e.g. the lament of the dying John of Gaunt in Shakespeare's Richard II "O, how that name befits my composition! Old Gaunt, indeed; and gaunt in being old"

3. ANAPHORA =   initial repetition of a word, phrase or sentence, e.g. Keats's La Belle Dame... O what can ail thee. knight-at-arms, Alone and palely loitering ? O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms So haggard and so woebegone ?

4. **EPISTROPHE =**   involves final repetition and is the opposite of anaphora. Formula : (.........a) (.......a) etc. Example from T.S. Eliot's Marina : Those who sharpen the tooth of the dog, meaning Death./Those who glitter with the glory of the humming bird meaning Death./Those who sit in the stye of contentment, meaning Death

5. **SYMPLOCE =**   initial repetition combined with final repetition, that is, anaphora and epistrophe together e.g. I will recruit for myself as and you as I go :/I will scatter myself among men and women as I go.

6. **ANADIPLOSIS =**   the last part of one unit is repeated at the beginning of the next Formula : (......a) (a.....)

Example : The same that oft-times hath. / Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam / of perilons seas, in faery lands forlorn. Forlorn ! The very word is like a bell /

To toll me back from thee to my sole self

7. **EPANALESIS =**   the final part of each unit repeats the initial part e.g.

With ruin upon ruin, rout upon rout

confusion worse confounded.

8. **ANTISTROPHE =**   the repetition of items in a reverse order. e.g. What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba That he should weep for her ?

9. **POLYPTOTON =**   here a word is repeated with varying grammatical inflections:

e.g.   And singing still dost soar and

Soaring ever singest.

10. **HOMOIOTELEUTON =**   the repetition of the same derivational or inflectional ending on different words :

-Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise,

But for those obstinate questionings

Of sense and out ward things

Fallings from us, ravishings

Blank misgivings of a creature

Moving about in worlds not realized.........

Similar and other kinds of repetition form patterns within a text. Similarly, verbal parallelism (repetition of words as well as syntactic patterns) performs the same function.

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3.1.1. Transference of meaning :

In this subsection we include figures of speech based on transference of meaning.

Language already contains rules of transference or mechanisms for deriving one meaning of a word from another. In literature these are used more daringly.

1. SIMILE : An overt comparison, with words like as or like.

Example : My love is like a red, red rose

or

I wanderd lonely as a cloud.

2. METAPHOR : It is a covert comparison and can be rephrased as a simile where the ground for comparison can be specified. Below are some examples of a metahor :

i) Life's but a walking shadow., a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

ii) The sky rejoices in the morning's birth.

3. SYNECDOCHE : a figure in which a part is made to represent the whole. Examples :

Many hands make light work

Two heads are better than one

4. METONYMY : This is a figure of speech which uses the name of one thing for another which is related to it. Given below are some examples of metonymy :

i) Led on the gray-haired wisdom of the east

ii) And all the pavements streamed with massacre

(Thee are various other ways of substitution)

3.1.2. Summing up :

There are many more figures of speech which have not been included here. However, figures of speech by themselves are fairly mechanical devices. They become significant when they contribute to the meaning of the whole text and provide clues to interpretation.

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3.2. Conclusion :

In this module you have come across various aspects of language variation and language use. You have also formed some idea of what stylistics is and how rhetoric is involved in the creation of meaning within a text.

3.3. Recommended Reading :

C. Brooks and R. P. Warren, *Fundamentals of Good Writing : A Handbook of Modern Rhetoric*, London.

Robert McCrum, *The story of English*, BBC, London.

NOTES

NOTES

মানুষের জ্ঞান ও ভাবকে বইয়ের মধ্যে সঞ্চিত করিবার যে একটা প্রচুর সুবিধা আছে, সে কথা কেহই অস্বীকার করিতে পারে না। কিন্তু সেই সুবিধার দ্বারা মনের স্বাভাবিক শক্তিকে একেবারে আচ্ছন্ন করিয়া ফেলিলে বুদ্ধিকে বাবু করিয়া তোলা হয়।

-- রবীন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর

ভারতের একটা *mission* আছে, একটা গৌরবময় ভবিষ্যৎ আছে, সেই ভবিষ্যৎ ভারতের উত্তরাধিকারী আমরাই। নূতন ভারতের মুক্তির ইতিহাস আমরাই রচনা করছি এবং করব। এই বিশ্বাস আছে বলেই আমরা সব দুঃখ কষ্ট সহ্য করতে পারি, অন্ধকারময় বর্তমানকে অগ্রাহ্য করতে পারি, বাস্তবের নিষ্ঠুর সত্যগুলি আদর্শের কঠিন আঘাতে ধূলিসাৎ করতে পারি।

— সুভাষচন্দ্র বসু

Any system of education which ignores Indian conditions, requirements, history and sociology is too unscientific to commend itself to any rational support.

— **Subhas Chandra Bose**