



F.Y.B.A.

OPTIONAL ENGLISH

PAPER I

**Introduction to
Literature**

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**FYBA
OPTIONAL ENGLISH
INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE**

SYLLABUS

(to be implemented from 2011-2012 onwards)

Objectives of the Course

- 1) To introduce the learners of literature to the various genres and literary terms
- 2) To sensitize them to themes and styles of literature
- 3) To inculcate reading skills and the reading habit in them
- 4) To enhance their vocabulary, style and language skills by introducing them to literary works
- 5) To nourish their creative faculty and to develop sensitivity to nature and fellow human beings

Unit 1: Terms : Short Story, Novel, Plot, Character, Setting, Narrative, Point of View, Bildungsroman, Picaresque, Epistolary, Stream of Consciousness, Novel of Social Reality, Psychological Novel and Historical Novel.

Unit 2: Novel : Jack London's *Call of the Wild* or R. K. Narayan's *Man-Eater of Malgudi*

Unit 3: Short Stories

Dorothy Parker - "A Telephone Call"

Oscar Wilde - "Happy Prince"

Washington Irving - "Rip Van Winkle"

Somerset Maugham - "Luncheon"

O'Henry - "The Gift of the Magi"

Gabriel Garcia Marquez – "A very old man with Enormous wings : A Tale for Children."

Unit 4 : Terms: Lyric, Dramatic Monologue, Sonnet, Ballad, Epic, Satire, Ode, Tragedy, Comedy, Farce, Melodrama, Chorus, Hamartia, Verse Drama

Unit 5 : Play: Oscar Wilde's *Importance of Being Ernest* or Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*

Unit 6 : Poems

Nissim Ezekiel — "Soap"

Sonnet: John Milton - "On His Blindness"

Dramatic Monologue: Robert Browning - "My Last Duchess"

Lyric: William Blake - "Piping Down the Valleys Wild"

Ballad: Walter Scott - "Lochinvar"

Ode: John Keats - "Ode to Nightingale"



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**FYBA
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INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE**

Paper Pattern for IDDL Students

**Marks : 100
Time : 3 hrs**

- Q.1 Literary Terms (four of eight) – 20 Marks**
- Q.2 Novel 20 Marks**
A. Long Questions (Jack London's *Call of the Wilde*)
OR
B. Long Questions (R. K. Narayan's *Man Enter of Malgudi*)
OR
C. Short Notes on (any 2 of 4)
- Q.3 Drama 20 Marks**
A. Long Questions. (Oscar Wilde's *Importance of Being Earnest*)
OR
B. Long Questions. (Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*)
or
C. Short Notes (any 2 of 4)
- Q.4 Short Stories 20 Marks**
A. on any one of 3 short stories
B. on any one of 3 short stories
- Q.5 Poetry 20 Marks**
A. on any one of 3 short stories
B. on any one of 3 short stories



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LITERARY TERMS

PART I

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- 1.2 Literary Terms
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 - 1.2.5 Lyric poetry
 - 1.2.6 Ode

1.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students with different genres or types of poetic literary forms.
- To help them study English Literature with the help of these literary terms
- To make them understand literary forms in comparison with different literary genres.
- To introduce students with literary devices and figurative language.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Literary terms are words used in, and having specific meaning in discussion, review, criticism and classification of literary works such as stories, poetry, drama, and essays. There is no authorized list of such words. Words that are used frequently for the purposes described above come to be recognized as literary terms.

Literary terms are words such as personification, simile, hyperbole, metaphor, and so on. They are used to describe various

forms of writing by an author. Let's take a look at personification. The definition of personification is an object, thing, or nonhuman character having human traits. Authors may use examples of personification in their writings. An example of personification used may be "The wind howled through the trees." The wind is the nonhuman and the howling is something that a human may do. Thus, the wind has a human characteristic or is an example of personification.

Let's take a look at another literary term: onomatopoeia. Onomatopoeia is the literary term. The definition is words that have sounds. An example of an onomatopoeia is, "The phone buzzed in my pocket." The word "buzz" is an example of an onomatopoeia because the word "buzz" sounds like the sound buzz.

1.1.1 Literary devices

They refer to specific aspects of literature, in the sense of its universal function as an art form which expresses ideas through language we can recognize, identify, interpret and/or analyze. Literary devices, which collectively comprise the art form's components; the means by which authors create meaning through language, and by which readers gain understanding of and appreciation for their works. They also provide a conceptual framework for comparing individual literary works to others, both within and across genres. Both literary elements and literary techniques can rightly be called literary devices. Some examples of literary devices are as under:

Allegory: Where every aspect of a story is representative, usually symbolic, of something else, usually a larger abstract concept or important historical/geopolitical event.

Alliteration: The repetition of consonant sounds within close proximity, usually in consecutive words within the same sentence or line.

Dramatic irony: Where the audience or reader is aware of something important, of which the characters in the story are not aware.

1.1.2 Figurative language

Any use of language where the intended meaning differs from the actual literal meaning of the words themselves. There are many techniques which can rightly be called figurative language, including metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, onomatopoeia, verbal irony, and oxymoron.

Foreshadowing: Where future events in a story, or perhaps the outcome, are suggested by the author before they happen. Foreshadowing can take many forms and be accomplished in many ways, with varying degrees of subtlety. However, if the outcome is deliberately and explicitly revealed early in a story (such as by the use of a narrator or flashback structure), such information does not constitute foreshadowing.

Hyperbole: A description which exaggerates, usually employing extremes and/or superlatives to convey a positive or negative attribute; “hype.”

However the students of B.A. First Year have to study only the literary terms. The list of the prescribed terms is discussed below.

1.2 LITERARY TERMS

1.2.1 Ballad

A ballad is a form of verse, often a narrative set to music. Ballads were particularly characteristic of the popular poetry and song of the British Isles from the later medieval period until the 19th century and used extensively across Europe and later the Americas, Australia and North Africa. Many ballads were written and sold as single sheet broadsides. The form was often used by poets and composers from the 18th century onwards to produce lyrical ballads. In the later 19th century it took on the meaning of a slow form of popular love song and the term is now often used as synonymous with any love song, particularly the pop or rock power ballad.

Most northern and west European ballads are written in ballad stanzas or quatrains (four-line stanzas) of alternating lines of iambic (an unstressed followed by a stressed syllable) tetrameter (eight syllables) and iambic trimeter (six syllables), known as ballad meter. Usually, only the second and fourth line of a quatrain are rhymed (in the scheme a, b, c, b), which has been taken to suggest that, originally, ballads consisted of couplets (two lines) of rhymed verse, each of 14 syllables. As can be seen in this stanza from ‘Lord Thomas and Fair Annet’:

*The horse| fair Ann|et rode| upon|
He amb|led like| the wind|,
With sil|ver he| was shod| before,
With burn|ing gold| behind|.*

However, there is considerable variation on this pattern in almost every respect, including length, number of lines and rhyming scheme, making the strict definition of a ballad extremely difficult. In southern and eastern Europe, and in countries that derive their tradition from them, ballad structure differs significantly, like Spanish romances, which are octosyllabic and use consonance rather than rhyme.

In all traditions most ballads are narrative in nature, with a self-contained story, often concise and relying on imagery, rather than description, which can be tragic, historical, romantic or comic. Another common feature of ballads is repetition, sometimes of fourth lines in succeeding stanzas, as a refrain, sometimes of third and fourth lines of a stanza and sometimes of entire stanzas.

1.2.2 Monologue

In theatre, a monologue (or monolog) is a speech presented by a single character, most often to express their thoughts aloud, though sometimes also to directly address another character or the audience. Monologues are common across the range of dramatic media (plays, films, etc.) as well as in non-dramatic media such as poetry. Monologues share much in common with several other literary devices including soliloquies, apostrophes, and asides. There are, however, distinctions between each of these devices.

One of the most important influences on the development of the dramatic monologue is the Romantic poets. The long, personal lyrics typical of the Romantic period are not dramatic monologues, in the sense that they do not, for the most part, imply a concentrated narrative. However, poems such as William Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* and Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Mont Blanc*, to name two famous examples, offered a model of close psychological observation and philosophical or pseudo-philosophical inquiry described in a specific setting.

The novel and plays have also been important influences on the dramatic monologue, particularly as a means of characterization. Dramatic monologues are a way of expressing the views of a character and offering the audience greater insight into that character's feelings. Dramatic monologues can also be used in novels to tell stories, as in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and to implicate the audience in moral judgments, as in Albert Camus' *The Fall* and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

Monologues are also linked with soliloquys- Such as in Macbeth, when Lady Macbeth reads a letter to herself and then speaks her thoughts as though she is thinking.

The Victorian Period

The Victorian period represented the high point of the dramatic monologue in English poetry.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Ulysses*, published in 1842, has been called the first true dramatic monologue. After *Ulysses*, Tennyson's most famous efforts in this vein are *Tithonus*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, and *St. Simon Stylites*, all from the 1842 *Poems*; later monologues appear in other volumes, notably *Idylls of the King*.

Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* and *Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse* are famous, semi-autobiographical monologues. The former, usually regarded as the supreme expression of the growing skepticism of the mid-Victorian period, was published along with the later in 1867's *New Poems*.

Robert Browning is usually credited with perfecting the form; certainly, Browning is the poet who, above all, produced his finest and most famous work in this form. While *My Last Duchess* is the most famous of his monologues, the form dominated his writing career. *Fra Lippo Lippi*, *Caliban upon Setebos*, *Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister* and *Porphyria's Lover*, as well as the other poems in *Men and Women* are just a handful of Browning's monologues.

Other Victorian poets also used the form. Dante Gabriel Rossetti wrote several, including *Jenny* and *The Blessed Damozel*; Christina Rossetti wrote a number, including *The Convent Threshold*. Algernon Charles Swinburne's *Hymn to Proserpine* has been called a dramatic monologue vaguely reminiscent of Browning's work.

1.2.3 Sonnet

A sonnet is a form of poetry that originated in Europe, mainly Italy: the Sicilian poet Giacomo da Lentini is credited with its invention. They commonly contain 14 lines. The term "sonnet" derives only from the Occitan word *sonet* and the Italian word *sonetto*, both meaning "little song" or "little sound". By the thirteenth century, it signified a poem of fourteen lines that follows a strict rhyme scheme and specific structure. Conventions associated with the sonnet have evolved over its history. Writers of sonnets are sometimes called "sonneteers," although the term can be used derisively. One of the best-known sonnet writers is William Shakespeare, who wrote 154 of them (not including those that appear in his plays). A Shakespearean, or English, sonnet consists of 14 lines, each line containing ten syllables and written in iambic

pentameter, in which a pattern of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable is repeated five times. The rhyme scheme in a Shakespearean sonnet is a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g; the last two lines are a rhyming couplet.

Traditionally, English poets employ iambic pentameter when writing sonnets, but not all English sonnets have the same metrical structure: the first sonnet in Sir Philip Sidney's sequence *Astrophel and Stella*, for example, has 12 syllables: it is iambic hexameters, albeit with a turned first foot in several lines. In the Romance languages, the hendecasyllable and Alexandrine are the most widely used metres.

Italian (Petrarchan) sonnet

The Italian sonnet was created by Giacomo da Lentini, head of the Sicilian School under Frederick II. Guittone d'Arezzo rediscovered it and brought it to Tuscany where he adapted it to his language when he founded the Neo-Sicilian School (1235–1294). He wrote almost 250 sonnets. Other Italian poets of the time, including Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) and Guido Cavalcanti (c. 1250–1300) wrote sonnets, but the most famous early sonneteer was Petrarca (known in English as Petrarch). Other fine examples were written by Michelangelo.

The structure of a typical Italian sonnet of this time included two parts that together formed a compact form of "argument". First, the octave (two quatrains), forms the "proposition," which describes a "problem," followed by a sestet (two tercets), which proposes a resolution. Typically, the ninth line creates what is called the "turn" or "volta," which signals the move from proposition to resolution. Even in sonnets that don't strictly follow the problem/resolution structure, the ninth line still often marks a "turn" by signaling a change in the tone, mood, or stance of the poem.

Later, the a-b-b-a, a-b-b-a pattern became the standard for Italian sonnets. For the sestet there were two different possibilities: c-d-e-c-d-e and c-d-c-c-d-c. In time, other variants on this rhyming scheme were introduced, such as c-d-c-d-c-d.

The first known sonnets in English, written by Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, used this Italian scheme, as did sonnets by later English poets including John Milton, Thomas Gray, William Wordsworth and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Early twentieth-century American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay also wrote most of her sonnets

This example, *On His Blindness* By Milton, gives a sense of using the Italian form. the Italian rhyming scheme;

When I consider how my light is spent (a)
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide, (b)
And that one talent which is death to hide, (b)
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent (a)
To serve therewith my Maker, and present (a)
My true account, lest he returning chide; (b)
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?" (b)
I fondly ask; but Patience to prevent (a)
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need (c)
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best (d)
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state (e)
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed (c)
And post o'er land and ocean without rest; (d)
They also serve who only stand and wait." (e)

Dante's variation

Most Sonnets in Dante's *La Vita Nuova* are Petrarchan, but some are not. Chapter VII gives sonnet *O voi che per la via*, with two sestetts (AABAAB AABAAB) and two quatrains (CDDC CDDC), and Ch. VIII, *Morte villana*, with two sestetts (AABBBA AABBBA) and two quatrains (CDDC CDDC).

Occitan sonnet

The sole confirmed surviving sonnet in the Occitan language is confidently dated to 1284, and is conserved only in troubadour manuscript P, an Italian chansonnier of 1310, now XLI.42 in the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence. It was written by Paolo Lanfranchi da Pistoia and is addressed to Peter III of Aragon. It employs the rhyme scheme a-b-a-b, a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d-c-d. This poem is historically interesting for its information on north Italian perspectives concerning the War of the Sicilian Vespers, the conflict between the Angevins and Aragonese for Sicily.^[5] Peter III and the Aragonese cause was popular in northern Italy at the time and Paolo's sonnet is a celebration of his victory over the Angevins and Capetians in the Aragonese Crusade:

Valiant Lord, king of the Aragonese
to whom honour grows every day closer,
remember, Lord, the French king
that has come to find you and has left France
With his two sons and that one of Artois;
but they have not dealt a blow with sword or lance
and many barons have left their country:
but a day will come when they will have some to remember.
Our Lord make yourself a company
in order that you might fear nothing;

that one who would appear to lose might win.
Lord of the land and the sea,
as whom the king of England and that of Spain
are not worth as much, if you wish to help them

An Occitan sonnet, dated to 1321 and assigned to one "William of Almarichi", is found in Jean de Nostredame and cited in Giovanni Crescembeni, *Storia della volgar Poesia*. It congratulates Robert of Naples on his recent victory. Its authenticity is dubious. There are also two poorly-regarded sonnets by the Italian Dante de Maiano.

English or (Shakespearean) sonnet

When English sonnets were introduced by Thomas Wyatt in the early 16th century, his sonnets and those of his contemporary the Earl of Surrey were chiefly translations from the Italian of Petrarch and the French of Ronsard and others. While Wyatt introduced the sonnet into English, it was Surrey who gave it a rhyming meter, and a structural division into quatrains of a kind that now characterizes the typical English sonnet. Having previously circulated in manuscripts only, both poets' sonnets were first published in Richard Tottel's *Songes and Sonnetts*, better known as *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557).

It was, however, Sir Philip Sidney's sequence *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) that started the English vogue for sonnet sequences: the next two decades saw sonnet sequences by William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, Fulke Greville, William Drummond of Hawthornden, and many others. These sonnets were all essentially inspired by the Petrarchan tradition, and generally treat of the poet's love for some woman; with the exception of Shakespeare's sequence. The form is often named after Shakespeare, not because he was the first to write in this form but because he became its most famous practitioner. The form consists of fourteen lines structured as three quatrains and a couplet. The third quatrain generally introduces an unexpected sharp thematic or imagistic "turn"; the volta. In Shakespeare's sonnets, however, the volta usually comes in the couplet, and usually summarizes the theme of the poem or introduces a fresh new look at the theme. With only a rare exception, the meter is iambic pentameter, although there is some accepted metrical flexibility (e.g., lines ending with an extra-syllable feminine rhyme, or a trochaic foot rather than an iamb, particularly at the beginning of a line). The usual rhyme scheme is end-rhymed a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g.

This example, Shakespeare's Sonnet 116, illustrates the form (with some typical variances one may expect when reading an Elizabethan-age sonnet with modern eyes):

Let me not to the marriage of true minds (a)
Admit impediments, love is not love (b)
Which alters when it alteration finds, (a)
Or bends with the remover to remove. (b)
O no, it is an ever fixed mark (c)
That looks on tempests and is never shaken; (d)
It is the star to every wand'ring bark, (c)
Whose worth's unknown although his height be taken. (d)
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks (e)
Within his bending sickle's compass come, (f)
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks, (e)
But bears it out even to the edge of doom: (f)
If this be error and upon me proved, (g)
I never writ, nor no man ever loved. (g)

In the 17th century, the sonnet was adapted to other purposes, with John Donne and George Herbert writing religious sonnets, and John Milton using the sonnet as a general meditative poem. Both the Shakespearean and Petrarchan rhyme schemes were popular throughout this period, as well as many variants.

The fashion for the sonnet went out with the Restoration, and hardly any sonnets were written between 1670 and Wordsworth's time. However, sonnets came back strongly with the French Revolution. Wordsworth himself wrote hundreds of sonnets, of which the best-known are "The world is too much with us" and the sonnet to Milton; his sonnets were essentially modelled on Milton's. Keats and Shelley also wrote major sonnets; Keats's sonnets used formal and rhetorical patterns inspired partly by Shakespeare, and Shelley innovated radically, creating his own rhyme scheme for the sonnet "Ozymandias". Sonnets were written throughout the 19th century, but, apart from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Sonnets from the Portuguese and the sonnets of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, there were few very successful traditional sonnets. In Canada during the last decades of the century, the Confederation Poets and especially Archibald Lampman were known for their sonnets, which were mainly on pastoral themes. Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote several major sonnets, often in sprung rhythm, such as "The Windhover", and also several sonnet variants such as the 10½-line curtal sonnet "Pied Beauty" and the 24-line caudate sonnet "That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire." By the end of the 19th century, the sonnet had been adapted into a general-purpose form of great flexibility.

This flexibility was extended even further in the 20th century. Among the major poets of the early Modernist period, Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay and E. E. Cummings all used the sonnet regularly. William Butler Yeats wrote the major sonnet *Leda and the Swan*, which used half rhymes. Wilfred Owen's sonnet *Anthem for Doomed Youth* was another sonnet of the early 20th century. W. H. Auden wrote two sonnet sequences and several other sonnets throughout his career, and widened the range of rhyme-schemes used considerably. Auden also wrote one of the first unrhymed sonnets in English, "The Secret Agent" (1928). Robert Lowell wrote five books of unrhymed "American sonnets," including his Pulitzer Prize-winning volume *The Dolphin* (1973). Half-rhymed, unrhymed, and even unmetrical sonnets have been very popular since 1950; perhaps the best works in the genre are Seamus Heaney's *Glanmore Sonnets and Clearances*, both of which use half rhymes, and Geoffrey Hill's mid-period sequence 'An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England'. The 1990s saw something of a formalist revival, however, and several traditional sonnets have been written in the past decade.

Spenserian sonnet

A variant on the English form is the Spenserian sonnet, named after Edmund Spenser (c.1552–1599) in which the rhyme scheme is, abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee. A Spenserian sonnet does not appear to require that the initial octave set up a problem that the closing sestet answers, as with a Petrarchan sonnet. Instead, the form is treated as three quatrains connected by the interlocking rhyme scheme and followed by a couplet. The linked rhymes of his quatrains suggest the linked rhymes of such Italian forms as *terza rima*. This example is taken from *Amoretti*.

Happy ye leaves! whenas those lily hands

Happy ye leaves! whenas those lily hands, (a)
Which hold my life in their dead doing might, (b)
Shall handle you, and hold in love's soft bands, (a)
Like captives trembling at the victor's sight. (b)
And happy lines on which, with starry light, (b)
Those laming eyes will deign sometimes to look,(c)
And read the sorrows of my dying sprite, (b)
Written with tears in heart's close bleeding book. (c)
And happy rhymes! bathed in the sacred brook (c)
Of Helicon, whence she derived is, (d)

When ye behold that angel's blessed look, (c)
My soul's long lacked food, my heaven's bliss. (d)
Leaves, lines, and rhymes seek her to please alone, (e)
Whom if ye please, I care for other none. (e)

Modern sonnet

With the advent of free verse, the sonnet was seen as somewhat old-fashioned and fell out of use for a time among some schools of poets. However, a number of modern poets, including Wilfred Owen, John Berryman, George Meredith, Edwin Morgan, Robert Frost, Rupert Brooke, George Sterling, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Federico García Lorca, E.E. Cummings, Jorge Luis Borges, Pablo Neruda, Robert Lowell, Joan Brossa, Vikram Seth, Rainer Maria Rilke, Jan Kal, Ernest Hilbert, Kim Addonizio, and Seamus Heaney continued to use the form. Elizabeth Bishop's inverted "Sonnet" was one of her last poems. Ted Berrigan's book, *THE SONNETS*, is an arresting and curious take on the form. Paul Muldoon often experiments with 14 lines and sonnet rhymes, though without regular sonnet meter. The advent of the New Formalism movement in the United States has also contributed to contemporary interest in the sonnet. The sonnet sees its revival with the word sonnet. Concise and visual in effect, word sonnets are fourteen line poems, with one word per line. Frequently allusive and imagistic, they can also be irreverent and playful. The Canadian poet Seymour Mayne published a few collections of word sonnets, and is one of the chief innovators of the form. Also, *Futility*, by Wilfred Owen, is a good example of a 14 lined sonnet, around and about the first world war.

1.2.4 Epic poetry

An epic (from the Ancient Greek adjective "word, story, poem" is a lengthy narrative poem, ordinarily concerning a serious subject containing details of heroic deeds and events significant to a culture or nation. Oral poetry may qualify as an epic, and Albert Lord and Milman Parry have argued that classical epics were fundamentally an oral poetic form. Nonetheless, epics have been written down at least since the works of Virgil, Dante Alighieri, and John Milton. Many probably would not have survived if not written down. The first epics are known as primary, or original, epics. One such epic is the Old English story Beowulf. Epics that attempt to imitate these like Milton's *Paradise Lost* are known as literary, or secondary, epics. Another type of epic poetry is epyllion (plural:

epyllia), which is a brief narrative poem with a romantic or mythological theme. The term, which means 'little epic', came into use in the nineteenth century. It refers primarily to the erudite, shorter hexameter poems of the Hellenistic period and the similar works composed at Rome from the age of the neoterics; to a lesser degree, the term includes some poems of the English Renaissance, particularly those influenced by Ovid. The most famous example of classical epyllion is perhaps Catullus 64.

In the East, the most famous works of epic poetry are the Ramayana and Mahabharata, with the Iliad and the Odyssey, which form part of the Western canon, fulfilling the same function in the Western world.

Oral epics or world folk epics

The first epics were products of preliterate societies and oral poetic traditions. In these traditions, poetry is transmitted to the audience and from performer to performer by purely oral means.

Early twentieth-century study of living oral epic traditions in the Balkans by Milman Parry and Albert Lord demonstrated the paratactic model used for composing these poems. What they demonstrated was that oral epics tend to be constructed in short episodes, each of equal status, interest and importance. This facilitates memorization, as the poet is recalling each episode in turn and using the completed episodes to recreate the entire epic as he performs it.

1.2.5 Lyric poetry

Is a genre of poetry that expresses personal and emotional feelings. In the ancient world, lyric poems were sung, accompanied by a lyre a musical instrument. Lyric poems do not have to rhyme, and today do not need to be set to music or a beat. Aristotle, in Poetics, mentions lyric poetry (kitharistike played to the cithara, a type of lyre) along with drama, epic poetry, dancing, painting and other forms of mimesis. The lyric poem, dating from the Romantic era, does have some thematic antecedents in ancient Greek and Roman verse, but the ancient definition was based on metrical criteria, and in archaic and classical Greek culture presupposed live performance accompanied by a stringed instrument.

Forms

Although arguably the most popular form of lyric poetry in the Western tradition is the 14-line sonnet, either in its Petrarchan or its Shakespearean form, lyric poetry appears in a variety of forms. Other forms of the lyric include ballades, villanelles, odes, pastourelle and canzone.

Ancient Hebrew poetry relied on repetition, alliteration, and chiasmus for many of its effects. Ancient Greek and Roman lyric poetry was composed in strophes. Pindar's epinician odes, where strophe and antistrophe are followed by an epode, represent an expansion of the same basic principle. The Greeks distinguished, however, between lyric monody (e.g. Sappho, Anacreon) and choral lyric (e.g. Pindar, Bacchylides). In all such poetry the fundamental formal feature is the repetition of a metrical pattern larger than a verse or distich. In some cases (although not in antiquity), form and theme are wed in the conception of a genre, as in the medieval alva or aubade, a dawn song in which lovers must part after a night of love, often with the watchman's refrain telling them it is time to go. A common feature of some lyric forms is the refrain of one or more verses that end each strophe. The refrain is repeated throughout the poem, either exactly or with variation. In the medieval Galician-Portuguese cantigas de amigo, thought to reflect an old oral tradition, 90% of the texts have a refrain.

Lyric in European literature of the medieval or Renaissance period means a poem written so that it could be set to music—whether or not it is. A poem's particular structure, function or theme is not specified by the term. The lyric poetry of Europe in this period was created largely without reference to the classical past, by the pioneers of courtly poetry and courtly love. The troubadors, travelling composers and performers of songs, began to flourish towards the end of the 11th century and were often imitated in successive centuries. Trouvères were poet-composers who were roughly contemporary with and influenced by the troubadours but who composed their works in the northern dialects of France. The first known trouvère was Chrétien de Troyes (fl. 1160s-80s). The dominant form of German lyric poetry in the period was the Minnesang, "a love lyric based essentially on a fictitious relationship between a knight and his high-born lady". Initially imitating the lyrics of the French troubadours and trouvères, Minnesang soon established a distinctive tradition. There is also a large body of medieval Galician-Portuguese lyric. A bhajan or kirtan is a Hindu devotional song. Bhajans are often simple songs in lyrical language

expressing emotions of love for the Divine. Notable exponents include: Kabir, Surdas and Tulsidas. Hebrew singer-poets of the Middle Ages include: Yehuda Halevi, Solomon ibn Gabirol and Abraham ibn Ezra.

In Italy, Petrarch developed the sonnet form pioneered by Giacomo da Lentini, which Dante used in his Vita Nuova. In 1327, according to the poet, the sight of a woman called Laura in the church of Sainte-Claire d'Avignon awoke in him a lasting passion, celebrated in the Rime sparse ("Scattered rhymes"). Later, Renaissance poets who copied Petrarch's style named this collection of 366 poems Il Canzoniere ("Song Book"). Laura is in many ways both the culmination of medieval courtly love poetry and the beginning of Renaissance love lyric.

The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries constitute the period of the rise of Russian lyric poetry, exemplified by Aleksandr Pushkin. The Swedish "Phosphorists" were influenced by the Romantic movement and their chief poet, Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom produced many lyric poems. Italian lyric poets of the period include Ugo Foscolo, Giacomo Leopardi, Giovanni Pascoli and Gabriele D'Annunzio. Japanese lyric poets include Taneda Santoka, Masaoka Shiki and Ishikawa Takuboku. Spanish lyric poets include Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Rosalía de Castro and José de Espronceda.

1.2.6 Ode

Ode (from the Ancient Greek is a type of lyrical verse. A classic ode is structured in three major parts: the strophe, the antistrophe, and the epode. Different forms such as the homostrophic ode and the irregular ode also exist. It is an elaborately structured poem praising or glorifying an event or individual, describing nature intellectually as well as emotionally.

Greek odes were originally poetic pieces accompanied by symphonic orchestras. As time passed on, they gradually became known as personal lyrical compositions whether sung(with or without musical instruments) or merely recited(always with accompaniment). For some, the primary instrument of choice was either the aulos or the lyre (the latter of which was the most revered instrument to the Ancient Greeks). The written ode, as it was practiced by the Romans, returned to the lyrical form of the Lesbian lyricists.

There are three typical forms of odes: the Pindaric, Horatian, and irregular. Pindaric odes follow the form and style of Pindar. Horatian odes follow conventions of Horace; the odes of Horace deliberately imitated the Greek lyricists such as Alcaeus and Anacreon. Odes by Catullus, as well as other poetry of Catullus, was particularly inspired by Sappho. Irregular odes are rhyming, but they do not employ the three-part form of the Pindaric ode nor the two- or four-line stanza of the Horatian ode.

English ode

An ode is typically a lyrical verse written in praise of, or dedicated to someone or something which captures the poet's interest or serves as an inspiration for the ode.

The initial model for English odes was Horace, who used the form to write meditative lyrics on various themes. The earliest odes in the English language, using the word in its strict form, were the Epithalamium and Prothalamium of Edmund Spenser.

In the 17th century the most important original odes in English are those of Abraham Cowley and Andrew Marvell. Marvell, in his Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland uses a regular form (two four-foot lines followed by two three-foot lines) modelled on Horace, while Cowley wrote "Pindarique" odes which had irregular patterns of line lengths and rhyme schemes, though they were iambic. The principle of Cowley's Pindariques was based on a misunderstanding of Pindar's metrical practice but was widely imitated nonetheless, with notable success by John Dryden.

With Pindar's metre being better understood in the 18th century, the fashion for Pindaric odes faded, though there are notable actual Pindaric odes by Thomas Gray, The Progress of Poesy and The Bard.

The Pindarick of Cowley was revived around 1800 by William Wordsworth for one of his very finest poems, the Intimations of Immortality ode; irregular odes were also written by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, and Percy Bysshe Shelley who wrote odes with regular stanza patterns. Shelley's Ode to the West Wind, written in fourteen line terza rima stanzas, is a major poem in the form, but perhaps the greatest odes of the 19th century were Keats's Five Great Odes of 1819 which included Ode to a Nightingale, Ode on Melancholy, Ode on a Grecian Urn, Ode to Psyche, and To Autumn. After Keats, there have been comparatively few major odes in English. One major exception is

the fourth verse of the poem For the Fallen by Laurence Binyon which is often known as "The Ode to the Fallen" or more simply as "The Ode".

W.H. Auden also wrote 'Ode', one of his most popular poems from his earlier career when based in London, in opposition to people's ignorance over the reality of war. In interview Auden once stated that he had intended to title the poem My Silver Age in mockery of the supposedly imperial Golden age, however chose 'Ode' as it seemed to provide a more sensitive exploration of warfare.

The English ode's most common rhyme scheme is ABABCDECDE.



LITERARY TERMS

PART II

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to different genres or types of Dramatic literary forms.
- To help them study English Literature with the help of these literary terms
- To make them understand literary forms in comparison with different literary genres.
- To introduce students to the literary devices and figurative language.

2.1 LITERARY TERMS

2.1.1 Character

A character is the representation of a person in a narrative work of art (such as a novel, play, or film). Derived from the ancient Greek word kharaktêr, it dates from the Restoration, although it became widely used after its appearance in Tom Jones in 1749. From this, the sense of "a part played by an actor" developed. Character, particularly when enacted by an actor in the theatre or cinema, involves "the illusion of being a human person." In literature, characters guide readers through their stories, helping

them to understand plots and ponder themes. Since the end of the 18th century, the phrase "in character" has been used to describe an effective impersonation by an actor. Since the 19th century, the art of creating characters, as practised by actors or writers, has been called characterization.

A character who stands as a representative of a particular class or group of people is known as a type. Types include both stock characters and those that are more fully individualized. The characters in Henrik Ibsen's Hedda Gabler (1891) and August Strindberg's Miss Julie (1888), for example, are representative of specific positions in the social relations of class and gender, such that the conflicts between the characters reveal ideological conflicts.

The study of a character requires an analysis of its relations with all of the other characters in the work. The individual status of a character is defined through the network of oppositions (proairetic, pragmatic, linguistic, proxemic) that it forms with the other characters. The relation between characters and the action of the story shifts historically, often miming shifts in society and its ideas about human individuality, self-determination, and the social order.

In the earliest surviving work of dramatic theory, Poetics, the Greek philosopher Aristotle deduces that character (ethos) is one of six qualitative parts of Athenian tragedy and one of the three objects that it represents. He understands character not to denote a fictional person, but the quality of the person acting in the story and reacting to its situations. He defines character as "that which reveals decision, of whatever sort". It is possible, therefore, to have tragedies that do not contain "characters" in Aristotle's sense of the word, since character makes the ethical dispositions of those performing the action of the story clear. Aristotle argues for the primacy of plot (mythos) over character (ethos). He writes:

But the most important of these is the structure of the incidents. For (i) tragedy is a representation not of human beings but of action and life. Happiness and unhappiness lie in action, and the end [of life] is a sort of action, not a quality; people are of a certain sort according to their characters, but happy or the opposite according to their actions. So [the actors] do not act in order to represent the characters, but they include the characters for the sake of their actions". In the Poetics, Aristotle also introduced the influential tripartite division of characters in superior to the audience, inferior, or at the same level. In the Tractatus coislinianus

(which may or may not be by Aristotle), comedy is defined as involving three types of characters: the buffoon, the ironist and the imposter or boaster . All three are central to Aristophanes' "Old comedy."

By the time the Roman playwright Plautus wrote his plays, the use of characters to define dramatic genres was well established. His Amphitryon begins with a prologue in which the speaker Mercury claims that since the play contains kings and gods, it cannot be a comedy and must be a tragicomedy. Like much Roman comedy, it is probably translated from an earlier Greek original, most commonly held to be Philemon's Long Night, or Rhinton's Amphitryon, both now lost

Types of characters

Round vs. flat

In his book Aspects of the novel, E. M. Forster defined two basic types of characters, their qualities, functions, and importance for the development of the novel: flat characters and round characters. Flat characters are two-dimensional, in that they are relatively uncomplicated and do not change throughout the course of a work. By contrast, round characters are complex and undergo development, sometimes sufficiently to surprise the reader.

2.1.2 Chorus

A Greek chorus (Greek: khoros) is a homogeneous, non-individualized group of performers in the plays of classical Greece, who comment with a collective voice on the dramatic action.

It originally consisted of fifty members which were later reduced to twelve by Sophocles, then increased to fifteen members by Euripides in tragedies. There were twenty-four members in comedies, and it performs using several techniques, including singing, dancing, narrating, and acting.^[3] In Aeschylus' Agamemnon, the chorus comprises the elderly men of Argos, whereas in Euripides' The Bacchae, they are a group of eastern bacchants, and in Sophocles' Electra, the chorus is made up of the women of Argos.

Dramatic function

Plays of the ancient Greek theatre always included a chorus that offered a variety of background and summary information to help the audience follow the performance. The Greek chorus comments on themes, and—as August Wilhelm Schlegel proposed

in the early 19th century to subsequent controversy—shows how an ideal audience might react to the drama.^[4] The chorus also represents, on stage, the general population of the particular story, in sharp contrast with many of the themes of the ancient Greek plays which tended to be about individual heroes, gods, and goddesses.

In many of these plays, the chorus expressed to the audience what the main characters could not say, such as their hidden fears or secrets. The chorus often provided other characters with the insight they needed.

Stage management

The Greek chorus usually communicated in song form, but sometimes spoke their lines in unison. The chorus had to work in unison to help explain the play as there were only one to three actors on stage who were already playing several parts each. As the Greek theatres were so large, the chorus' actions had to be exaggerated and their voices clear so that everyone could see and hear them. To do this, they used techniques such as synchronization, echo, ripple, physical theatre and the use of masks to aid them. A Greek chorus was often led by a coryphaeus. They also served as the ancient equivalent for a curtain, as their parodos (entering procession) signified the beginnings of a play and their exodos (exit procession) served as the curtains closing.

Modern plays

Modern plays, especially Broadway musicals and grand operas, sometimes incorporate a contemporary version of the chorus, although they serve a different purpose. Per Six Plays by Rodgers and Hammerstein:

The singing chorus is used frequently to interpret the mental and emotional reactions of the principal characters, after the manner of a Greek chorus.

Before the introduction of multiple, interacting actors by Aeschylus, the Greek chorus was the main performer in relation to a solitary actor. The importance of the chorus declined after the 5th century BCE, when the chorus began to be separated from the dramatic action. Later dramatists depended on the chorus less than their predecessors.

2.1.3 Comedy

The word "comedy" is derived from the Classical Greek which is a compound either of komos (revel) or (village) and (singing); it is possible that komos itself is derived from revel, and originally meant a village revel. The adjective "comic" (Greek revel komikos), which strictly means that which relates to comedy is, in modern usage, generally confined to the sense of "laughter-provoking". Of this, the word came into modern usage through the Latin comoedia and Italian commedia and has, over time, passed through various shades of meaning.

(from the Greek: komoidía), as a popular meaning, is any humorous discourse or work generally intended to amuse by creating laughter, especially in television, film, and stand-up comedy. This must be carefully distinguished from its academic definition, namely the comic theatre, whose Western origins are found in Ancient Greece. In the Athenian democracy, the public opinion of voters was remarkably influenced by the political satire performed by the comic poets at the theaters. The theatrical genre can be simply described as a dramatic performance which pits two societies against each other in an amusing agon or conflict. Northrop Frye famously depicted these two opposing sides as a "Society of Youth" and a "Society of the Old", but this dichotomy is seldom described as an entirely satisfactory explanation. A later view characterizes the essential agon of comedy as a struggle between a relatively powerless youth and the societal conventions that pose obstacles to his hopes; in this sense, the youth is understood to be constrained by his lack of social authority, and is left with little choice but to take recourse to ruses which engender very dramatic irony which provokes laughter.

Satire and political satire use ironic comedy to portray persons or social institutions as ridiculous or corrupt, thus alienating their audience from the object of humor. Satire is a type of comedy. Parody borrows the form of some popular genre, artwork, or text but uses certain ironic changes to critique that form from within (though not necessarily in a condemning way). Screwball comedy derives its humor largely from bizarre, surprising (and improbable) situations or characters. Black comedy is defined by dark humor that makes light of so called dark or evil elements in human nature. Similarly scatological humor, sexual humor, and race humor create comedy by violating social conventions or taboos in comic ways. A comedy of manners typically takes as its subject a particular part of society (usually upper class society) and uses humor to parody or

satirize the behavior and mannerisms of its members. Romantic comedy is a popular genre that depicts burgeoning romance in humorous terms, and focuses on the foibles of those who are falling in love.

2.1.4 Hamartia (An inborn flaw in the nature of the Hero)

Hamartia (Ancient Greek: is an injury committed in ignorance (when the person affected or the results are not what the agent supposed they were). In tragedy, hamartia is often described as a hero's fatal flaw. It is a term developed by Aristotle in his work Poetics. The word hamartia is rooted in the notion of missing the mark (hamartanein) and covers a broad spectrum that includes ignorant, mistaken, or accidental wrongdoing, as well as deliberate iniquity, error, or sin.

This form of drawing emotion from the audience is a staple of the Greek tragedies. In Greek tragedy, stories that contain a character with a hamartia often follow a similar blueprint. The hamartia, as stated, is seen as an error in judgment or unwitting mistake is applied to the actions of the hero. For example, the hero might attempt to achieve a certain objective X; by making an error in judgment, however, the hero instead achieves the opposite of X, with disastrous consequences.

However, hamartia cannot be sharply defined or have an exact meaning assigned to it. Consequently, a number of alternate interpretations have been associated with it, such as in the Bible hamartia is the Greek word used to denote "sin." Bible translators may reach this conclusion, according to T. C. W. Stinton, because another common interpretation of hamartia can be seen as a "moral deficit" or a "moral error" (Stinton 221). R. D. Dawe disagrees with Stinton's view when he points out in some cases hamartia can even mean to not sin (Dawe 91). It can be seen in this opposing context if the main character does not carry out an action because it is a sin. This failure to act, in turn, must lead to a poor change in fortune for the main character in order for it to truly be a hamartia.

In a medical context, a hamartia denotes a focal malformation consisting of disorganized arrangement of tissue types that are normally present in the anatomical area.

History of hamartia

Aristotle first introduced hamartia in his book Poetics. However through the years the word has changed meanings. Many scholars have argued that the meaning of the word that was given

in Aristotle's book is not really the correct meaning, and that there is a deeper meaning behind the word. In the article "Tragic Error in the Poetics of Aristotle," the scholar J.M. Bremer first explained the general argument of the poetics and, in particular, the immediate context of the term. He then traces the semasiological history of the hamart-group of the words from Homer (who also tried to determine the meaning behind the word) and Aristotle, concluding that of the three possible meanings of hamartia (missing, error, offense), the Stagirite uses the second in our passage of Poetics. It is, then a "tragic error", i.e. a wrong action committed in ignorance of its nature, effect, etc., which is the starting point of a causally connected train of events ending in disaster. Today the word and its meaning is still up in the air; even so the word is still being used in discussion of many plays today, such as Hamlet and Oedipus Rex.

Major examples of hamartia in literature

Hamartia is often referred to as tragic flaw and has many examples throughout literature, especially in Greek tragedy. Isabel Hyde discusses the type of hamartia Aristotle meant to define in the Modern Language Review, "Thus it may be said by some writers to be the 'tragic flaw' of Oedipus that he was hasty in temper; of Samson that he was sensually uxorious; of Macbeth that he was ambitious; of Othello that he was proud and jealous-and so on... but these things do not constitute the 'hamartia of those characters in Aristotle's sense" (Hyde 321). This explains that Aristotle did not describe hamartia as an error of character, but as a moral mistake or ignorant error. Even J.L. Moles comments on the idea that hamartia is considered an error and states, "the modern view (at least until recently) that it means 'error', 'mistake of fact', that is, an act done in ignorance of some salient circumstances".

Hyde goes on to question the meaning of true hamartia and discovers that it is in fact error in the article, "The Tragic Flaw: Is It a Tragic Error?" She claims that the true hamartia that occurs in Oedipus is considered "his ignorance of his true parentage" that led him to become "unwittingly the slayer of his own father" (Hyde 322). This example can be applied when reading literature in regards to the true definition of hamartia and helps place the character's actions into the categories of character flaws and simple mistakes all humans commit. Within Oedipus, it is apparent that these errors are the result of hamartia caused by the gods and these tragic actions occur because tragedy has been willed upon the characters. R.D. Dawe brings this use of hamartia in literature to the forefront in the article "Some Reflections on Ate and Hamartia"

found in Harvard's Studies of Classical Philology. For instance, "this hamartia is in reality as predestined as the incest and parricide and belongs to the category of the 'forced error'... from the artistic point of view it provides the satisfactory illusion of a voluntary choice" (Dawe 118-119). This forced error is caused by the gods and the hamartia the characters engage in has been predestined since their birth. (In relation to Ate and Hamartia relationship, see also Golden's article)

Another example of true hamartia in Greek tragedy is Antigone. Although she has been presented with the decree from her Uncle not to bury her brother and her obsession with her dead family ties initially gets her in trouble, the true hamartia or "error" in this tragedy rests on Creon. It occurs when he orders his men to properly bury Polynices before releasing Antigone which can be identified as the mistake or error that led to her death. Creon's own ignorance causes the hamartia that results in Antigone's death and Dawe agrees here, "Creon believed himself to be acting rightly in the interests of the city. Antigone, Haemon, Tiresias, the chorus and Creon himself (post eventum) recognize that he is in fact mistaken" (Dawe 113). Many characters have flaws that influence their decisions to act in a certain way yet they make mistakes, only to realize them later. True Aristotelian hamartia arises when mistakes or errors cause the plot or direction of action to change in a tragic way as described in the tragedies of Antigone and Oedipus.

Tragic flaw

While the modern popular rendering of hamartia as "tragic flaw" (or "fatal flaw") is broadly imprecise and often misleading, it cannot be ruled out that the term as Aristotle understood it could sometimes at least partially connote a failure of morals or character:

Whether Aristotle regards the "flaw" as intellectual or moral has been hotly discussed. It may cover both senses. The hero must not deserve his misfortune, but he must cause it by making a fatal mistake, an error of judgement, which may well involve some imperfection of character but not such as to make us regard him as "morally responsible" for the disasters although they are nevertheless the consequences of the flaw in him, and his wrong decision at a crisis is the inevitable outcome of his character.

Aeschylus' The Persians provides a good example of one's character contributing to his hamartia. Error would be his decision to invade Greece, as this invasion ends disastrously for him and

Persia. Yet this error is inextricably bound up in Xerxes' chief character flaw: his hubris. A morally tinged understanding of hamartia such as this can and has been applied to the protagonist of virtually every Greek tragedy. For example, Peter Struck comments on Oedipus the King:

The complex nature of Oedipus' "hamartia," is also important. The Greek term "hamartia," typically translated as "tragic flaw," actually is closer in meaning to a "mistake" or an "error," "failing," rather than an innate flaw. In Aristotle's understanding, all tragic heroes have a "hamartia." The character's flaw must result from something that is also a central part of their virtue, which goes somewhat awry, usually due to a lack of knowledge. By defining the notion this way, Aristotle indicates that a truly tragic hero must have a failing that is neither idiosyncratic nor arbitrary, but is somehow more deeply imbedded -- a kind of human failing and human weakness. Oedipus fits this precisely, for his basic flaw is his lack of knowledge about his own identity. Moreover, no amount of foresight or preemptive action could remedy Oedipus' hamartia; unlike other tragic heroes, Oedipus bears no responsibility for his flaw. The audience fears for Oedipus because nothing he does can change the tragedy's outcome.

Thus, while the concept of hamartia as an exclusively moral or personal failing is foreign to Greek tragedy, the connotation is not entirely absent.

Nevertheless, to import the notion of Hamartia as "tragic flaw" into the act of doing literary analysis locks the critic into a kind of endless blame game, an attitude of superiority, and a process of speculation about what the character could or (worse) should have done differently. Tragedy often works precisely because the protagonist in choosing good, chooses something that will lead to unhappiness. This is certainly the case with Oedipus and, arguably, the case with Hamlet.

2.1.5 Plot

Plot is a literary term defined as the events that makes up the story, particularly as they relate to one another in a pattern, in a sequence, through cause and effect, or by coincidence. One is generally interested in how well this pattern of events accomplishes some artistic or emotional effect. An intricate, complicated plot is called an imbroglia, but even the simplest statements of plot may include multiple inferences, as in traditional ballads.

Aristotle on plot

In his Poetics, Aristotle considered plot ("mythos") the most important element of drama—more important than character, for example. A plot must have, Aristotle says, a beginning, a middle, and an end, and the events of the plot must causally relate to one another as being either necessary, or probable.

Of the utmost importance to Aristotle is the plot's ability to arouse emotion in the psyche of the audience. In tragedy, the appropriate emotions are fear and pity, emotions which he considers in his Rhetoric. (Aristotle's work on comedy has not survived.)

Aristotle goes on to consider whether the tragic character suffers (pathos), and whether the tragic character commits the error with knowledge of what he is doing. He illustrates this with the question of a tragic character who is about to kill someone in his family.

The worst situation [artistically] is when the personage is with full knowledge on the point of doing the deed, and leaves it undone. It is odious and also (through the absence of suffering) untragic; hence it is that no one is made to act thus except in some few instances, e.g. Haemon and Creon in Antigone. Next after this comes the actual perpetration of the deed meditated. A better situation than that, however, is for the deed to be done in ignorance, and the relationship discovered afterwards, since there is nothing odious in it, and the discovery will serve to astound us. But the best of all is the last; what we have in Cresphontes, for example, where Merope, on the point of slaying her son, recognizes him in time; in Iphigenia, where sister and brother are in a like position; and in Helle, where the son recognizes his mother, when on the point of giving her up to her enemy.

Exposition

The exposition introduces all of the main characters in the story. It shows how they relate to one another, what their goals and motivations are, and the kind of person they are. The audience may have questions about any of these things, which get settled, but if they do have them they are specific and well-focused questions. Most importantly, in the exposition the audience gets to know the main character, and the main character gets to know his or her goal and what is at stake if he fails to attain his or her goal.

This phase ends, and the next begins, with the introduction of conflict.

Rising action

Rising action is the second phase in Freytag's five-phase structure. It starts with the death of the characters or a conflict.

'Conflict' in Freytag's discussion must not be confused with 'conflict' in Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch's critical apparatus plots into types, e.g. man vs. society. The difference is that an entire story can be discussed according to Quiller-Couch's mode of analysis, while Freytag is talking about the second act in a five-act play, at a time when all of the major characters have been introduced, their motives and allegiances have been made clear (at least for the most part), and they now begin to struggle against one another.

Generally, in this phase the protagonist understands his goal and begins to work toward it. Smaller problems thwart his initial success, and in this phase his progress is directed primarily against these secondary obstacles. This phase shows us how he overcomes these obstacles.

Thus, at the end of this phase and at the beginning of the next he is finally in a position to go up against his primary goal. This part begins after the exposition. It consists of a beginning of a tension or complication that continues with the development of conflict between the characters.

Climax

The point of climax is the turning point of the story, where the main character makes the single big decision that defines the outcome of their story and who they are as a person. The dramatic phase that Freytag called the 'climax' is the third of the five phases, which occupies the middle of the story, and that contains the point of climax. Thus "the climax" may refer to the point of climax or to the third phase of the drama.

The beginning of this phase is marked by the protagonist finally having cleared away the preliminary barriers and being ready to engage with the adversary. Usually, entering this phase, both the protagonist and the antagonist have a plan to win against the other. Now for the first time we see them going against one another in direct, or nearly direct, conflict.

This struggle results with neither character completely winning, nor losing, against the other. Usually, each character's plan is partially successful, and partially foiled by their adversary. What is unique about this central struggle between the two characters is that the protagonist makes a decision which shows us his moral quality, and ultimately determines his fate. In a tragedy, the protagonist here makes a bad decision, which is his miscalculation and the appearance of his tragic flaw.

The climax often contains much of the action in a story, for example, a defining battle.

Falling action

Freytag called this phase "falling action" in the sense that the loose ends are being tied up. However, it is often the time of greatest overall tension in the play, because it is the phase in which everything goes most wrong.

In this phase, the villain has the upper hand. It seems that evil will triumph. The protagonist has never been further from accomplishing the goal. For Freytag, this is true both in tragedies and comedies, because both of these types of play classically show good winning over evil. The question is which side the protagonist has put himself on, and this may not be immediately clear to the audience.

Resolution

In the final phase of Freytag's five phase structure, there is a final confrontation between the protagonist and antagonist, where one or the other decisively wins. This phase is the story of that confrontation, of what leads up to it, of why it happens the way it happens, what it means, and what its long-term consequences are.

2.1.6 Plot devices

A plot device is a means of advancing the plot in a story, often used to motivate characters, create urgency or resolve a difficulty. This can be contrasted with moving a story forward with narrative technique, that is, by making things happen because characters take action for solid, well-motivated reasons. As an example, when the cavalry shows up at the last moment and saves the day, that can be argued to be a plot device; when an adversarial character who has been struggling with himself saves the day due to a change of heart, that is dramatic technique.

Plot outline

A plot outline is a prose telling of a story to be turned into a screenplay. Sometimes called a one page (one page synopsis, about 1 - 3 pages). It is generally longer and more detailed than a standard synopsis (1 - 2 paragraphs), but shorter and less detailed than a treatment or a step outline. There are different ways to create these outlines and they vary in length, but are basically the same thing.

In comics, a pencil, often pluralized as pencils, refers to a stage in the development where the story has been broken down very loosely in a style similar to storyboarding in film development.

The pencils will be very loose (i.e., the sketch rough), the main goals being to lay out the flow of panels across a page, to ensure the story successfully builds suspense and to work out points of view, camera angles and character positions within panels. This can also be referred to as a plot outline or a layout.

2.1.7 Tragedy

Tragedy is a form of drama based on human suffering that invokes in its audience an accompanying catharsis or pleasure in the viewing. While many cultures have developed forms that provoke this paradoxical response, tragedy often refers to a specific tradition of drama that has played a unique and important role historically in the self-definition of Western civilization. That tradition has been multiple and discontinuous, yet the term has often been used to invoke a powerful effect of cultural identity and historical continuity—"the Greeks and the Elizabethans, in one cultural form; Hellenes and Christians, in a common activity," as Raymond Williams puts it. From its obscure origins in the theaters of Athens 2,500 years ago, from which there survives only a fraction of the work of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, through its singular articulations in the works of Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Racine, and Schiller, to the more recent naturalistic tragedy of Strindberg, Beckett's modernist meditations on death, loss and suffering, and Müller's postmodernist reworkings of the tragic canon, tragedy has remained an important site of cultural experimentation, negotiation, struggle, and change. A long line of philosophers—which includes Plato, Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Voltaire, Hume, Diderot, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Freud, Benjamin, Camus, Lacan, and Deleuze—have analysed, speculated upon, and criticised the tragic form. In the wake of Aristotle's Poetics (335 BCE), tragedy has been used to make genre distinctions, whether at the scale of poetry in general (where the tragic divides against

epic and lyric) or at the scale of the drama (where tragedy is opposed to comedy). In the modern era, tragedy has also been defined against drama, melodrama, the tragicomic, and epic theatre.

Origin

The word "tragedy" appears to have been used to describe different phenomena at different times. It derives from (Classical Greek , contracted from trag(o)-aoidiā = "goat song", which comes from tragos = "he-goat" and aeidein = "to sing" (cf. "ode"). Scholars suspect this may be traced to a time when a goat was either the prize in a competition of choral dancing or was that around which a chorus danced prior to the animal's ritual sacrifice. In another view on the etymology, Athenaeus of Naucratis (2nd–3rd century CE) says that the original form of the word was trygodia from trygos (grape harvest) and ode (song), because those events were first introduced during grape harvest.

Writing in 335 BCE (long after the Golden Age of 5th-century Athenian tragedy), Aristotle provides the earliest-surviving explanation for the origin of the dramatic art-form in his Poetics, in which he argues that tragedy developed from the improvisations of the leader of choral dithyrambs (hymns sung and danced in praise of Dionysos, the god of wine and fertility)

Anyway, arising from an improvisatory beginning (both tragedy and comedy—tragedy from the leaders of the dithyramb, and comedy from the leaders of the phallic processions which even now continue as a custom in many of our cities), [tragedy] grew little by little, as [the poets] developed whatever [new part] of it had appeared; and, passing through many changes, tragedy came to a halt, since it had attained its own nature. Poetics IV, 1449a 10-15

In the same work, Aristotle attempts to provide a scholastic definition of what tragedy is:

Tragedy is, then, an enactment of a deed that is important and complete, and of [a certain] magnitude, by means of language enriched [with ornaments], each used separately in the different parts [of the play]: it is enacted, not [merely] recited, and through pity and fear it effects relief (catharsis) to such [and similar] emotions. Poetics, VI 1449b 2-3

There is some dissent to the dithyrambic origins of tragedy, mostly based on the differences between the shapes of their choruses and styles of dancing. A common descent from pre-Hellenic fertility and burial rites has been suggested. Nietzsche

discussed the origins of Greek tragedy in his early book, The Birth of Tragedy (1872).

In the English language, the most famous and most successful tragedies are those by William Shakespeare and his Elizabethan contemporaries. Shakespeare's tragedies include:

Antony and Cleopatra

Coriolanus

Hamlet

Julius Caesar

King Lear

Macbeth

Othello

Romeo and Juliet

Timon of Athens

Titus Andronicus

A contemporary of Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, also wrote examples of tragedy in English, notably:

The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus

Tamburlaine

John Webster also wrote famous plays of the genre: The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil

Modern development

In modernist literature, the definition of tragedy has become less precise. The most fundamental change has been the rejection of Aristotle's dictum that true tragedy can only depict those with power and high status. Arthur Miller's essay "Tragedy and the Common Man" (1949) argues that tragedy may also depict ordinary people in domestic surroundings.^[26] British playwright Howard Barker has argued strenuously for the rebirth of tragedy in the contemporary theatre, most notably in his volume Arguments for a Theatre. "You emerge from tragedy equipped against lies. After the musical, you're anybody's fool," he insists.



LITERARY TERMS

PART III

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students with different genres or types of prose literary forms.
- To help them study English Literature with the help of these literary terms
- To make them understand literary forms in comparison with different literary genres.
- To introduce students with the literary devices and figurative language.

3.1 LITERARY TERMS

3.1.1. Epistolary novel

An epistolary novel is a novel written as a series of documents. The usual form is letters, although diary entries, newspaper clippings and other documents are sometimes used. Recently, electronic "documents" such as recordings and radio, blogs, and e-mails have also come into use. The word epistolary is derived through Latin from the Greek word epistole, meaning a letter (see epistle).

The epistolary form can add greater realism to a story, because it mimics the workings of real life. It is thus able to demonstrate differing points of view without recourse to the device of an omniscient narrator.

Early works

There are two theories on the genesis of the epistolary novel. The first claims that the genre originated from novels with inserted letters, in which the portion containing the third person narrative in between the letters was gradually reduced. The other theory claims that the epistolary novel arose from miscellanies of letters and poetry: some of the letters were tied together into a (mostly amorous) plot. Both claims have some validity. The first truly epistolary novel, the Spanish "Prison of Love" (Cárcel de amor) (c.1485) by Diego de San Pedro, belongs to a tradition of novels in which a large number of inserted letters already dominated the narrative. Other well-known examples of early epistolary novels are closely related to the tradition of letter-books and miscellanies of letters. Within the successive editions of Edmé Boursault's Letters of Respect, Gratitude and Love (Lettres de respect, d'obligation et d'amour) (1669), a group of letters written to a girl named Babet was expanded and became more and more distinct from the other letters, until it formed a small epistolary novel entitled Letters to Babet (Lettres à Babet). The immensely famous Letters of a Portuguese Nun (Lettres portugaises) (1669) generally attributed to Gabriel-Joseph de La Vergne, comte de Guilleragues, though a small minority still regard Marianna Alcoforado as the author, is claimed to be intended to be part of a miscellany of Guilleragues prose and poetry.^[3] The founder of the epistolary novel in English is said by many to be James Howell (1594–1666) with "Familiar Letters", who writes of prison, foreign adventure, and the love of women.

The first novel to expose the complex play that the genre allows was Aphra Behn's Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister (1684), which appeared in three successive volumes in 1684, 1685, and 1687. The novel shows the genre's results of changing perspectives: individual points were presented by the individual characters, and the central voice of the author and moral evaluation disappeared (at least in the first volume; her further volumes introduced a narrator). Behn furthermore explored a realm of intrigue with letters that fall into the wrong hands, with faked letters, with letters withheld by protagonists, and even more complex interaction.

The epistolary novel as a genre became popular in the 18th century in the works of such authors as Samuel Richardson, with his immensely successful novels Pamela (1740) and Clarissa (1749). In France, there was Lettres persanes (1721) by Montesquieu, followed by Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse (1761) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Laclos' Les Liaisons dangereuses (1782), which used the epistolary form to great dramatic effect, because the sequence of events was not always related directly or explicitly. In Germany, there was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers (1774) (The Sorrows of Young Werther) and Friedrich Hölderlin's Hyperion. The first North American novel, The History of Emily Montague (1769) by Frances Brooke was written in epistolary form.

Starting in the 18th century, the epistolary form was subject to much ridicule, resulting in a number of savage burlesques. The most notable example of these was Henry Fielding's Shamela (1741), written as a parody of Pamela. In it, the female narrator can be found wielding a pen and scribbling her diary entries under the most dramatic and unlikely of circumstances.

The epistolary novel slowly fell out of use in the late 18th century. Although Jane Austen tried her hand at the epistolary in juvenile writings and her novella Lady Susan, she abandoned this structure for her later work. It is thought that her lost novel "First Impressions", which was redrafted to become Pride and Prejudice, may have been epistolary: Pride and Prejudice contains an unusual number of letters quoted in full and some play a critical role in the plot.

The epistolary form nonetheless saw continued use, surviving in exceptions or in fragments in nineteenth-century novels. In Honoré de Balzac's novel Letters of Two Brides, two

women who became friends during their education at a convent correspond over a 17 year period, exchanging letters describing their lives. Mary Shelley employs the epistolary form in her novel Frankenstein (1818). Shelley uses the letters as one of a variety of framing devices, as the story is presented through the letters of a sea captain and scientific explorer attempting to reach the north pole who encounters Victor Frankenstein and records the dying man's narrative and confessions. In the late 19th century, Bram Stoker released one of the most widely recognized and successful novels in the epistolary form to date, Dracula. Printed in 1897, the novel is compiled entirely of letters, diary entries, newspaper clippings, telegrams, doctor's notes, ship's logs, and the like, which Stoker adroitly employs to balance believability and dramatic tension.

Types of epistolary novels

There are three types of epistolary novels: monologic (giving the letters of only one character, like Letters of a Portuguese Nun), dialogic (giving the letters of two characters, like Mme Marie Jeanne Riccoboni's Letters of Fanni Butlerd (1757), and polylogic (with three or more letter-writing characters). In addition, a crucial element in polylogic epistolary novels like Clarissa, and Dangerous Liaisons is the dramatic device of 'discrepant awareness': the simultaneous but separate correspondences of the heroines and the villains creating dramatic tension.

3.1.2 Magic realism or magical realism

It is an aesthetic style or genre of fiction in which magical elements blend with the real world. The story explains these magical elements as real occurrences, presented in a straightforward manner that places the "real" and the "fantastic" in the same stream of thought. It is a film, literary and visual art genre.

One example of magic realism is when a character in the story continues to be alive beyond the normal length of life and this is subtly depicted by the character being present throughout many generations. On the surface the story has no clear magical attributes and everything is conveyed in a real setting, but such a character breaks the rules of our real world. The author may give precise details of the real world such as the date of birth of a reference character and the army recruitment age, but such facts help to define an age for the fantastic character of the story that would turn out to be an abnormal occurrence like someone living for two hundred years.

The term is broadly descriptive rather than critically rigorous: Winona State University Asst. Professor of Japanese Studies, and author, Matthew Strecher defines magic realism as "...what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe." This critical perspective towards magical realism stems from the Western reader's disassociation with mythology, a root of magical realism more easily understood by non-Western cultures. Western confusion regarding magical realism is due to the "...conception of the real" created in a magical realist text: rather than explain reality using natural or physical laws, as in typical Western texts, magical realist texts create a reality "...in which the relation between incidents, characters, and setting could not be based upon or justified by their status within the physical world or their normal acceptance by bourgeois mentality." Many writers are categorized as "magical realist," which confuses what the term really means and how wide its definition is

3.1.3 Narrative mode or Point of view

The narrative mode (also known as the mode of narration) is the set of methods the author of a literary, theatrical, cinematic, or musical story uses to convey the plot to the audience. Narration, the process of presenting the narrative, occurs because of the narrative mode. It encompasses several overlapping areas of concern, most importantly narrative point-of-view, which determines through whose perspective the story is viewed and narrative voice, which determines a set of consistent features regarding the way through which the story is communicated to the audience.

The narrator may be a fictive person devised by the author as a stand-alone entity, or may even be a character. The narrator is considered participant if an actual character in the story, and nonparticipant if only an implied character, or a sort of omniscient or semi-omniscient being who does not take part in the story but only relates it to the audience.

Ability to use the different points of view is one measure of a person's writing skill. The writing mark schemes used for National Curriculum assessments in England reflect this: they encourage the awarding of marks for the use of viewpoint as part of a wider judgment.

The narrative mode encompasses not only who tells the story, but also how the story is described or expressed (for example, by using stream of consciousness or unreliable narration).

Narrative point of view

Narrative point of view in the creative writing of fiction describes the narrator's position in relation to the story being told. Point of view differs from similar terms and concepts such as perspective, viewpoint, or the point-of-view of a camera. Perspective refers to a particular attitude toward or a way of regarding something; when discussed in fiction writing, perspective means the subjective perception of a character. Viewpoint refers to the position from which something is viewed, and point-of-view in film refers to the view captured by the camera's optics. The viewpoint of a person or the point-of-view of a camera is not analogous to narrative point of view in literature.

First-person point of view

In a first-person narrative the story is relayed by a narrator who is also a character within the story, so that the narrator reveals the plot by referring to this viewpoint character as "I" (or, when plural, "we"). Oftentimes, the first-person narrative is used as a way to directly convey the deeply internal, otherwise unspoken thoughts of the narrator. Frequently, the narrator's story revolves around him-/herself as the protagonist and allows this protagonist/narrator character's inner thoughts to be conveyed openly to the audience, even if not to any of the other characters. It also allows that character to be further developed through his/her own style in telling the story. First-person narrations may be told like third-person ones, with a person experiencing the story without being aware that they are actually conveying their experiences to an audience; on the other hand, the narrator may be conscious of telling the story to a given audience, perhaps at a given place and time, for a given reason. In extreme cases, the first-person narration may be told as a story within a story, with the narrator appearing as a character in the story. The first-person narrator also may or may not be the focal character.

The narrator in the stories that narrated by I perspective is protagonist and the main subject. We become aware of the events and characters of story by his view to and his knowledge of the story. As before mentioned, the first-person narrator is always a character within his/her own story (whether the protagonist or not) and this viewpoint character takes actions, makes judgments and has opinions and biases, therefore, not always allowing the audience to be able to comprehend some of the other character's thoughts, feelings, or understandings as much as this one

character. In this case, the narrator gives and withholds information based on his/her own viewing of events. It is an important task for the reader to determine as much as possible about the character of the narrator in order to decide what "really" happens. Example:

"I could picture it. I have a habit of imagining the conversations between my friends. We went out to the Cafe Napolitain to have an aperitif and watch the evening crowd on the Boulevard." from The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway. The narrator is protagonist Jake Barnes.

The narrator can be the protagonist (e.g., Gulliver in Gulliver's Travels), someone very close to him who is privy to his thoughts and actions (Dr. Watson in Sherlock Holmes), or an ancillary character who has little to do with the action of the story (such as Nick Carraway in The Great Gatsby). Narrators can report others' narratives at one or more removes. These are called 'frame narrators': examples are Mr. Lockwood, the narrator in Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë, and the unnamed narrator in Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad.

In autobiographical fiction, the first person narrator is the character of the author (with varying degrees of accuracy). The narrator is still distinct from the author and must behave like any other character and any other first person narrator. Examples of this kind of narrator include Jim Carroll in The Basketball Diaries and Kurt Vonnegut Jr. in Timequake (in this case, the first-person narrator is also the author). In some cases, the narrator is writing a book — "the book in your hands" — therefore it has most of the powers and knowledge of the author. Examples include The Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco, and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon.

Third-person point of view

Third-person narration provides the greatest flexibility to the author and thus is the most commonly used narrative mode in literature. In the third-person narrative mode, each and every character is referred to by the narrator as "he", "she", "it", or "they", but never as "I" or "we" (first-person), or "you" (second-person). In third-person narrative, it is obvious that the narrator be merely an unspecified entity or uninvolved person that conveys the story, but not a character of any kind within the story being told. Third-person singular (he/she) is overwhelmingly the most common type of third-person narrative, before there have been successful uses of the third-person plural (they), as in Maxine Swann's short story "Flower

Children". Even more common, however, is to see singular and plural used together in one story, at different times, depending upon the number of people being referred to at a given moment in the plot. In third-person narratives, a character never would refer to himself in the third-person e.g., "(Character name) would like to come with you".

If the narrator of the story is not present or is present but not a protagonist and a story told by someone else and not his own, the story is narrated by He/She perspective.

The third-person modes are usually categorized along two axes. The first is the subjectivity/objectivity axis, with "subjective" narration describing one or more character's feelings and thoughts, while "objective" narration does not describe the feelings or thoughts of any characters. The second axis is between "omniscient" and "limited", a distinction that refers to the knowledge available to the narrator. An omniscient narrator has omniscient knowledge of time, people, places and events; a limited narrator, in contrast, may know absolutely everything about a single character and every piece of knowledge in that character's mind, but it is "limited" to that character—that is, it cannot describe things unknown to the focal character.

Narrative voice

The narrative voice describes how the story is conveyed (for example, by "viewing" a character's thought processes, by reading a letter written for someone, by a retelling of a character's experiences, etc.).

Character voice

One of the most common narrative voices, used especially with first- and third-person viewpoints is the character voice in which an actual conscious "person" (in most cases, a living human being) is presented as the narrator. In this situation, the narrator is no longer an unspecified entity, but rather, a more relatable, realistic human character who may or may not be involved in the actions of his or her story and who may or may not take a biased approach in the storytelling. If he or she is directly involved in the plot, this narrator is also called the viewpoint character. The viewpoint character is not necessarily the focal character: examples of supporting viewpoint characters include Doctor Watson, Scout in To Kill a Mockingbird, and The Great Gatsby's Nick Carraway.

Historically, the third-person omniscient perspective has been the most commonly used; it is seen in countless classic novels, including works by Jane Austen, Leo Tolstoy, Charles Dickens, and George Eliot. This is a tale told from the point of view of a storyteller who plays no part in the story but knows all the facts, including the characters' thoughts. It sometimes even takes a subjective approach. One advantage of omniscience is that this mode enhances the sense of objective reliability (i.e. truthfulness) of the plot. The third-person omniscient narrator is the least capable of being unreliable—although the omniscient narrator can have its own personality, offering judgments and opinions on the behavior of the characters.

In addition to reinforcing the sense of the narrator as reliable (and thus of the story as true), the main advantage of this mode is that it is eminently suited to telling huge, sweeping, epic stories, and/or complicated stories involving numerous characters. The disadvantage of this mode is that it can create more distance between the audience and the story, and that—when used in conjunction with a sweeping, epic "cast of thousands" story—characterization is more limited, which can reduce the reader's identification with or attachment to the characters. A classic example of both the advantages and disadvantages of this mode is J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings series.

Some more modern examples are Lemony Snicket, James Eugene Robinson in his novel, The Flower of Grass, and Philip Pullman. In some unusual cases, the reliability and impartiality of the narrator may in fact be as suspect as in the third person limited

3.1.4 Novel

A novel is a book of long narrative in literary prose. The genre has historical roots both in the fields of the medieval and early modern romance and in the tradition of the novella. The latter supplied the present generic term in the late 18th century.

Further definition of the genre is historically difficult. The construction of the narrative, the plot, the way reality is created in the works of fiction, the fascination of the character study, and the use of language are usually discussed to show a novel's artistic merits. Most of these requirements were introduced in the 16th and 17th centuries, in order to give fiction a justification outside the field of factual history. The individualism of the presentation makes the personal memoir and the autobiography the two closest relatives among the genres of modern histories.

Definition

The fictional narrative, the novel's distinct "literary" prose, specific media requirements (the use of paper and print), a characteristic subject matter that creates both intimacy and a typical epic depth can be seen as features that developed with the Western (and modern) market of fiction. The separation of a field of histories from a field of literary fiction fueled the evolution of these features in the last 400 years.

A fictional narrative

Fictionality and the presentation in a narrative are the two features most commonly invoked to distinguish novels from histories. In a historical perspective they are problematic criteria. Histories were supposed to be narrative projects throughout the early modern period. Their authors could include inventions as long as they were rooted in traditional knowledge or in order to orchestrate a certain passage. Historians would thus invent and compose speeches for didactic purposes. Novels can, on the other hand, depict the social, political, and personal realities of a place and period with a clarity and detail historians would not dare to explore.

The line between history and novel is eventually drawn between the debates novelists and historians are supposed to address in the West and wherever the Western pattern of debates has been introduced: Novels are supposed to show qualities of literature and art. Histories are by contrast supposed to be written in order to fuel a public debate over historical responsibilities. A novel can hence deal with history. It will be analyzed, however, with a look at the almost timeless value it is supposed to show in the hands of private readers as a work of art.

The critical demand is a source of constant argument: Does the specific novel have these "eternal qualities" of art, this "deeper meaning" an interpretation tries to reveal? The debate itself had positive effects. It allowed critics to cherish fictions that are clearly marked as such. The novel is not a historical forgery, it does not hide the fact that it was made with a certain design. The word novel can appear on book covers and title pages; the artistic effort or the sheer suspense created can find a remark in a preface or on the blurb. Once it is stated that this is a text whose craftsmanship we should acknowledge literary critics will be responsible for the further discussion. The new responsibility (historians were the only

qualified critics up into the 1750s) made it possible to publicly disqualify much of the previous fictional production: Both the early 18th-century roman à clef and its fashionable counterpart, the nouvelle historique, had offered narratives with – by and large scandalous – historical implications. Historians had discussed them with a look at facts they had related. The modern literary critic who became responsible for fictions in the 1750s offered a less scandalous debate: A work is "literature", art, if it has a personal narrative, heroes to identify with, fictional inventions, style and suspense – in short anything that might be handled with the rather personal ventures of creativity and artistic freedom. It may relate facts with scandalous accuracy, or distort them; yet one can ignore any such work as worthless if it does not try to be an achievement in the new field of literary works – it has to compete with works of art and invention, not with true histories. The new scandal is if it fails to offer literary merits.

Historians reacted and left much of their own previous "medieval" and "early modern" production to the evaluation of literary critics. New histories discussed public perceptions of the past – the decision that turned them into the perfect platform on which one can question historical liabilities in the West. Fictions, allegedly an essentially personal subject matter, became, on the other hand, a field of materials that call for a public interpretation: they became a field of cultural significance to be explored with a critical and (in the school system) didactic interest in the subjective perceptions both of artists and their readers.

3.1.5 Bildungsroman Novel

In literary criticism, bildungsroman ; in German it means: "formation novel") or coming-of-age story is a literary genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood (coming of age), and in which character change is it in 1905. The genre is further characterized by a number of formal, topical, and thematic features: The term coming-of-age novel is sometimes used interchangeably with Bildungsroman, but its use is usually wider and less technical. thus extremely important. The term was coined in 1819 by philologist Karl Morgenstern in his university lectures, and later famously reprised by Wilhelm Dilthey, who legitimized it in 1870 and popularized

The birth of the Bildungsroman is normally dated to the publication of Goethe's The Apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister in 1795–96. Although the Bildungsroman arose in Germany, it has had extensive influence first in Europe and later throughout the world.

Thomas Carlyle translated Goethe's novel into English, and after its publication in 1824, many British authors wrote novels inspired by it. In the 20th century, the genre has been particularly popular among female and minority writers; it has spread to Germany, Britain, France and several other countries around the globe

A Bildungsroman tells about the growing up or coming of age of a sensitive person who is looking for answers and experience. The genre evolved from folklore tales of a dunce or youngest son going out in the world to seek his fortune. Usually in the beginning of the story there is an emotional loss which makes the protagonist leave on his journey. In a Bildungsroman, the goal is maturity, and the protagonist achieves it gradually and with difficulty. The genre often features a main conflict between the main character and society. Typically, the values of society are gradually accepted by the protagonist and he is ultimately accepted into society – the protagonist's mistakes and disappointments are over. In some works, the protagonist is able to reach out and help others after having achieved maturity.

There are many variations and subgenres of Bildungsroman that focus on the growth of an individual. An Entwicklungsroman ("development novel") is a story of general growth rather than self-cultivation. An Erziehungsroman ("education novel") focuses on training and formal schooling, while a Künstlerroman ("artist novel") is about the development of an artist and shows a growth of the self.

3.1.6 Short story

A short story is a work of fiction that is usually written in prose, often in narrative format. A short story usually deals with a few characters and often concentrates on the creation of the mood rather than the plot.

The short story format tends to be more pointed than longer works of fiction, such as novellas (in the 20th and 21st century sense) and novels. Short story definitions based on length differ somewhat, even among professional writers, in part because of the fragmentation of the medium into genres. Since the short story format includes a wide range of genres and styles, the actual length is determined by the individual author's preference (or the story's actual needs in terms of creative trajectory or story arc) and the submission guidelines relevant to the story's actual market. Guidelines vary greatly among publishers.

Many short story writers define their work through a combination of creative, personal expression, and artistic integrity. They attempt to resist categorization by genre as well as definition by numbers, finding such approaches limiting and counter-intuitive to artistic form and reasoning. As a result, definitions of the short story based on length splinter even more when the writing process is taken into consideration.

A short story is often judged by its ability to provide a complete or satisfying treatment of its characters and subject.[4]ion, such as novellas (in the 20th and 21st century sense) and novels. Short story definitions based on length differ somewhat, even among professional writers, in part because of the fragmentation of the medium into genres. Since the short story format includes a wide range of genres and styles, the actual length is determined by the individual author's preference (or the story's actual needs in terms of creative trajectory or story arc) and the submission guidelines relevant to the story's actual market. Guidelines vary greatly among publishers.

Many short story writers define their work through a combination of creative, personal expression, and artistic integrity. They attempt to resist categorization by genre as well as definition by numbers, finding such approaches limiting and counter-intuitive to artistic form and reasoning. As a result, definitions of the short story based on length splinter even more when the writing process is taken into consideration.

3.1.7 Setting of novel

Setting the time, place, physical details, and circumstances in which a situation occurs. Settings include the background, atmosphere or environment in which characters live and move, and usually include physical characteristics of the surroundings. Settings enables the reader to better envision how a story unfolds by relating necessary physical details of a piece of literature. A setting may be simple or elaborate, used to create ambiance, lend credibility or realism, emphasize or accentuate, organize, or even distract the reader. Settings in the Bible are simplistic. In the book of Genesis, we read about the creation of the universe and the lives of the descendants of Adam. Great detail is taken in documenting the lineage, actions, and ages of the characters at milestones in their lives, yet remarkably little detail is given about physical characteristics of the landscape and surroundings in which events occurred. In Genesis 20, we learn that because of her beauty, Sarah's identity is concealed to prevent the death of her husband,

Abraham. Yet, we have no description of Sarah or Abraham's hair, eye or skin color, height, weight, physical appearance, or surroundings. Detailed settings that were infrequent in some ancient writings like the Bible are common in today's literature. In recent literature, settings are often described in elaborate detail, enabling the reader to vividly envision even imaginary characters and actions like the travels of Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien. Settings have a way of drawing the reader into a piece of literature while facilitating understanding of the characters and their actions. Understanding the setting is useful because it enables us to see how an author captures the attention of the reader by painting a mental picture using words. See *Literature, An Introduction to Reading and Writing*. Kate Endrigo, Student, University of North Carolina at Pembroke fiction, setting includes the time, location, and everything in which a story takes place, and initiates the main backdrop and mood for a story. Setting has been referred to as story world or milieu to include a context (especially society) beyond the immediate surroundings of the story. Elements of setting may include culture, historical period, geography, and hour. Along with plot, character, theme, and style, setting is considered one of the fundamental components of fiction.

Setting is a critical component for assisting the plot, as in man vs. nature or man vs. society stories. In some stories the setting becomes a character itself. The term "setting" is often used to refer to the social milieu in which the events of a novel occur. Novelist and novel-writing instructor Donna Levin has described how this social milieu shapes the characters' values.. For young readers in the US (K-5), the setting is often established as the "place" where the story occurs. As children advance, the elements of the story setting are expanded to include the passage of time which might be static in some stories or dynamic in others (e.g. changing seasons, day-and-night, etc.). The passage of time as an element of the setting helps direct the child's attention to recognize setting elements in more complex stories. Setting is another way of identifying where a story takes place.

3.1.8 Picaresque novel

The picaresque novel (Spanish: "picaresca," from "pícaro," for "rogue" or "rascal") is a popular sub-genre of prose fiction which is usually satirical and depicts, in realistic and often humorous detail, the adventures of a roguish hero of low social class who lives by his wits in a corrupt society. This style of novel originated in sixteenth century Spain and flourished throughout Europe in the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It continues to influence modern literature.

The word *picaro* starts to first appear in Spain with the current meaning in 1545. The word *picaro* does not appear in Lazarillo de Tormes (1554), the novella credited with founding the genre. The expression *picaresque novel* was coined in 1810

The character type of *Lazarillo*, which determines the story and the so-called *picaresque novel* genre, has been shaped from characterization elements already present in Roman literature. With Petronius' Satyricon, *Lazarillo* takes some of the traits of the central figure of *Encolpius*, a former gladiator but it is unlikely that the author had access to *Petronius'* work; from the comedies of Plautus, it borrows from the figure of the parasite and the supple slave; other traits are taken from Apuleius's The Golden Ass.¹The *Golden Ass* and *Satyricon* were particularly revived and widely read in renaissance Europe, and are rare surviving samples of a mostly lost genre, which was highly popular in the classical world, known as "Milesian tales."

Arabic literature, which was read widely in Spain in the time of Al-Andalus and possessed a literary tradition with similar themes, is another possible formative influence on the *picaresque* style. Al-Hamadani (d.1008) of *Hamadhan* (Iran) is credited with inventing the literary genre of maqamat in which a wandering vagabond makes his living on the gifts his listeners give him following his extemporaneous displays of rhetoric, erudition, or verse, often done with a trickster's touch *Ibn al-Astarkuwi* or *al-Ashtarkuni* (d.1134) also wrote in the genre maqamat, comparable to later European *picaresque* novels. While elements of Chaucer and Boccaccio have a *picaresque* feel and are likely to have contributed to the style, the modern *picaresque* begins with Lazarillo de Tormes, which was published anonymously in Antwerp and Spain in 1554. It is variously considered either the first *picaresque* novel or at least the antecedent of the genre. The title character, *Lazarillo*, is a *pícaro* who must live by his wits in an impoverished country full of hypocrisy.

Sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

The autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, written in Florence beginning in 1558, also has much in common with the *picaresque*. Another early example is Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599), characterized by religiosity.

Francisco de Quevedo's El buscón (1604 according to Francisco Rico; the exact date is uncertain, yet it was certainly a very early work) is considered the masterpiece of the subgenre by A.A. Parker, because of his baroque style and the study of the delinquent psychology. However, a more recent school of thought, led by Francisco Rico, rejects Parker's view, contending instead that the protagonist, Pablos, is a highly unrealistic character, simply a means for Quevedo to launch classist, racist and sexist attacks. Moreover, argues Rico, the structure of the novel is radically different from previous works of the picaresque genre: Quevedo uses the conventions of the picaresque as a mere vehicle to show off his abilities with conceit and rhetoric, rather than to construct a satirical critique of Spanish Golden Age society.

Indeed, in order to understand the historical context that led to the development of these paradigmatic picaresque novels in Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is essential to take into consideration the circumstances surrounding the lives of conversos, whose ancestors had been Jewish, and whose New Christian faith was subjected to close scrutiny and mistrust. In other European countries, these Spanish novels were read and imitated. In Germany, Grimmelshausen wrote Simplicius Simplicissimus (1669), the most important of non-Spanish picaresque novels. It describes the devastation caused by the Thirty Years' War. In Le Sage's Gil Blas (1715) is a classic example of the genre, which in France had declined into an aristocratic adventure. In Britain, the body of Tobias Smollett's work, and Daniel Defoe's Moll Flanders (1722) are considered picaresque, but they lack the sense of religious redemption of delinquency that was very important in Spanish and German novels. The triumph of Moll Flanders is more economic than moral.

The classic Chinese novel Journey to the West is considered to have considerable picaresque elements. Having been written in 1590, it is contemporary with much of the above - but is unlikely to have been directly influenced by the European genre.

3.1.9 Stream of consciousness

Stream of consciousness describes the continuous flow of sense - perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and memories in the human mind. It was introduced to the field of literary studies from that of psychology, as a method of representing a blending of mental processes in fictional characters, usually in an unpunctuated or disjointed form of interior monologue. The term "Stream of

Consciousness" was coined by philosopher and psychologist William James. It was taken from the book Principles of Psychology.

In literary criticism, *stream of consciousness* is a narrative mode that seeks to portray an individual's point of view by giving the written equivalent of the character's thought processes, either in a loose interior monologue, or in connection to his or her actions. Stream-of-consciousness writing is usually regarded as a special form of interior monologue and is characterized by associative leaps in syntax and punctuation that may sometimes make the prose difficult to follow. Stream of consciousness and interior monologue are distinguished from dramatic monologue, where the speaker is addressing an audience or a third person, which is used chiefly in poetry or drama. In stream of consciousness, the speaker's thought processes are more often depicted as overheard in the mind (or addressed to oneself); it is primarily a fictional device. James Joyce's *Ulysses* is the novel written in stream of consciousness style.

Stream of Consciousness and Interior monologue

Stream of Consciousness is often used as a synonym for interior monologue, but they can also be distinguished psychologically and literarily. In a psychological sense, stream of consciousness is the subject - matter, while interior monologue is the technique for presenting it; thus Marcel Proust's novel *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913–27) is about the stream of consciousness, especially the connection between sense - impressions and memory, but it does not actually use interior monologue. In a literary sense, stream of consciousness is a special style of interior monologue; while an interior monologue always presents a character's thoughts 'directly', without the apparent intervention of a summarizing and selecting narrator, it does not necessarily mingle them with impressions and perceptions -nor does it necessarily violate the norms of grammar, syntax, or logic- but the stream - of - consciousness technique also does one or both of these things.

3.1.10 Novel of social reality

Novel of social reality, also known as social problem novels or realist fiction, originated in the 18th century but gained a popular following in the 19th center with the rise of the Victorian Era and in many ways was a reaction to industrialization, social, political and

economic issues and movements. In the 1830s the social novel saw resurgence as emphasis on widespread reforms of government and society emerged, and acted as a literary means of protest and awareness of abuses of government, industry and other repercussions suffered by those who did not profit from England's economic prosperity. The sensationalized accounts and stories of the working class poor were directed toward middle class audiences to help incite sympathy and action towards pushing for legal and moral changes, as with the Reform Act of 1832, and crystallized different issues in periodicals and novels for a growing literate population.

Different sub-genres of the social novel included the industrial novel that focused on the country's working class rural and urban poor and also the later 'condition of England' novel that was geared toward education, suffrage and other social movements. Deplorable conditions in factories and mines, the plight of child labor and endangered women, and the constant threat of rising criminality and [epidemics] due to over-crowding and poor sanitation were all laced into the storyline lines of these novels. On a moral level the social novel became the medium for authors who either took in common experiences of a marginalized group or those in the midst of dire circumstances and composed sensationalized stories for members of the middle and upper classes of Victorian society. Many of the different novels held a moral or supernatural element that linked reform to Christianity and played on the perception that the middle class were more economically sound but also more devoted to their religiosity, therefore more prone to assist the lower classes before the aristocracy. An example of this was Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol where the lead character Scrooge is instructed by several ghosts to live a Christian life and help his less fortunate neighbors and employees. Though the majority of these novels were to sensationalize and shock the middle class into political action and reform work, opposition against these novels was rapid throughout their peak years during the 19th century. An element of the growing mass culture that came with more economic prosperity and literacy in the middle class led to a saturation of literature that combined the respectable and the scandalous and meant wealth to the authors, editors and distributors of these novels. This was often read as an underhanded way for outsiders to make a profit off the struggles of disenfranchised, uneducated and underemployed populations, but the genre of the social problem novel was also an indicator of the social changes within Victorian society. Therefore the social novels

did not determine the structures, government or institutions of the nation but the social novel was determined and was a reflection of the nation.

The Effects of the Novel of Social reality

A debate rages over whether or not the social novel ever declined but elements of the genre have permeated into different mediums since the 1850s. The social problem novels were not confined to England but were written throughout Europe and the United States. An example is Russian author Leo Tolstoy, who championed reform for his own country, particularly in education and added his novels War and Peace and Anna Karenina to the realist fiction genre. Newspapers would continue to sensationalize stories and novels would continue to inspire and thrill the public and elements of social novels still provide the messages of marginalized parts of different societies today.

3.1.11 Psychological novel

A Psychological fiction is a specific sub-genre of the wide ranging thriller genre. This genre often incorporates elements from the mystery genre in addition to the typical traits of the thriller genre. Usually thrillers focus on plot over fictional characters, emphasizing on intense physical action over the character's psyche. Psychological thrillers tend to reverse this formula to a certain degree, emphasizing the characters just as much if not more so than the plot. psychological novel, also called psychological realism, is a work of prose fiction which places more than the usual amount of emphasis on interior characterization, and on the motives, circumstances, and internal action which springs from, and develops, external action. The psychological novel is not content to state what happens but goes on to explain the motivation of this action. In this type of writing character and characterization are more than usually important, and they often delve deeper into the mind of a character than novels of other genres. The psychological novel can be called a novel of the "inner man," so to say. In some cases, the stream of consciousness technique, as well as interior monologues, may be employed to better illustrate the inner workings of the human mind at work. Flashbacks may also be featured. While these three textual techniques are also prevalent in "modernism," there is no deliberate effort to fragment the prose or compel the reader to interpret the text.

The Tale of Genji, written in 11th century Japan, has often been considered the first psychological novel. In the west, the

origins of the psychological novel can be traced as far back as Giovanni Boccaccio's 1344 Elegia di Madonna Fiammetta; that is before the term psychology was coined.

3.1.12 Historical novel

A novel that has as its setting a usually significant period of history and that attempts to convey the spirit, manners, and social conditions of a past age with realistic detail and fidelity (which is in some cases only apparent fidelity) to historical fact. The work may deal with actual historical personages...or it may contain a mixture of fictional and historical characters.

An early example of historical prose fiction is Luó Guànzhōng's 14th century Romance of the Three Kingdoms, which covers one of the most important periods of Chinese history and left a lasting impact on Chinese culture.

The historical novel was further popularized in the 19th century by writers classified as Romantics. Many regard Sir Walter Scott as the first to write historical novels. György Lukács, in his The Historical Novel, argues that Scott is the first fiction writer who saw history not just as a convenient frame in which to stage a contemporary narrative, but rather as a distinct social and cultural setting. His novels of Scottish history such as Waverley (1814) and Rob Roy (1817) focus upon a middling character who sits at the intersection of various social groups in order to explore the development of society through conflict. His Ivanhoe (1820) gains credit for renewing interest in the Middle Ages. Victor Hugo's The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1831) furnishes another 19th century example of the romantic-historical novel as does Leo Tolstoy's War and Peace. In the United States, James Fenimore Cooper was a prominent author of historical novels. In French literature, the most prominent inheritor of Scott's style of the historical novel was Balzac.

Though the genre has evolved since its inception, the historical novel remains popular with authors and readers to this day; bestsellers include Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey–Maturin series, Ken Follett's Pillars of the Earth, and Neal Stephenson's Baroque Cycle. A striking development in British/Irish writing in the past 25 years has been the renewed interest in the First World War. Works include William Boyd's An Ice-Cream War; Sebastian Faulks' Birdsong and The Girl at the Lion d'Or (concerned with the War's consequences); Pat Barker's Regeneration Trilogy and Sebastian Barry's A Long Long Way.

Many early historical novels played an important role in the rise of European popular interest in the history of the Middle Ages. Hugo's Hunchback often receives credit for fueling the movement to preserve the Gothic architecture of France, leading to the establishment of the Monuments historiques, the French governmental authority for historic preservation.

The genre of the historical novel has also permitted some authors, such as the Polish novelist Bolesław Prus in his sole historical novel, Pharaoh, to distance themselves from their own time and place to gain perspective on society and on the human condition, or to escape the depredations of the censor.

In some historical novels, major historic events take place mostly off-stage, while the fictional characters inhabit the world where those events occur. Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped recounts mostly private adventures set against the backdrop of the Jacobite troubles in Scotland. Charles Dickens's Barnaby Rudge is set amid the Gordon Riots, and A Tale of Two Cities in the French Revolution.

In some works, the accuracy of the historical elements has been questioned, as in Alexandre Dumas' Queen Margot. Postmodern novelists such as John Barth and Thomas Pynchon operate with even more freedom, mixing historical characters and settings with invented history and fantasy, as in the novels The Sot-Weed Factor and Mason & Dixon respectively. A few writers create historical fiction without fictional characters. One example is I, Claudius, by 20th century writer Robert Graves; another is the Masters of Rome series by Colleen McCullough.

3.1.13 Farce

In theatre, a farce is a comedy which aims at entertaining the audience by means of unlikely, extravagant, and improbable situations, disguise and mistaken identity, verbal humor of varying degrees of sophistication, which may include word play, and a fast-paced plot whose speed usually increases, culminating in an ending which often involves an elaborate chase scene. Farces are often highly incomprehensible plot-wise (due to the large number of plot twists and random events that often occur), but viewers are encouraged not to try to follow the plot in order to avoid becoming confused and overwhelmed. Farce is also characterized by physical humor, the use of deliberate absurdity or nonsense, and broadly

stylized performances. Farces have been written for the stage and film.

3.1.16 Melodrama

The term melodrama refers to a dramatic work that exaggerates plot and characters in order to appeal to the emotions. It may also refer to the genre which includes such works, or to language, behavior, or events which resemble them. It is usually based around having the same character traits, e.g. a hero (always the fearless one), heroine (the love of the hero, usually the one that the hero saves), villain (usually likes the heroine too) and villain's sidekick (typically gets in the way of the Villain). It is also used in scholarly and historical musical contexts to refer to dramas of the 18th and 19th centuries in which orchestral music or song was used to accompany the action. The term originated from the early 19th-century French word *mélodrame*, which is derived from Greek *melos*, music, and French *drame*, drama (from Late Latin *drāma*, which in turn derives from Greek *drān*, to do, perform) An alternative English spelling, now obsolete, is "melodrame".

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18th-century origins: monodrama, duodrama and opera

Beginning in the 18th century, melodrama was a technique of combining spoken recitation with short pieces of accompanying music. In such works, music and spoken dialog typically alternated, although the music was sometimes also used to accompany pantomime. The earliest known examples are scenes in J. E. Eberlin's Latin school play *Sigismundus* (1753). The first full

melodrama was Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, the text of which was written in 1762 but was first staged in Lyon in 1770. The overture and an Andante were composed by Rousseau, but the bulk of the music was composed by Horace Coignet. A different musical setting of Rousseau's *Pygmalion* by Anton Schweitzer was performed in Weimar in 1772, and Goethe wrote of it approvingly in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. *Pygmalion* is a monodrama, written for one actor. Some 30 other monodramas were produced in Germany in the fourth quarter of the 18th century. When two actors are involved the term duodrama may be used. Georg Benda was particularly successful with his duodramas *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1775) and *Medea* (1778). The sensational success of Benda's melodramas led Mozart to use two long melodramatic monologues in his opera *Zaide* (1780). Other later, and better-known examples of the melodramatic style in operas are the grave-digging scene in Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805) and the incantation scene in Weber's *Der Freischütz* (1821)

19th century: operetta, incidental music and salon entertainment

A few operettas exhibit melodrama in the sense of music played under spoken dialogue, for instance, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore* (itself a parody of melodramas in the modern sense) has a short "melodrame" (reduced to dialogue alone in many productions) in the second act; Jacques Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* opens with a melodrama delivered by the character of "Public Opinion"; and other pieces from operetta and musicals may be considered melodramas, such as the "Recit and Minuet" in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Sorcerer*. As an example from the American musical, several long speeches in Lerner and Loewe's *Brigadoon* are delivered over an accompaniment of evocative music. The technique is also frequently used in Spanish zarzuela, both in the 19th and 20th centuries, and continued also to be used as a "special effect" in opera, for instance Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

In a similar manner, Victorians often added "incidental music" under the dialogue to a pre-existing play, although this style of composition was already practiced in the days of Ludwig van Beethoven (*Egmont*) and Franz Schubert (*Rosamunde*). (This type of often-lavish production is now mostly limited to film (see film score) due to the cost of hiring an orchestra. Modern recording technology is producing a certain revival of the practice in theatre, but not on the former scale.) A particularly complete version of this

form, Sullivan's incidental music to Tennyson's *The Foresters* is available online, complete with several melodramas, for instance, No. 12 found here.

3.1.17 Verse drama

Verse drama is any drama written as verse to be spoken; another possible general term is poetic drama. For a very long period, verse drama was the dominant form of drama in Europe (and was also important in non-European cultures). Greek tragedy and Racine's plays are written in verse, as is almost all of Shakespeare's drama, Ben Jonson, Fletcher and others like Goethe's *Faust*.

Verse drama is particularly associated with the seriousness of tragedy, providing an artistic reason to write in this form, as well as the practical one that verse lines are easier for the actors to memorize exactly. In the second half of the twentieth century verse drama fell almost completely out of fashion with dramatists writing in English (the plays of Christopher Fry and T. S. Eliot being possibly the end of a long tradition).

Dramatic verse occurs in a dramatic work, such as a play, composed in poetic form. The tradition of dramatic verse extends at least as far back as ancient Greece. It was probably used by Greek playwrights such as Euripides for incantatory effect and to make long passages easier to memorize.

The English Renaissance saw the height of dramatic verse in the English-speaking world, with playwrights such as Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare developing new techniques, both for dramatic structure and poetic form. Though a few plays, such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, feature extended passages of rhymed verse, the majority of dramatic verse is composed as blank verse; there are also passages of prose.

Dramatic verse began to decline in popularity in the nineteenth century, when the prosaic and conversational styles of playwrights such as Henrik Ibsen became more prevalent, and were adapted in English by George Bernard Shaw. Verse drama did have a role in the development of Irish theatre.

For many centuries from the Greeks onwards verse was, throughout Europe, the natural and almost exclusive medium for the composition and presentation of dramatic works with any pretensions to seriousness or the status of art. Western drama's

twin origins, in the Greek Festivals and in the rituals of the medieval church, naturally predisposed it to the use of verse. For tragedy verse long remained the only proper vehicle. In comedy the use of prose became increasingly common - giving rise, for example, to such interesting cases as Ariosto's *I suppositi*, written in prose in 1509 and reworked twenty years later in verse. Shakespeare's use of prose in comic scenes, especially those of low life, and for effective contrast in certain scenes of the tragedies and history plays, shows an increasing awareness of the possibilities of the medium and perhaps already contains an implicit association between prose and realism. Verse continued to be the dominant medium of tragedy throughout the seventeenth century - even domestic tragedies such as *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (Anon., 1608) or Thomas Heywood's *A Woman Killed With Kindness* (1603) were composed in blank verse. For all the continuing use of verse it is hard to escape the feeling that by the end of the seventeenth century it had largely ceased to be a genuinely living medium for dramatists. Increasingly the prevailing idioms of dramatic verse became decidedly literary, owing more to the work of earlier dramatists than to any real relationship with the language of its own time. By 1731 George Lillo's *The London Merchant, or The History of George Barnwell*, for all its clumsiness and limitations, in its presentation of a middle-class tragedy in generally effective prose achieved a theatrical liveliness and plausibility largely absent from contemporary verse tragedies - from Addison's *Cato* (1713), Thomson's *Sophonisba* (1730) and *Agamemnon* (1738), or Johnson's *Irene* (1749). The example of Racine was vital to such plays, but it was not one that proved very fertile. Lillo was praised in France by Diderot and Marmontel, in Germany by Lessing and Goethe. It is not unreasonable to see Lillo's work as an early and clumsy anticipation of Ibsen's. *The London Merchant* constitutes one indication of the effective death of verse drama. Others are not far to seek. In France, Houdar de La Motte was also writing prose tragedies in the 1720's, and Stendhal, in the 1820's was insistent that prose was now the only possible medium for a viable tragedy. Ibsen largely abandoned verse after *Peer Gynt* (1867), in favor of prose plays more directly and realistically concerned with contemporary issues. A well-known letter to Lucie Wolf (25 May 1883) proclaims that Verse has been most injurious to the art of drama... It is improbable that verse will be employed to any extent worth mentioning in the drama of the immediate future since the aims of the dramatists of the future are almost certain to be incompatible with it.

3.2 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

The Students should remember that the question in examination, on this topic- literary terms- will be as follows:

Write short notes on four of the following:

Lyric, Dramatic Monologue, Sonnet, Ballad, Epic, satire, Ode, Tragedy, Comedy, Farce, Melodrama, Chorus, Hamletia, Melodrama Short Story, Novel, Plot, Character, setting, narrative, point of view, Bildungsroman novel Picaresque novel, Stream of consciousness, Novel of social reality, Psychological novel, Historical novel, Farce Melodrama, Verse drama.



BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF THE NOVEL

Contents

- 4.0 Objectives
 - 4.1 Introduction
 - 4.2 What is a Novel?
 - 4.3 Aspects of the Novel
 - 4.4 Types of Novel
 - 4.5 Development of the English Novel
 - 4.6 The Initiation of Indian English Novel
 - 4.7 Let Us Conclude
-

4.0 OBJECTIVES

- To make the students understand what novel is
 - To introduce them to various aspects which contribute to its development.
 - To introduce students to the types of Novel and its development.
-

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit the initiation of the novel and its development has been described. Usually a novel is read as a storybook without realizing the factors that lie within, shaping it up in an exact form. The basic aspects of the novel that have been discussed in the unit will help the students to recognize the major features and ensure better understanding. Without knowing the basic categories the learners might fail to understand the general distinctions and so the various types, discussed in short, add to inform. It is in Europe that novel took its form and developed and now, with passion, it has spread all over the world. India doesn't stay aloof in its contributions. From the pre-Independence time it has started making its prominence felt in the literature of the era and it continues to add its fragrance with newer concepts and imagination in the novel of the time. Novel has made the literature of the world richer and healthier with its exceptional variety and veracity.

4.2 WHAT IS A NOVEL?

The novel is one of the many possible prose narrative forms. It shares with other narratives, like the epic and the romance, two basic characteristics: a story and a story-teller. The epic tells a traditional story and is a combination of myth, history, and fiction. Its

heroes are gods and goddesses and extraordinary men and women. The romance also tells stories of larger-than-life characters. It stresses on adventure and often involves a search for an ideal or the quest of an enemy. In symbolic form the events seem to project the primitive wishes, hopes, and fear of the human mind and are, therefore, similar to the resources of dream, myth, and ritual. Although this is true to some novels as well, what differentiates the novel from the romance is its realistic treatment of life and manners. In broad terms a novel can thus be defined as a piece of prose fiction which dramatizes life with the help of characters and situations. It also portrays some characteristics of human experience and generates real-life impression.

4.3 ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL

Theme

The central idea of a novel is the theme. It is a concern or a subject on which the story rotates. For a novelist the theme is like a design that comes to the mind, sprouts like a seed and a story with plot and characters are woven around it.

Plot

The framework of the story is the plot. It has an opening, a center and a conclusion. It progresses with the help of characters, events and actions. There can be even sub-plot in a plot but they are linked to each other in the main theme. Plot is thus the structure of the actions which work together to accomplish an artistic outcome. And as these actions are performed by the characters, plot and character are inter-dependent on each other. It is the plot that arranges and re-arranges the story according to the mode of narrative.

Characterization

The writer offers some ethical or dispositional qualities to the characters which they expose through their actions. How should the person act, react, learn and change all constitute the art of characterization. With the advancement of the story a character grows slowly and has the power to make the reader so involved that he might feel very close to the character participating and sharing the emotional fluctuations as well. A character has the potentiality of moving the readers and forcing them to remember it forever and this indicates the accomplishment of the art of characterization.

Point of View

This indicates how a story is narrated. It is the perception through which the author depicts the characters, controls their actions and relates the events. The story can be in first person narration where the narrator reports the incidents with 'I' which represent that it is he who has been a spectator to the events of life.

Time and Place

A story originates and moves within a particular time and place and the author cannot detach himself from it. Use of place decides the location and use of time assures the way the events are structured. It is not required for a novelist to mention the name of the place but through the setting and the background the ambience is created. In some novels the author uses place to give cultural support to the story and in some the place is used as a source of significance and building the atmosphere around the story.

Style

Each writer has his/her own style of writing. It is the manner in which the author narrates the story keeping in view the language and expression. The characters, situations and events are expressed maintaining a unique diction, choice of words, sentence structure etc. and it is this style that distinguishes one author from the other.

4.4 TYPES OF NOVEL

Various types of novels have taken form in English from its initiation in England to the recent ones developed in America and India.

Gothic Novel

Derived from the word 'Goths' used for a Germanic tribe, the Gothic novel has supernatural elements like ghosts, haunted houses, etc. which induces horror, apprehension and insecurity. Examples – Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto, a Gothic Story*, Ann Radcliff's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, etc.

Picaresque Novel

Derived from the Spanish word 'Picaro' which means 'a rogue', the Picaresque novels present the stories of adventure where the characters, in general, move from one place to the other. Examples – Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, etc.

Epistolary Novel

The meaning of 'Epistle' is 'a letter'. It is through the exchange of letters among the characters that the story proceeds forward. It became very popular in the eighteenth century with Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa*.

Historical Novel

It is from history that the events and the characters are taken. This type was brought into prominence by Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

Psychological Novel

It is the innermost desires and motives of the characters that are projected in this type of novel. The feelings and reactions of the characters are given prominence more than the social setting. The stream of consciousness techniques suit this type very much. Examples – Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, etc.

Regional Novel

This type of novel is set in a particular geographical section and deals with the living and culture of that area. Example – Thomas Hardy's *Wessex*, R.K.Narayan's *Malgudi*, etc.

These are the common types of novel. Apart from these there are many more varieties that excel in creating the literature of the time and making the essence of novel more dedicated and authentic in the present scenario.

4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL

In most European languages the term for novel is 'roman' and this very clearly suggests its closeness to medieval romance. The English name, however, was derived from the Italian 'novella' which means 'a little new thing'. Romances and novelle, which were actually short tales in prose, and even the picaresque narratives were the forerunners of the novel. The development of the realistic novel owes to a great extent to such writings which normally discouraged romantic or idealistic fictional structures. The only most significant prototype of modern novel is Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605-15) which explores the story of an appealing madman, who tries desperately to exist by the principles of chivalric romance, thus exploring the role of fantasy and actuality in life.

Gradually the novel came out from the chains of its narrative predecessors and shaped itself under the guidance of the 17th century intellectuals, Descartes and Locke, who persisted upon the magnitude of individual understanding. Thus, the novel started emphasizing the precise and pragmatic particulars and even its themes reflected the accepted 18th century apprehension along with the community composition of day to day life.

With the emergence of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Moll Flanders* (1722), the novel as we understand today came into existence. The first psychological novel or the 'novel of character' can be linked to Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1741). Both were the first great writers who did not take their plots from mythology or history, legend or literature and were also keen on establishing the novel's assertion as a genuine version of the real experience of people. At the same time, [Jane Austen](#) was writing

highly polished novels about the life of the landed gentry, seen from a woman's point of view, and was focusing on practical social issues, especially marriage and money. Her [*Pride and Prejudice*](#) (1813) is often considered the epitome of the [romance](#) genre.

It was the Romantic Age that saw the first flowering of English novel. The Romantic and the Gothic novel are closely linked, both anticipated almost-supernatural forces operating in nature or directing human fate. In the 19th century novelists like Charles Dickens and Thackeray brought in a different technique in novel writing by revealing the views of the characters without explaining the source of information. Dickens wrote vividly about London life and the struggles of the poor, as in [*Oliver Twist*](#), employing a popular style which would prove reachable to readers of all classes. [*Great Expectations*](#) is a quest for maturity and [*A Tale of Two Cities*](#) is set in London and Paris. Dickens early works are masterpieces of comedy but later his works became darker, without losing his genius for caricature.

The emotionally powerful works of the [Brontë sisters](#) – Charlotte's [*Jane Eyre*](#), Emily's [*Wuthering Heights*](#) and Anne's [*Agnes Grey*](#) were released in 1847. [William Makepeace Thackeray](#)'s satirized British society in [*Vanity Fair*](#) (1847), while [Anthony Trollope](#)'s novels portrayed the lives of the landowning and professional classes of early Victorian England.

The novels of [George Eliot](#), such as [*Middlemarch*](#), were a milestone of [literary realism](#). Novels of [Thomas Hardy](#) and others, dealt with the changing social and economic situation of the countryside. He preferred to go directly for the elemental in human behavior with a minimum of contemporary social detail. He felt that man was an alien in an impersonal universe and at the mercy of sheer chance. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure* are his most famous works.

H. G. Wells who is referred to as 'The Father of Science Fiction', invented a number of themes that are now classic in the science fiction genre. *The War of the Worlds* (1898) describes an invasion of late Victorian England by Martians. *The Time Machine* enhances the concept of time travel using a vehicle.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes is a brilliant London-based 'consulting detective', famous for his intellectual powers. An important forerunner of [modernist literature](#), [Joseph Conrad](#) wrote the novel [*Heart of Darkness*](#) (1899), where he uses a [symbolic](#) story within a story. In the latter half of the 19th century Henry James brought in the point-of-view narrative technique which

later inspired the stream of consciousness technique observed by writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce and William Faulkner who attempted to justify the flow of thoughts and emotions without barricading them into logical grammatical structures. Though more conventional in form, the novels of D. H. Lawrence were equally challenging and he was the first to defend both the primitive and the extreme civilized urges of men and women.

Many modernist novelists gradually broke away from the traditional narrative form while many others chose to adapt it to their own ends often to represent an individual subject struggling against oppressive ideological systems.

4.6 THE INITIATION OF OF THE INDIAN ENGLISH NOVEL

Indian English Novels have made a significant position in the contemporary world of writing. The real emergence of Indian English Novel started with Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* published in 1864. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was very much influenced with the English novelists, especially Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens and *Rajmohan's Wife*, like most of his Bengali novels, deals with social issues of the time. The main theme of the novel is about the consequences of a bad marriage and the sufferings of the woman protagonist. It was the time of social reform and so it is not surprising that the first Indian English novel is a social novel instead of a historical romance.

The second noteworthy Indian English novel, *Govinda Samanta, or the History of a Bengali Raivat*, is also by a Bengali, Lal Behari Dey, and was published in 1874. Set in the Burdwan District in the mid 19th century, the novel is a family saga, relating the life and times of Govinda Samanta, from his birth till death. The novel is said to have received a prize in 1871 for the best novel in Bengali or English exemplifying the 'Social and Domestic life of the Rural Population and Working Classes of Bengal'.

Though Toru Dutt is better known as a poet, she may very well considered to be the first woman novelist in Indian English, and perhaps the first Indian novelist in French! Published in Calcutta in 1878, her unfinished novel *Bianca or the Young Spanish Maiden* is a romantic love story set in England. Malashri Lal considers that Toru Dutt couldn't finish the novel because it was very much autobiographical and "it mirrored the turbulence of her young life" and she was also immersed in being a critique of the people close to her in the novel. But many critics feel that had the novel been completed it would not only have been a wonderful work of fiction but also would have been a model for the Indian writers of English fiction.

Krupabai Sathianandhan was another earliest women writer who has contributed two novels – *Kamala: A Story of Hindu Life* (1894) and *Saguna: A Story of Native Christian Life* (1895) – and both are autobiographical in nature. *Saguna* is about her early years and portrays the conversion of a Hindu Brahmin family into a Christian household. *Kamala* was written after the loss of her child and is about her conflicts and heartaches.

While considering women novelists, Shevantibai Nikambe, the social reformer and educationist, should not be ignored. Her short novel *Ratnabai: A Sketch of a Bombay High Caste Hindu Wife* (1895) brings forth the ideal of a companionate marriage. A young married girl, whose husband is away in England, is sent to school against the oppositions of her father. Although she suffers a lot in the hands of her in-laws, her husband returns to find a wife capable enough for conversing and so this story serves as a larger discourse of reform and the treatment of women in Hindu society.

There are many other women novelists who are mentioned in the History of Indian English Fiction. Rajalakshmi Devi's novel in verse form, *The Hindoo Wife or the Enchanted Fruit* was published in 1876 and Cornelia Sorabji's three collections of short stories came out in the first half of the 20th century. Rabindranath Tagore's sister, Swarnakumari Ghosal wrote three novels – *The Fatal Garland* (1910), *An Indian Love Story* (1910) and *An Unfinished Song* (1913). The first is a historical romance and the last is a novel of sensibility that shows the influence of novelists like George Eliot.

Many of the novelists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries wrote historical romances. And some of them written during this time are: Chakravarti Khetrapal's *Sarala and Hingana* (1895), T. Ramakrishna Pillai's *Pamini: An Indian Romance* (1903) and *The Dive for Death: An Indian Romance* (1911), S.M. Mitra's *Hindupore: A Peep Behind the Indian Unrest – An Anglo-Indian Romance* (1909) and Balkrishna's *The Love of Kusuma: An Eastern Love Story* (1910). Shoshee Chunder Dutt's *Shunkur: A Tale of Indian Mutiny 1857* and *The Young Zamindar* (1883) both depict the greatness of cultural heritage of Indian freedom. H. Dutt wrote adventure fiction and is mainly known for his two novels, *Bijay Chand: An Indian Tale* (1888) and *Lieut. Suresh Biswas: His Life and Adventures* (1900).

When the Gandhian tornado struck India, a change was visualized in mostly all directions, including the novel. There was intensification in the sense of nationalism as well as endeavors to construct the idea of a modern India. There was a great modification in the social dimension and this affected the trend of novel writing. A patriotic theme came into existence and K. S. Venkatramani's two novels, *Murugan, the Tiller* (1927) and *Kandan, the Patriot: A Novel of New India in the Making* (1932) proved the essence of the time.

The trinity of R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao started from the pre-Independence period and continued their long and illustrious career even in the post-Independence era. Many of their novels have contributed to the enrichment of Indian writing in English. Mulk Raj Anand was a prolific writer whose first literary efforts were an account of the lives of the under-privileged. *Untouchable* (1935) is about a sweeper, *Coolie* (1936) illustrates the lives of displaced labourers who are exploited by all kinds of economic forces including colonialism and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) exposes the state of plantation life in British India. Thus, when Anand started writing fiction, his main concern was to discover the lonely path of the outcastes and peasants, the down trodden and the working class. Raja Rao had an enchanting prose style which captured the mind and heart of the readers. *Kanthapura*, (1938) the only novel written by him before independence, clearly reveals a writer pondering over and depicting the transformations that were taking place in the making of the modern nation. R. K. Narayan, regarded as one of the leading Indian English fiction writers, was capable of bringing small-town India to his audience in a manner that was both authentic as well as experimental. His first novel *Swami and Friends* (1935) created the famous 'Malgudi' – an imaginary town that seeped into the heart of every Indian. Many more novels followed like *Bachelor of Arts* (1936), *The Dark Room* (1938), *The English Teacher* (1945) and many more. Behind all their unpretentious simplicity and triviality, Narayan's novels conveyed a sublime philosophy of life. Lives of ordinary people, like that of Swami, are 'full of incident without accomplishment' but they are still full of happiness, inspiration and enlightenment. Narayan's greatest achievement was making India reachable to the outside world through his literature.

4.7 LET US CONCLUDE

In this unit a brief introduction to novel has been given along with its aspects and types. From the derivation of the name, the development of the romances and novella, the 17th century emphasis and the 18th century apprehensions, the 19th century individuals and the 20th century psychological to the recent novel acceptance worldwide, the journey has been clearly reflected. The march of the Indian English Novel from the pre-Independence time till the time of the three aspiring contemporaries – R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao – is briefly explained.



A CRITICAL STUDY OF “THE CALL OF THE WILD”

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the students to the American author, John Griffith "Jack" London and his contribution to the world of literature.
 - To explain *The Call of the Wild*, which is one of Jack London's most significant inputs.
-

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit the attention is on Jack London – the biographical note followed by one of his most cherished novels *The Call of the Wild*. The summary of the novel highlights the main idea followed by the plot which gives an idea about where the story is mainly located and the role of the characters, especially Buck the dog, that are justified at the setting of the plot. The animal instinct is very well constructed. The human-animal relationship is also very well defined. The themes, motifs and symbols justify the novels essence so that the readers are able to understand the exact spirit of the novel.

5.2 THE AUTHOR

John Griffith "Jack" London (January 12, 1876 – November 22, 1916) was an American author, journalist, and social activist. He was one of the first fiction writers to obtain worldwide celebrity and also a large fortune from his fiction. He is best remembered for his novels *Call of the Wild* (originally entitled “*The Sleeping Wolf*”) and *White Fang* both set in the Klondike Gold Rush. Many

of his short stories like *To Build a Fire*, *An Odyssey of the North*, *Love of Life*, *The Pearls of Parlay*, *The Heathen* have become very famous. This American literary genius brilliantly and sympathetically portrayed his life and times, as well as the never ending struggles of man and nature.

Jack's extensive life experiences included being a laborer, factory worker, oyster pirate on the San Francisco Bay, member of the California Fish Patrol, sailor, railroad traveler, and gold prospector (in the Klondike from 1897-1898). It was during his cross-country travels that he became acquainted with socialism. Eventually London started writing from a socialist viewpoint, which is evident in his novel *The Iron Heel*. Neither a theorist nor an intellectual socialist, London's socialism grew out of his life experience. London's exceptional brightness and his optimistic, lighthearted behavior finally combined to convert his various experiences into a working philosophy of service and survival.

In his later life, London indulged his wide-ranging interests by accumulating a personal library of 15,000 volumes. He referred to his books as 'the tools of my trade'. London was elected to honorary membership in the Bohemian Club and he participated in many activities there. London had been a strong man but had suffered several serious diseases including scurvy in the Klondike. At the time of his death he suffered from dysentery and uremia and was a victim of alcoholism. London died November 22, 1916, in a sleeping state in a cottage on his ranch.

5.3 HIS CONTRIBUTION

London's 'strength of utterance' is at its height in his stories, and they are meticulously well-constructed. *To Build a Fire*, set in the ruthless Klondike and recounting the random trek of a person who ignores an old-timer's caution about the risks of traveling alone, is the best known of all his stories. After publishing *The Youth's Companion* in 1902 he brought out *The Century Magazine* in 1908 and both the works indicate London's growth and maturity as a writer. In 1906, London published in *Collier's* magazine his eye-witness report of the San Francisco earthquake. Numerous stories of London would be classified as Science Fiction today – 'The Unparalleled Invasion' narrates germ warfare against China, 'Goliath' moves around and tempting energy weapon, 'The Shadow and the Flesh' is about two brothers taking different routes to attain invisibility, 'A Relic of the Pliocene' is about an encounter of a modern-day man with a mammoth.

London's most notable books include *The Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*, *The Sea-Wolf*, *The Iron Heel*, *The People of the Abyss*, *John Barleycorn*, *The Star Rover* and *Martin Eden*. *The Acorn Planter* was published in 1916.

5.4 THE CALL OF THE WILD

5.4.1 Summary

Buck, a huge and handsome dog, lives on an extensive estate in California's Santa Clara Valley owned by the wealthy Judge Miller. Buck is four years old and is the undoubted master of Judge Miller's place, as the locals call it. He is loved by the Miller children and grandchildren. But Buck is ignorant to the fact that there hovers a shadow over his happy life. It is 1897, and men from all over the world are traveling north for the gold rush that has hit the Klondike region of Canada, just east of Alaska. They require strong dogs to pull their sleds on the difficult journey. Buck does not realize that Manuel, a gardener on Judge Miller's estate, is an unreliable associate. Manuel's love of gambling in the Chinese lottery makes it difficult for him to support his wife and several children. One day, while the judge is away, Manuel takes Buck for a walk and leads him to a flag station where a stranger waits for him. Money changes hands and Buck attacks the stranger to rescue himself from them but he finds it impossible to break free. The man fights back and Buck's strength fails. He blacks out and is thrown into the baggage car of the train.

After regaining consciousness he tries his best to rescue himself again and bites the kidnapper's hand. He is then thrown down and choked repeatedly then locked into a cage like crate. Without food and water he stays there for the rest of the night and then he is passed from one vehicle to the other. He becomes more and more angry and decides never to let his tormentors tie a rope around his neck again. In Seattle, Buck's crate is lifted into a small yard with high walls and a stout man signs for him. Buck understands that this new man is his next tormentor and he snarls and growls and leaps at the man with all his weight. For the first time he is beaten with a club and this hurts and stuns him. He continues trying to attack until the man beats him into submission. When Buck is finally exhausted, the man brings him water and meat and pats him on the head. Buck realizes that he should not stand a chance against a man with a club and submits himself. Buck watches other men arrive, sometimes taking other dogs away with them, and he is glad that he is not chosen. Finally the time comes for him when a French Canadian named Perrault buys him and a Newfoundland bitch named Curly. They are taken onto a ship called the *Narwhal* and turned over to another French Canadian named Francois. They join two other dogs, Spitz and Dave, on the

journey northward. Buck realizes that the weather is continuously growing colder until finally, they arrive into a cold surface that Buck does not recognize, never having seen snow before.

Buck realizes that he has been ousted from civilization into the lap of the wild and his first day in the North is very depressing. Both the dogs and the men around him are very cruel and he is even shocked to see the pitiless dogs fight. Buck is stunned when Curly, the female dog, is attacked and killed by the brutal creatures. He understands that to survive he should avoid any kind of fight. He is then fastened with a strap by Francois and is set to carry a sleigh. He tries his best to respond to the whip of Francois and the growls of the other experienced dogs, especially Spitz who is the team's lead dog and whom Buck feels like hating. Spitz leads them carving a path through the snow and Buck learns the art quickly and makes good progress. Later two more dogs, Billee and Joe are joined in. though brothers they are completely different in nature – Billee is extremely good-natured while Joe is bitter. Another dog, Sol-leks, an old husky and one eyed, also joins them. Gradually the team becomes big and Buck learns a lot from the company. When he does not get place to sleep he learns to dig a hole in the snow for him to be comfortable, when hungry he learns to eat fast before the disappearance of food and leaving his old morals he even learns to steal.

The sleigh dogs are even attacked by the starving wild dogs. Finally the team manages to reach the most difficult stretch – the frozen lakes and rivers where the surface is partly melted. At times they take immense risks, and many of the dogs break through the ice and almost freeze to death or drown. Dolly, one of the dogs, goes mad one morning and begins chasing Buck and finally Francois kills the mad dog. Spitz and Buck gradually becomes great rivals and an undeclared war with a fight to death situation becomes unavoidable. Realizing the situation Francois bets on Buck and Perrault on Spitz. Buck threatens Spitz's leadership by teaming up with the weaker dogs and as the team pushes over from Dawson towards Skaguav, Bucks rebellion against Spitz keeps increasing. Finally a severe fight takes place and under the watch of the other dogs Buck finishes Spitz off. Buck tries to take the position of Spitz and when Francois gives the place to Sol-leks Buck shows his resentment. Sol-leks shows his fear against Buck and even Perrault suggests Francois to take the desirable decision. Buck takes up the job and tries to show himself even superior to

Spitz. Like a born leader he expects the others to live up to his expectations. The team progresses very well and even make a remarkable record of their journey that makes them very popular in a very short time. Perrault and Francois soon receive official orders to move somewhere else and they exit from the life of Buck. The team, under the command of a Scotsman, travels back to Dawson carrying a heavy load of mail to the gold miners in the North. With such a load, their speed becomes naturally slow, and life becomes monotonous and laborious for Buck. Though he thinks about his life in California often, he is not homesick. His inherited instincts grow stronger within him and whatever he encounters in the wild seem peculiarly familiar. The men around him remind him of people of another, more primitive time. Sometimes at night he even has hallucinations that seem to come from a previous era, when men wore animal skins and lived in caves.

When, after a long journey, they arrive completely exhausted at Skaguay they are immediately ordered to deliver more mail. The dogs are replaced and Buck and his mates are sold to two men, Hal and Charles and a materialistic lady Mercedes, who have recently arrived from US. The new owners are less organized and less professional than their previous owners. Buck is not very happy with his new owners whom he finds to be very lazy and careless. Their ineffectiveness makes their progress irregular and to add to their woes they are underfed when they run out of food. With little compassion for the animals their owners keep arguing among themselves. Buck is totally worn out with starvation and fatigue. Many of his fellows, along with Billee pass away. Soon they are only five in the team fighting with starvation. It is springtime and the snow begins to melt. When they reach John Thornton's camp, the experienced gold hunter advises them not to venture as the melting ice increases the risk of falling. But the owners ignore him and cruelly forces the dogs back into harness. When Buck refuses he is brutally whipped by Hal. Thornton, who has been watching the inhuman behavior, saves Buck from the cruel hands of his owners. The rest of the team moves on and Buck stays back in the care of Thornton. Thornton checks over his broken bones and finds that Buck is fatigued, injured and starved. From a distance Thornton and Buck watch the rest of the team crawl over the ice. Suddenly they hear a scream and they see a section of the ice give away and the whole team drop down and disappear into the dark water.

Buck slowly regains his strength and develops, for the first time, a strong affection for the man who has saved his life. Thornton treats his dogs like his own children and Buck responds to the adoration and obeys all his commands. Even when Thornton asks him to jump off a cliff he obeys him before he is stopped by Thornton. Even though Buck is happy with Thornton, his fighting wild instinct remains strong. He starts fighting in defense of Thornton and soon earns the reputation throughout Alaska for faithfulness and fierceness. Many a times he saves the life of Thornton – once when he steps in to stop a fight in a bar and the fighters lashes out at him; once when he is thrown off a boat and gets caught in a fierce torrent. That winter a strange urge grasps Thornton and he challenges that Buck can start a sled with a thousand pounds loaded on it. A man named Matthewson, who has become rich in the gold rush, bets a thousand dollars by saying that Buck will not be able to perform the task. Though in doubt himself, Thornton accepts the bet and borrows the money from a friend. Hundreds of people come to watch and the betting goes on. Initially Matthewson is confident and he keeps adding to the amount. But once Buck is harnessed, he pulls the sled a hundred yards breaking through the ice. The crowd cheers in admiration and even Matthewson joins the applause.

After paying off his debts with the money he has earned from the bet Thornton, with his friends Pete and Hans and the dogs, sets towards the east. They wander in the wilderness and finally reach a shallow place in a valley full of gold. The men start earning thousands of dollars a day in the gold mine whereas the dogs have nothing to do. Buck craves for the wild desires and one night he suddenly feels the call from the forest. He rushes through the woods and makes friendship with a small wolf. Though the wolf encourages him towards the forest, remembering Thornton he returns back to the camp. But again the call of the wild haunts him and he keeps away from the camp for days together. Buck has now two identities – one a sled dog in Thornton's camp and another as a wild hunter in the forest. Once, on his way back to the camp, he senses some calamity. His feeling is justified when he finds two of Thornton's dogs dying on the track. As he approaches the camp he sees Hans coved with arrows lying face down. He sees the Yeehat Indians dancing in the ruins and charges towards them cutting their throats and killing several. As the Indians disperse, Buck finds the rest of his camp, including Thornton, dead. Buck mourns for his dead master but feels proud of having killed the Yeehats. Broken by

death he heads towards the forest again when he hears the call of the wolf. He finds a pack of wolf who fight with him. But latter the wolf who had befriended him approaches him and Buck joins the wolf group. The Yeehats watch the group and finds a difference in the local breed of the timber wolves as the years pass by. They narrate the story of a Ghost Dog that runs in front of the pack, singing and leaping. They also recount the haunted valley, where Thornton lies dead and the evil spirit resides and where, every year, Buck comes and mourns beside the stream and then rejoins the pack of wolves in the forest.

5.4.2 Plot

Buck, a powerful shepherd dog, is disbarred from his comfortable life in California as the pampered pet of Judge Miller, when he is stolen by the assistant of the Judge's gardener and sold off to pay for his gambling debt. From California's Santa Clara Valley the location shifts to Seattle where Buck is shipped. On his journey he is harassed and is provided neither with food or drink. When he is finally released from the crate he confronts more misery and is even beaten up so that he learns to respect the club. He is bought by a pair of French-Canadians who take him to Alaska and train him as a sled dog there. Buck learns to survive the cold winter nights and adapt himself to the situation by following his teammates. He even develops a rivalry with the lead dog Spitz and eventually he defeats Spitz in a major fight. The other dogs close in and Spitz is killed leading Buck to become the leader of the team.

The sled dog team, including Buck is then sold off to a Scottish half breed man who works in the mail service. The load that the dogs carry is very heavy and the journey becomes tedious and extended. After some time the situation becomes so worse that the dogs fail to overcome their tiredness and fail to proceed with their trek. Buck is then sold to a trio, Hal, Charles and a woman named Mercedes, who are looking for a fortune by finding gold. They are inexperienced in the art of sledding and struggle to survive in the Alaskan wilderness. The situation of the sled dogs becomes miserable in their company and finally Buck falls in the hands of John Thornton who rescue him from the ill-treatment of his owners. Though Thornton warns the trio against crossing the river, they ignore his advice and precede further leaving Buck behind. The ice gives way and the trio, along with the dogs, falls in the river.

Thornton nurses Buck back to health and Buck starts loving his new master and becomes devoted to him. Buck saves the life of Thornton twice and is praised for his faithfulness. He is taken by Thornton on various trips in search of gold. In one such trip a man bets Thornton over Buck's strength. Buck helps Thornton win the bet by breaking the ice and pulling the sled hundred yards. The bet money is used to pay off the debts of Thornton. Thornton and his friends return to the camp and continue with their search for gold and Buck starts exploring the wilderness around. He befriends a wolf in the forest. One night when he returns to the camp he finds every member, including his master, being killed by a group of Yeehat Indians. In rage he attacks them and kills many. He buries his past with the death of his master and responds to the call of the wild by following the pack of wolves in the forest. But every year he comes to the forest to mourn his master's death and then retreats into the wild responding to its call.

The novel is often classified as children's literature because of the animal protagonist, but the maturity of its subject-matter makes it valuable for the older readers as well. Major themes that are included in the novel are 'the survival of the fittest', 'civilization versus nature' and 'fate versus freewill'.

5.5 THEMES, MOTIFS AND SYMBOLS

Themes

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.

In *The Call of the Wild* the indispensable struggle for master is expressed through the transformation of the civilized moral dog, Buck, who adjusts himself into the harsh realities of life. London owes to Charles Darwin theory of 'the survival of the fittest', the phrase that justifies Buck's experience thoroughly. But gradually Buck does not just want to survive, he desires to dominate. In a sense, Buck is a savage creature but London expects the readers to applaud his ferocity. His novel proposes that there is no superior destiny for man or animal than to struggle and win in the fight for mastery.

The power of ancestral memory and primitive instincts is also brought forward when Buck enters the wild. It is expected that he must learn countless lessons to survive the wild. To him it is not a matter of learning the ways of the wild but recovering the primitive

instincts that his wild ancestors possessed, which, as civilized creatures, have been buried inside. The instincts lay dormant underneath until Buck responds to the call of the wild.

The laws of civilization and of wilderness are carefully brought out. The rules of the civilized and uncivilized worlds are, of course, extremely different – in the wild, many conflicts are resolved through bloody fights rather than through rational negotiation. But the novel suggests that what is important in both worlds is to identify and abide by the rules which that the world has installed, and it is only when those rules are broken that true savagery and disregard for life is seen. The wild does not allow chaos and establishes a strict social and natural order different from, but not inferior to, the cultured world.

Even the membership of the individual group is also exhibited. For Buck the sense of belongingness grows gradually with time and it takes a lot of time for him to adjust himself into the company. At the same time, the most esteemed quality in the wilderness is individuality – mastery is achieved only through separation from the group and attaining independent existence. Throughout Buck serves either a master or a group and loses his identity till he is in the hands of Thornton. It is only then that his individuality comes to the forefront and he cherishes his desire of the wild. At the end of the novel, the balance between the individual and the group is disrupted once more when Buck joins the group of the wolves. Though the duties of both the animal groups are different, the message seems to be very clear – the wild eventually requires the assistance of a group in order to guarantee individual survival.

Motifs

Motifs are frequent constitutions, distinctions or literary strategies that help in the information and development of the text's major themes.

In ***The Call of the Wild*** the violent struggle assists the narrative providing various sequences and helping the theme to develop in its own course. The continuous battle of life and death serves as a reminder of the dangers of life in Klondike on the one hand and the gradual integration of Buck in the new environment on the other. The continuing attainment of Buck's experience serves as the motif to support the main theme of the story. Buck watches

the brutal killing of Curly, finds himself in rivalry with Spitz and emerges alive after a battle with him, establishes himself as the leader and to prove his superiority has to fight many other creatures, finally killing the Yeehat Indians – fighting against mankind for the first time which indicates his ultimate assimilation into the wild.

Another motif that guides the theme is the vision. 'Atavism' – an animal's recovery of the instincts of his wild ancestors – is one of the themes of the novel and Buck's recovery of them involves repeated visions of his primitive past. He finds the men around him as primitive, covered with furs and cautious of the primeval mystery around them. He then has visions of himself as a primitive, wild creature, hunting his prey in the prehistoric forests. Each of these visions brings him nearer to his destiny, which, returning to his ancestral manners, he submits himself to the wild again.

Symbols

Symbols are objects, characters, facts or colors used to symbolize abstract beliefs or concepts.

The possessions of Mercedes act as a symbol to justify the trend of consumerism. She loads the sled with all her belongings and it becomes so heavy that dogs fail to pull it. Her assertion on having all of her assets with her highlights the distinction between the wild, where the significance of an object lies in its instant usefulness, and society, where the value of an object lies in its capability to represent the riches of its owner. Material possessions and consumerism have no regard for the wild and it is the inability to recognize this fact that makes that leads people to face various difficulties.

The significance of Buck's straps that bind him to the rest of the team also acts as a symbol and changes with the development of the plot. His position, as a monarch, degrades as he is stolen from the civilized place of Judge Miller. He is introduced to the servitude status of pulling the sled for the humans. But as he becomes a part of the wild, Buck starts to realize the hierarchy of the sled group and starts gaining authority over the pack. After defeating Spitz he is harnessed into the position of the lead dog. His strap then no longer represented servitude to the humans but signified leadership over the dogs. Finally when John Thornton releases Buck from his traces, it indicates his freedom from his

servility of humans. To Thornton he is a companion rather than a servant and he gradually enters a world of individual existence in the wild.

The club also acts as a symbol of superiority and power. When Buck is kidnapped he is repeatedly beaten with the club and he is forcefully made to submit. Even Curly is beaten up to death and it symbolizes that the cultured human society tries to show their might over the speechless animals with the help of weapons. Buck's enters into the new world after his comfortable life as a pet and he understands that it is 'the law of the club and fang' that reigns there.

Though Buck feels the call of the wild, the only attraction that holds him back is his love for John Thornton. When Thornton is killed by the Yeehat Indians his last tie to humanity is snapped. He even becomes free to attack the Yeehat Indians and kills many of them. To attack a human being was an act beyond imagination for him but gradually his eagerness to do so symbolize the fact that his transformation is complete – he has really achieved his wild personality.

Style of Writing

Jack London uses the style of naturalism where nature plays the most prominent part. His common style of writing includes escape from the urban background to the wilds – urban problems which are mainly man-made are left behind for more prehistoric conflicts in nature; respect for nature – man's adaptation to the rhythms of nature and not the vice versa; subject matter mainly masculine – whether man or animal it is a male. ***The Call of the Wild*** is the story of an impressive dog that is stolen from the peaceful life and sold for use to a dogsled team. His travels are not just substantial in nature for he learns hard discipline from the world of the men and then journeys back to the primitive roots of the wolf.

The novel's simple style and rough depiction of harsh realities in frozen Klondike region appeal a lot to the readers. It also provides the spirit of an adventure story. While writing the novel Jack London, in fact, drew on his experiences in the Klondike gold rush of 1897. The novel is regarded as one of the most adored animal stories essentially because London was able to assure the story of a dog's adventures realistic, while permitting reader's to relate to Buck's viewpoint. The story is told from a very remarkable point of

view—that of a dog. Yet a human narrator stands outside of Buck's consciousness and provides logic of the dog's world to the human readers. London also tries to preserve Buck's believability as a dog. So while he explains Buck's motivations, London reminds the reader that Buck does not actually think. After a lengthy passage about Buck's moral decline, explaining why Buck steals food from his master, London writes, "Not that Buck reasoned it out.... unconsciously he accommodated himself to the new mode of life."

One of the main topics of significance in the novel is its connection to the philosophy of the 'survival of the fittest' that was in trend at the turn of the century. London has brought in his conception of law into this fascinating adventure of man's best friend which is easily visible through the eyes of Buck. Buck directs the reader's sympathies to the 'good' and the 'bad' as they pass through his life. Thus his style of writing is abrupt and challenging. Through his characters he portrays the life and style of living at that particular time. A lot is expressed through various extraordinary situations and events and the writer justifies his style through his sense of naturalism and realism.

5.6 LET US CONCLUDE

Thus we see that the unit introduces us to the American author John Griffith "Jack" London and his contributions with special analysis on *The Call of the Wild*. The biographical note of the author gives a brief hint into his personal and professional life. The summary and the plot give an idea about the development and style of the novel. The relationships are well-handled and the summary revolves around the character of the main protagonist – the dog, Buck. Through the themes, motifs and symbols the readers come closer to the main idea which builds in between the various human and animal characters.

5.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 How does *The Call of the Wild* present the human-dog relationship?
- Q.2 Describe Jack London's style of writing in *The Call of the Wild*.
- Q.3 What is the 'law of the club and the fang'? What does it represent? How is Buck introduced to it?

- Q.4 How is John Thornton different from Buck's previous masters? Why is he an ideal master?
- Q.5 In the novel *The Call of the Wild* what does Buck's fondness for Thornton signify?
- Q.6 Describe the changes that Buck undergoes in the novel.
- Q.7 How does Buck balance his love for Thornton with his more primitive self?
- Q.8 How do the motifs and symbols used in the novel justify the themes of the novel?
- Q.9 Explain the title '*The Call of the Wild*'?
- Q.10 Discuss Mercedes, Hal and Charles. What role do they play in the novel? How do they function as pictures of the worst side of civilization?
- Q.11 What is 'atavism'? What role does it play in Buck's development as a wild animal?
- Q.12 How does 'the call of the wild' affect Buck's behavior throughout the novel?



A CRITICAL STUDY OF “THE MAN EATER OF MALGUDI”

Contents

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 The Author
- 6.3 His Contribution
- 6.4 The Man Eater of Malgudi
- 6.5 Let us conclude
- 6.6 Check Your Progress

6.0 OBJECTIVES

7.0

- To introduce R.K.Narayan as a writer.
- To introduce his major contemporaries.
- To make the students understand Narayan’s contribution to literature.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.2

In the previous unit the attempt was to convey the meaning and development of the novel and how it has appeared on the Indian literary scene. In this unit the attention is on R.K.Narayan – the biographical note followed by one of his most appreciated novels *The Man Eater of Malgudi*. The summary of the novel highlights the main theme followed by the plot which gives an idea about where the story is mainly located and the role of the characters that are justified at the backdrop of the plot. The mythological story that justifies the significance of the novel is highlighted. The main characters, Nataraj and Vasu, have been elucidated to enhance the story.

2.2 THE AUTHOR

R.K.Narayan (10 October 1906 – 13 May 2001), one of the leading figures in Indian English literature, was born in Madras and spent his early years under the care of his maternal grandmother. Later he moved to Mysore to live with his family. The school his father was posted had a well-stocked library which nourished his reading habit. After clearing the university entrance examination he joined Maharaja College of Mysore and it took him four years to obtain his B.A degree. He briefly joined a school as a teacher and

later left it in protest when he was asked by the principal to substitute for the physical training master. From then on he realized that his only career was in writing and he decided to stay at home and write books. He started writing in the local newspapers and magazines and though writing did not pay him much he always got the support of his family and friends.

While on vacation at his sister's house in Coimbatore in 1933 he fell in love with Rajam, a fifteen year girl who lived nearby, and he managed to marry her despite astrological and financial obstacles. When Narayan's father expired in 1937, he was compelled to accept a commission from the government of Mysore as he was not earning any money. Within two years of his father's death his wife died of typhoid and this affected Narayan deeply and he remained distressed for a long time. He was also concerned for their daughter Hema who was only three years old then. Narayan started his own publishing company Indian Thought Publications which was a great success and is still active managed by his granddaughter.

It was in 1953 that his works were first published in the United State by Michigan State University Press. It was only after arranging his daughter's wedding in 1956, he started to travel often and also visited the United States for the Rockefeller Fellowship. In 1967 he travelled to England to receive his first honorary doctorate from the University of Leeds. In 1980 he was elected as an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and won the AC Benson Medal from the Royal Society of Literature. Around this time his works were translated into Chinese for the first time. He was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 1980 for his contributions to the field of literature. In his six-year term his main focus was on the pathetic plight of the school children, especially the heavy loads of books which resulted in a negative effect on the child's creativity. He was nominated a multiple times for the Nobel Prize in Literature but sadly never won it. He was honoured with Padma Vibhushan just a few months before his death. After his daughter's death of cancer in 1994 he was looked after by his granddaughter till his final exit on May 13th 2001 in Chennai at the age of 94.

6.3 HIS CONTRIBUTION

R.K.Narayan' first published work was a book review of *Development of Maritime Laws of 17th-Century England*. He wrote his first novel *Swami and Friends* in 1930, a semi-autobiographical book created with the help of the various incidents of his own

childhood. It was his friend who showed the manuscript to Graham Greene who recommended the book to his publisher and was thus published in 1935. From then itself the imaginary town of Malgudi was also shaped. His next novel *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) was to some extent inspired by his experiences at college and dealt with the topic of an unruly youngster who changes in the company of well-adjusted adult. His third book *The Dark Room* (1938) is about domestic discord where man is shown as the oppressor and woman the victim. The death of his wife in 1939 affected Narayan very much and brought in a noteworthy transformation in his life and was also the inspiration behind his next novel *The English Teacher* (1945). His first collection of short stories, *Malgudi Days*, was published in 1942.

Gradually Narayan's style of writing took a more imaginative and artistic style, completely different from the semi-autobiographical tone of the earlier novels and *Mr. Sampath* was the first adapted approach. Then he published *The Financial Expert* (1951), written under the inspiration of a true story about a financial mastermind, which is considered as a masterpiece of Narayan. The subsequent novel, *Waiting for the Mahatma*, is based on Mahatma Gandhi's fictional visit to Malgudi and though the novel comprises noteworthy references from the Indian Independence Movement the main spotlight is on the lives of the ordinary individuals. *The Guide* was written when he visited the United States in 1956 which won him the Sahitya Academy Award in 1958. While in U.S. he maintained a daily journal which later served as the foundation for his book *My Dateless Diary*. His next novel *The Man Eater of Malgudi* was published in 1961, a narrative in a classical art form of comedy. His first mythological work *Gods, Demons and Others* was published in 1964 where the stories were selected on the basis of powerful protagonists. *The Vendor of Sweets* came out in 1967 which was to some extent inspired by his American visits. He kept contributing in English literature till a very mature age and all his works serve as a source of inspiration for all.

6.4 THE MAN EATER OF MALGUDI

Summary

The story rotates around the life of an Indian printer Nataraj who lives in a massive ancestral house in Malgudi, a fictional town in South India. Surrounded by Mempi hills, the beautiful town is tranquil and pleasing. Leading a contented lifestyle along with his circle of friends, a poet, a journalist named Sen, and his single employee, Sastri, Nataraj had never suspected any kind of unnecessary intervention. Vasu, the taxidermist, comes to Malgudi with the selfish intention of exploring the Mempi hills in search of wildlife. It is with his persuasive stipulation of printing five hundred visiting cards that he barges into Nataraj's printing press; and then onwards the love-hate relationship between Vasu and Nataraj

develops. Nataraj is not very sure about Vasu's proximity, neither is he clear about his own stance but there is a strange collaboration between them and however hard he tries to come out of it, it is beyond his capability. It is as if the bond is sanctified by a supreme force and despite Nataraj's desperate wish he fails to tear himself apart from the strong pull.

Vasu is a torment to the simple-hearted people of the village and is even compared to *Rakshasa* (a Demon) by Nataraj and Sastri. He vehemently and authoritatively takes up residence in the attic of Nataraj's press and convinces Nataraj that he would stay there as a guest only for a few days until he gets some other better place to move on. This self declaration seems unauthentic with the passing of time as, without Nataraj's knowledge, Vasu finds the place very suitable to carry out his taxidermist plans. Vasu, the 'pahelwan', is proud of his strength and has an intention of doing whatever he feels like by demonstrating his muscle power and his over-imposing nature. Without Nataraj's permission Vasu encroaches into his life casually and even bullies his friends and customers every now and then creating a state of confusion and condemnation all around. He poaches wildlife from Mempi hills and carries out the work of a taxidermist in the attic of the printing press which results in an awful stench in the neighborhood. When Nataraj questions about this to Vasu, he, on the contrary, files a complaint with the rent control authority on Nataraj, blaming him as a self declared tenant. Vasu even goes to the extent of entertaining women in the attic and this disturbs the serenity and sobriety of Malgudi. He is referred to by the narrator as "the man eater of Malgudi" as it is his coming to the town that engulfs the purity and profundity of the place.

It is Rangi, the temple dancer and one of Vasu's women, who informs Nataraj that Vasu wants to kill Kumar, the temple elephant, which Nataraj had brought down from the Mempi Hills for treatment of some ailment as a favour to Muthu who had helped Nataraj when he had happened to meet him under unexpected circumstances owing to Vasu's unpredicted and reckless adventures. Nataraj frantically tries to stop Vasu from this heinous crime, but in vain. He even decides for another ultimate talk to Vasu but when he goes to the attic he ascertains the sleeping profile of Vasu from the dim street light. He thinks it to be a blessing and comes down without disturbing Vasu, praying that Vasu must continue his sleep till the procession passes by. The convoy passes uninterruptedly and it is only in the next morning that Vasu's death is discovered. Nataraj is looked down upon as many has a feeling that it might be he who had instigated the crime and Nataraj tries his best to prove his innocence. The autopsy takes place and the verdict issued is that he was neither poisoned nor were there any signs of physical injury. Though the case is closed, the reputation of Nataraj's press is ruined and his friends and other people start avoiding him. Later, Nataraj learns, through his friend

Sastri, that Vasu was not murdered, but died in an attempt to smash a mosquito sitting on his temple. The blow was so hard that he had damaged one of his nerves leading to an instant death. The powerful hands that Vasu was so proud of finally become the instrument of his own destruction. At last Nataraj is rid of Vasu but in his heart he nurtures his attraction for the man whose courage and confidence he really appreciated. The story ends on the note that all demons or *rakshashas* are themselves responsible for their own downfall.

Based on the mythological story of Bhasmasura *The Man Eater of Malgudi* is one of the outstanding works of fiction by R.K.Narayan. It is at once an implementation of the old Hindu parable and also a sympathetic presentation of two spectacularly contrasting approaches to life, the scantiness of both being sarcastically uncovered. The application of the Bhasmasura myth in the novel was a module of cognizant endeavor by Narayan as is gathered from the speech he delivered to the audience of Columbia University in 1972, "At some point in one's writing career, one takes a fresh look at the so-called myths and legends and finds a new meaning in them. After writing a number of novels and short stories based on the society around me, some years ago suddenly I came across a theme which struck me as an excellent piece of mythology in modern dress. It was published under the title *The Man Eater of Malgudi* I based this story on a well-known mythological episode, the story of Mohini and Bhasmasura."

It is the relationship between the narrator Nataraj, a witty but warm-hearted printer of Malgudi and Vasu, an eccentric taxidermist, which is at the heart of R.K.Narayan's novel *The Man Eater of Malgudi*. Vasu, the taxidermist, has detrimental fortitude and has all the distinctiveness of a Rakshas. The problem generates with Vasu forcing himself into Nataraj's attic and using it authoritatively for himself and his profession. Vasu has learnt the art of stuffing animals from a master named Suleiman, but before that he had also learnt the art of wrestling which he used for his sake by killing his guru in a moment of irrepressible fury. By the time Nataraj debates with his wisdom of carrying out a deal with a man who looks and sounds like a 'giant' Vasu takes over his attic and converts it into a working quarter for himself without the mention of either rent or consent. Nataraj, the convivial, compassionate and submissive protagonist is uncomfortable for a while by the narcissistic, destructive and intolerant Vasu till the latter self-destructs, as demons are usually supposed to do.

Initially it seems that the prime assignment of Vasu is to expose the ridiculous pretensions of Nataraj and his intellectual circle which, in turn, depicts, through comic allegory, the incompatible customs of heroic aggression in India. The story even entails a charitable viewpoint of the Indians pleading desperately for an appearance of some redeemer during their time of misery, or any miracle to happen in order to heal the evils of Indian society.

Although the societies elsewhere have been developing with the changing scenario, Narayan's Malgudi sticks to its age-old customs and traditions and Malgudians miserably incompetent in changing their outlook and adjusting their philosophy. Even Nataraj, the chief protagonist of the novel, is depicted as a spineless, docile and subservient man. Throughout he sits in his press surrounded by the poet and the journalist and is concerned more about the social gossip rather than the business deals. Vasu penetrates into the serene atmosphere of Malgudi and Nataraj is completely disturbed about it because he has never seen a person so savage and untamed in character throughout his life time. In the company of Vasu he feels so powerless that he has no audacity to counter the opinions of Vasu. It is because of the submissive and defeatist attitude that he has nurtured under his orthodox parents which has never encouraged him to face the challenges of life. It is due to this mindset of his that he finally leaves everything in the hands of the celestial power, optimistically pleading for support and the readers are not at all surprised by his meek and desperate situation. The author even condemns the temperament of the Indians, through his characters, who still consult their astrologers or palmists for the good and awful events that happen in their life – whatever they achieve is considered as a blessing and whatever they forego they regard it as a curse – everything handled by the gods and goddesses whom they keep praying all the time. It is with pride that Nataraj comments, "I hung up a framed picture of goddess Laxmi poised on her lotus holding aloft the bounties of earth in her four hands, and through her grace I did not do too badly."

It is only after Vasu fails to appease a forestry official to get a license to kill animals, he starts poaching in the Mempi forest besides shooting innocent creatures around the locality. On being interrogated about killing an eagle that is considered sacred by the Hindus as it is believed to be Lord Vishnu's vehicle, Vasu answers frivolously, "I want to try and make Vishnu use his feet now and then." (64) Vasu seems to be especially fond of killing tigers and Nataraj is stunned when he sees for the first time the head of a tiger on the back seat of his jeep. It is undoubtedly a shocking experience for Nataraj as he belongs to a household where even killing a fly is observed as an offense. Vasu even proves a perfect enemy to Nataraj by accusing him of having rented the ill-maintained part of the house illegally to him and with great pain has Nataraj to settle the matter at court through passive resources. It is Sastri's view that Vasu 'shows all the definitions of a rakshasa' with his gigantic power, mastermind and no regard for either man or God, which captivates the thinking of Nataraj. Sastri further goes to the extent of saying that like a demon Vasu is impregnable and beyond law – "But sooner or later something or the other will destroy him" (96) and to support his surveillance he offers a number of examples from the Puranas. In the Ramayana, the ten-headed demon, Ravana, was finally killed by Rama despite his

extraordinary Yogic powers and the blessing of never ending life. Even the story of Mahisha, an Asura, who had the boon of immortality and invincibility and also possessed the capability to generate a demon like him with every drop of blood he shed on the ground was finally destroyed by goddess Durga who sucked the blood that fell from his body, is recounted by Sastri. Sastri even goes to the extent of narrating the parable of Bhasmasura who made the human race suffer with his unusual boon of sweltering everything he touched and was finally tricked by Mohini, a personification of God Vishnu, to place his palms on his own head and was reduced to ashes. "Every man can think that he is great and live forever, but no one can guess from which quarter his doom will come." (97)

It is only when the poet friend of Nataraj completes his poem on Radha Kalyan that they decide to commemorate the occasion in a grand manner. A day which coincides with the spring festival is fixed by the astrologer and the whole town is in a mood of celebration. When Nataraj is busy with all the preparations, he is taken aback by the surprise visit of Rangī, the iniquitous temple dancer who has of late become very close to Vasu. To his startling disbelief and shock, she informs Nataraj the plan of Vasu to shoot the Temple elephant during the time of the procession. When the concerned Nataraj questions Vasu about his despicable plan, Vasu replies indifferently " Has it occurred to you how much more an elephant is worth dead? I can make ten thousand out of the parts of this elephant." (172) It is to Lord Vishnu to whom Nataraj surrenders himself after having lost all hopes of rescuing the elephant, for Nataraj believes that when Lord Vishnu can save Gajendra, the elephant king, from the clutches of the crocodile it is only he who can save their temple elephant from the evil influence. Unable to control himself, he softly enters Vasu's quarters again and finding him sleeping takes away the gun. Nothing extraordinary happens when the procession passes by and it is only the next day when the town comes to know about Vasu's accidental death. Though it is on Nataraj that the finger is raised at but later, on inquiry, it is revealed that Vasu, in a fit of anger over a mosquito hovering over him, had hit himself hard on the forehead and met with his own end. Sastri's aphorism finally comes true: "Every demon carries with him, unknown to himself, a tiny seed of self-destruction, and goes up in the air at the most unexpected moment." (214)

To emphasize the contrast between good and evil Narayan illustrates the mythological story of Bhasmasura and everything seems very relevant as he observes: "The strong man of evil continues to be reckless until he is destroyed by the tempo of his own misdeeds. Evil has in it buried subtly, the infallible seeds of its own destruction. And however frightening a demon might seem, his doom is implied in his own propensities " [R.K.Narayan, *Gods*,

Demons and Others (Mysore: Indian Thought Publications, 1977), p.5]

Plot

The story revolves around the love-hate relationship between Nataraj, the printer, and Vasu, the taxidermist. Nataraj stays in a huge ancestral house in Malgudi, an imaginary town in South India. The town is located near the Mempi Hills and is very pleasant and beautiful. Nataraj lives a much contented lifestyle surrounded by his regular friends, the poet and the journalist, and his employee, Sastri who, though quite aged, knows his responsibilities well. Suddenly the calmness of the town and the peace of Nataraj are disturbed with the appearance of Vasu who comes to the town in search of animals from the Mempi Hills. He unexpectedly comes to Nataraj's printing press in demand of 5000 printing cards. Nataraj, unsure of Vasu's intention and shocked at his abrupt behavior, is quite at a loss in his approach of dealing with him.

Prof. K. R. S. Iyengar in his *Indian Writing in English* traces the origin of the plot or relates the plot of this novel to the Bhasmasura episode of the ancient mythology. The well-known story tells about Bhasmasura who was granted a boon by Lord Shiva. Finally this boon itself was responsible for his doom. Lord Vishnu wanted to control the violence of Bhasmasura who was troubling all with his newly acquired powers. Under the clever man composition of Mohini, who was none other than Lord Vishnu, Bhasmasura invites his own end. In this novel also the immoral, ungrateful and absolutely pitiless but physically powerful hero, Vasu, meets his doom most unbelievably at his own hands.

The plots of Narayan do not follow any standardized form but rather progresses according to the logical development of the idea he considers best. This is true even in the case of *The Man Eater of Malgudi* – the action of the novel is determined by the character of Vasu. It is he who dominates the entire story. His elimination from the picture by way of unexpected and instant death restores normalcy and satisfying life of Nataraj, his friends and the people of Malgudi.

The plots of Narayan are built of resources and events that occur to almost everyone at one time or the other. But it is the magical power of his imagination that captures the reader's curiosity and consideration.

The Significance of the Story

In *The Man Eater of Malgudi*, Narayan has taken the story of a demon – Bhasmasura. 'Bhasma' means 'ash' and 'Asura' means 'demon'. The demon had acquired a boon from Lord Shiva that anybody he touches will be reduced to ashes immediately. After achieving this boon Bhasmasura creates a lot of trouble on earth. To end the cruelty of the demon Lord Vishnu takes the form of a beautiful woman to seduce him. When the demon desires for the woman Lord Vishnu (in the form of the woman) asks him to dance

with her. As a part of the dance the woman makes a gesture of placing her hand on her head and the demon imitates her. The moment he does so he is turned into ashes.

Narayan created the story keeping this ancient mythological tale at the backdrop. The man-eater of Malgudi pays heavily for his sins. Like Mohini, Rangi acts as an instrument for the death of Vasu in the novel. Just as Bhasmasura wanted to test the authenticity of the boon on Lord Shiva himself, Vasu, the Bhasmasura of Malgudi, annoys torments and humiliates Nataraj unaware of the fact that he has given him shelter. Most amazingly Nataraj is another name for Lord Shiva. Thus this novel has a perfect similarity to the ancient mythological episode. The title suggests a recurring thread but presents it with a moral inclination as well.

Character of Nataraj

At the heart of R.K.Narayan's *The Man Eater of Malgudi* lies the relationship between the narrator Nataraj, a warm-hearted printer of the town, and Vasu, an eccentric taxidermist who forces himself into Nataraj's attic and uses it to house himself and practice his profession. Nataraj is described as a spineless, submissive and sensitive fellow. He sits in his press all the time surrounded by the poet and the journalist. Vasu enters the quiet scene of Malgudi and Nataraj becomes totally upset as he has never seen in his life a person so savage and wild by nature. He looks totally helpless before Vasu. The submissive and accepting attitude that Nataraj has developed under his orthodox parents never encourage him to face the challenges of life. It is no wonder that a person of his mentality leaves everything to the divine power, and always keeps praying for help. Nataraj symbolizes the peaceful life of Malgudi. The neatness with which he runs his printing press gets a jolt with the arrival of Vasu.

Though Vasu is adamant in his behavior and a bully in nature, Nataraj does not hate him as he appreciates his power and his confidence. Nataraj is overwhelmed by the spirit and courage of Vasu. He feels that Vasu is a demoniac creature who possesses massive strength, strange powers and intellect. In the presence of Vasu he loses his own self. He is proud of his powerful muscle and it is for this that Nataraj appreciates him and also distances himself from him.

Nataraj is typically a modest simple man whose words and deeds tend to create an impression that he is hesitant, shy and submissive. In the words of Vasu Nataraj is 'a spineless person' (p. 101). He is generous, obliging and accommodating. When he is dragged by Vasu to Mempi, he gets concerned in the affairs of the village and even assures Muthu, the tea-shop owner, of printing the notices and even helping him in curing the temple elephant, Kumar. He helps the poet in getting the poems printed and takes a leading part the function in the temple on the release of the book. He is very honest and sincere in attitude. A perfect gentleman he even praises high about the neighbouring Star Press, which owns an original

Heidelberg machine, whenever he faces the difficulty of being overloaded with work. He fails to turn away any customer and with a little bit of insistence he accepts the burden. A law-abiding citizen he knows his responsibilities and limitations very well. As a good citizen he is interested in the welfare of the community at large and is even willing to sacrifice the profits he makes from the press.

When Nataraj interferes and questions about his activities, Vasu, in turn, files a complaint against him to the rent control authority by saying that Nataraj is a self-declared tenant. Nataraj is shattered but he knows very well that he will not be able to come to terms with Vasu's obstinate nature. It is only during the release of the poetry book of Krishna by the author friend of Nataraj that the climax takes place. Rangi, the temple dancer who had become close to Vasu, informs Nataraj that Vasu is determined to kill the temple elephant, Kumar. Nataraj had brought the elephant to town earlier from Mempi Hills to treat an illness and also to do a favour in turn to one of his friends there who had helped him when Vasu had left him astray. Nataraj is shocked to learn from Rangi that present intention was to kill the temple elephant for the sake business. He desperately tries to stop the procession but it has taken such a huge form that it becomes impossible for him to intervene. At that time his only rescue, he feels, is in the power of the Almighty and like a madman he raises his hands up for prayer. Then he decides to talk to Vasu one last time with the hope that if at all he can somehow convince him and with this intention he goes up to the attic. As he goes up the steps he comes across many stuffed animals and he is overwhelmed by the mastery of art.

As Nataraj enters the dark attic he catches the outline of Vasu and immediately starts dissuading him from the terrible action he has planned. When no response comes from Vasu's side he proceeds further to notice that Vasu is sleeping with his gun on his lap. Immediately he seizes the gun and aims it at him with his finger on the trigger. He becomes sure of his approach because he knows that without the gun he will not be able to restrict Vasu when he gets up to shoot the elephant. But to his utter surprise Vasu does not get up and the procession passes by calmly. The next morning the revelation of Vasu's death shocks the town. Finally when Vasu dies it is Nataraj who becomes the chief suspect though he comes from a family who even looks upon the killing of a fly as a crime. He loses his face and his press loses its reputation. It is only the autopsy report that finally proves Vasu's fault and Nataraj's innocence. The case is closed and Nataraj is let free but the reputation of his press is ruined and his friends and customers start avoiding him. At the end it is Sastri who informs Nataraj that Vasu was not murdered, but died in an attempt to smash a mosquito sitting on his temple. One of his nerves was damaged by the powerful blow of his own hand and he died immediately. Nataraj is finally rid of Vasu and the novel ends with a note that the devils or the rakshashas bring their own downfall. It is certainly a story of

eternal conflict between the Good and the Evil personified in the two characters, Nataraj and Vasu, ruttled against each other in unusual situations.

But it is not just charm and virtue that Nataraj possesses. He is also shrewd, insistent, ambitious and not free from self-interest. From the beginning of the novel itself the complexity of Nataraj is quite visible. Although he appears to be quite selfless, allowing casual visitors in his parlour, he is aware of the fact that 'while they rested there, people got ideas from bill forms, visiting cards or wedding invitations which they asked me to print'. (p 2)

Character of Vasu

Vasu is a gigantic, muscular and tall person and everyone in the press of Nataraj is scared of him not because he is physically strong but also because he is hostile in his approach and also very offensive in attitude. Vasu is known by the innumerable adjectives like 'the man-eater', 'terrifying', 'unreasonable', 'man with the dark halo', 'rakshasha' and what not. A wild animal hunter and a taxidermist he enters the peaceful town of Malgudi and disturbs the easy-going life of the people. He constantly troubles and terrorizes others with his demoniac strength. He is so powerful in the eyes of the common people of Malgudi that he can be compared with a tiger and Narayan regards him as 'the man-eater of Malgudi'. Vasu trespasses into the life of Nataraj and disturbs it completely with his indomitable activities. At times he harasses the friends and customers of Nataraj, he shoots someone's pet dog and many other animals and birds near their residing place, he poaches wildlife from the Mempi Hills and he creates an unbearable stench in the neighbourhood through his taxidermy occupation. Vasu even entertains women in the attic and thus disturbs the serene atmosphere of the beautiful town and thus he is referred to by the narrator as 'the man eater of Malgudi'.

Vasu forces himself into the attic of Nataraj and self-declares that he would stay there as a guest for a few days. He himself takes the responsibility of cleaning the attic as Nataraj just watches him come and go without seeking any kind of permission from him. Without Nataraj's knowledge he makes the place very convenient for his taxidermy occupation. He is proud of his powerful muscle and it is for this that Nataraj appreciates him and also distances himself from him.

Though a giant in size and a demon in attitude, Narayan gives him an intellectual touch also. He expresses that he has received his M.A. in Economics, History and Literature from the Presidency College of Madras. He knows the laws, talks of Vedanta and he even follows Mahatma Gandhi and goes for imprisonment. Being a taxidermist by profession he shoots animals and tans the covering. The pseudo-philosophy of self-willed and confident Vasu is exposed in his speech "we are civilized human beings, educated and cultured and it is up to us to prove our superiority to nature.

Science conquers nature in a new way every day; why not in creation also? That's my philosophy, Sir." (p. 20) Even Nataraj admires Vasu – "He worked single handed on all branches of his work. I admired him for it" (p. 66)

He is a complete womanizer and whenever he is free from his hunting he indulges himself into sex. He loves to enjoy the immoral company of the characterless women and is against the institution of marriage "only fools marry and they deserve all the trouble they get. I really do not know why people marry at all" (p. 38). He sticks to the concept of enjoying sex whenever required and freely satisfies his sexual desire with the prostitutes of the town including Rangji, the temple dancer.

Vasu is open-hearted, lively and at times sympathetic too. If he takes Nataraj unexpectedly to Mempi village it is not for any harm but because of his high spirits and playfulness. The greatest input of Vasu in the town of Malgudi is his intention to expose all the irrationalities of Nataraj and his friends. Vasu has committed such sins in life which, when he narrates them to Nataraj, Nataraj is horrified. He had hit his teacher (Guru) and escaped from there. He had taken to the profession of killing and stuffing animals. He never regretted on what he did but always believed in what he should do next. He is not interested in other people's affairs and leads a secluded life altogether. He comes like a storm and sweeps Nataraj with his gush of words. Though he should be obliged to Nataraj for his attic he behaves in such a way as if Nataraj is indebted to him. He is obstinate and aggressive. He cares neither for Nataraj nor for the forest officials. The only instance cited in the novel to show Vasu as a requester is when he accompanies the forest officer to the press for the purpose of getting his book of golden thoughts published at Nataraj's press. Vasu does not even respect the law and goes hunting even when he is not given a license. He kills all animals that come his way. He is thus a manifestation of evil trying to reconstruct while destroying life.

Vasu's death is based on the mythological story of Bhasmasura. Like the demon (Asura) who turned into ashes by his own conduct, Vasu also calls upon death by his own action. Hitting hard a mosquito sitting on his temple, he collapses under the influence of his own strength.

Irony

Like most of Narayan's novels, *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is written in clear straightforward prose style. Narayan's dominant tone is that of gentle irony. He shows an obvious capability to control the narrative pace, shifting skillfully from the slow-moving opening scenes to the fast-paced conclusion where Nataraj and the townspeople plan to prevent Vasu from his adamant scheme. The novel is a first-person narrative and so Nataraj's growing tension and anxiety at Vasu's actions is realized by the readers.

R. K. Narayan is basically a humorous writer whose interest is in careful scrutiny and he does so through his ironic and

harmonious way of telling his story. It is because of his brilliance for humour that he has a perpetual appeal as a novelist. His humour is the straight outcome of his scholarly inspection of the tragic or comic challenges knotted in human experience. Basically his three novels – *The Man Eater of Malgudi*, *The Guide* and *The Financial Expert* – are the finest of his fiction as irony in them is developed into an all acceptance image of life.

The Man Eater of Malgudi can be seen as a comic allegory of India, with its contradictory traditions of epic violence or *ahimsa*. Comedy is also provided through the poet who is efficiently composing an epic on Krishna in monosyllabic verse and also a retired forest officer occupied in compiling an Anthology of Golden Thoughts from World Literature. The components of comedy are brilliantly cluttered in the novel with the exact intention of providing amusement but the hint of serious objective could not be ignored.

Narayan's humour in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* relies a lot on the ironical situations as well as the interaction of several major and minor characters in unanticipated ways. From Nataraj's consultation with the adjournment lawyer to Vasu's liberty of taking Nataraj, without warning, on an excursion into Mempi Village and then the septuagenarian's visit to inform him about Vasu's shooting his grandchild's dog – are all various examples of how Narayan creates humour in different forms. The humour created during the consultation with the adjournment lawyer is an example of how Narayan creates a humorous situation out of typical human behaviour around other. People, the trip to Mempi Village depends mainly on Nataraj's own internal thoughts while the episode concerning the murdered dog involves a display of characters and Narayan uses dialogue as his main technique in creating a dark humour here. Narayan's visual images play an important part in creating humorous images that tend to leave a lasting impression.

6.5 LET US CONCLUDE

Thus the unit sees the development of the story based on the imaginary town of Malgudi. The significance of the title justifies its attachment to the mythological allegory of Bhasmasura. The plot of the story, which originally is taken from the Bhasmasura myth moves in and around the imaginary town of Malgudi. Narayan's brilliant use of irony and humour adds to the appeal of the novel. With the characterization of Nataraj and Vasu the essence of the story becomes more accurate. Nataraj's helplessness and Vasu's indifference allows one to understand the difficulties that arise due to human interference.

6.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 Discuss irony and humour in *The Man Eater of Malgudi*.
- Q.2 What is the central theme of *The Man Eater of Malgudi*. Is the conflict between good and evil portrayed by Nataraj and Vasu.
- Q.3 Character analysis of Nataraj.
- Q.4 Character analysis of Vasu.
- Q.5 Could *The Man Eater of Malgudi* be considered as an Indian folklore? Why or why not?
- Q.6 What is the significance of the title of the story?



DRAMA AS A FORM OF LITERATURE

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7.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the history of drama to the students.
- To make them understand the elements of drama and the types of drama

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature plays a very significant role in human life. It is considered to be the mirror of the society which reflects the image of the time in which it was created. It is a medium of expressing thoughts and ideas for the writer. It is one of the most ancient forms of entertainment in the history of mankind. At the beginning when there was no written form of language, literature was composed in the form of poetry and preserved through the words of mouth. In the history of literature, poetry is the most ancient form of literature. Then it developed into various other forms like drama, novel, and short story.

7.2 DRAMA: IT'S HISTORY

The term 'drama' originates from Greek language, which means 'to do'. In a drama, we come across objective representation of the conflicts, actions, events and crisis from the lives of the concerned characters. Drama is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance. It is primarily a performing art. It is the most powerful literary expression as action is presented on the stage, engaging the audio-visual faculties of the audience.

Drama is an ancient form of literature having a long history of more than 2500 years. Historically speaking following are the stages in the development of drama:

7.2.1 Greek Drama

History of literature shows the origin of drama in Greece in 6th century B.C. In ancient Greece dramatic competitions were held to celebrate the festival of God Dionysus. The dramatists participating in this competition were required to present a tetralogy of plays consisting of three tragedies and a satyr play. The plays performed in this period were tragedy, comedy and the satyr play. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes and Menander are the best-known dramatists of Ancient times.

7.2.2 Roman Drama

Greek drama came in contact with the Romans after the Roman Empire expanded into Greece territories in the 3rd century B.C. Roman dramatists of this period like Andronicus and Naevius took drama all over Europe. During the 2nd century B.C. it had become one of the chief means of entertainment with many men of letters practicing it. The comedies written by Plautus and Terence became very popular, many of which have survived. The Roman tragedian, Seneca popularized tragedy so much so that it is called Senecan tragedy.

7.2.3 Medieval Drama

The drama of the Middle Ages dealt with Bible stories and allegorical mysteries. It was being written in the regional languages of the times. To help the laymen understand the teachings of the

religion, the clergymen used to perform the incidents from Bible in dramatic form. The plays of this period are called Mystery and Miracle plays.

7.2.4 Elizabethan Drama

With the construction of Globe Theatre in London, drama as a major form of literature flourished in England. The main practitioners of this form in 16th and 17th century are Ben Jonson, Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. The plays of this period were written on the themes like ancient history and Greek and Roman mythology, and contemporary socio-political issues.

7.2.5 Modern Drama

Henrik Ibsen and Bertolt Brecht dominate the modern drama of 19th and 20th Century respectively. Ibsen started a new kind of drama by making an ordinary housewife as the heroine of his play, 'A Doll's House'. Anton Chekhov, Eugene O'Neill, Luigi Pirandello, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, John Osborne and George Bernard Shaw are the important dramatists of this period.

7.2.6 Indian Classical Drama

Indian Classical drama originated from the Rig-Veda. The plots of these plays were based on the stories taken from the great Sanskrit epics, *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata*. Our ancient writer, Bharata penned the theory of writing a play in his book '*Natya Shastra*'. Bhasa, Kalidasa, Sudraka, Asvaghosa and Harsha are the famous Sanskrit playwrights.

7.3 DRAMA: ITS ELEMENTS

Aristotle, in his book entitled 'The Poetics' has discussed theoretical aspects of drama. Here he has given emphasis on tragedy and its elements. These elements are plot, theme, character, diction, music and spectacle.

7.3.1 Plot

According to Aristotle's theory of drama in 'Poetics', plot is the most important element of drama. He equals the plot of a play with the soul in human body. The plot can be either simple or complex. Simple plot is straight-forward, with continuous movements, whereas the complex plot has peripeteia and Anagnorisis. Peripeteia means the opposite results produced by the human actions. In such a plot the character goes on acting naively in certain way without realizing the effects of his actions. But these actions ultimately lead it to its doom. Anagnorisis means the realization of truth. The simple plot has only one story in it whereas the complex plot can have more than one story or episodes in it. The skill of the dramatist lies in knitting all these episodes in a single whole to create a singular effect on the audience.

An ideal plot can be divided into three parts-beginning, middle and an end. A good beginning is that which is not dependent on some previous incident or knowledge. A good middle is the outcome of the events which have taken place in the beginning and

leads those events to their satisfactory conclusion. A good ending is the result of whatever has happened before the end. It is the natural conclusion of the events gone before.

7.3.2 Character

Drama is the representation of the conflicts of human life. And so it requires some characters in the happenings of life. As the dramatist represents a story, it is but natural that there should be some characters on whose life the story is based. The characters in a play are selected from the host of people according to the need of the plot. As the play has a limited canvas, he does not make his play over crowded with too many characters. There is no scope for a full length character study in a drama. So the writer selects only those incidents from the life of his protagonist that are necessary for the action of the play.

The characters are of two types - flat characters and round characters. A flat character does not grow with the development of the plot. It remains static from the beginning to the end of the play. On the other hand, round character grows with the action of the play. Another type of character is the stock character, a character that reappears again and again in various plays with the same attributes each time. Such characters are also called stereotypes or the stock characters.

While developing his characters, the dramatist uses the following methods: one method is to develop his characters by the help of the dialogues which the character speaks; the other method is to expose the character by through the speeches of the other characters; and the third method is the combination of the earlier two methods, i.e. developing the character partly through his/her own speeches and partly by what others say about him/her. Actually the last method is more convincing and so used by the greater number of writers.

One more aspect of the characters in a play is the selection of the hero or the heroine. The dramatist has to be very careful regarding this aspect because the success of the play is dependent on the proper selection of the characters. So the dramatist follows certain well-defined principles for this purpose. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle has laid down some rules for the proper choice of characters. According to Aristotelian canon the hero of a tragedy should be a 'good' person. It means the hero of a play should be of an intermediate type of person. He should neither be 'too good' nor 'too bad'. Similarly, the heroine of a play should also be selected as per the demands of the plot. The hero and the heroine should belong to the royal families or to the upper strata of the society because the fall of such a person from happiness to misery would create the cathartic effect on the minds of the audience.

7.3.3 Diction

As is mentioned earlier that there should be a proper selection of the characters, similarly there should be a proper

choice of the language to be used in a play. Language or the diction is *'the choice of words made by the playwright and enunciation of the actors delivering these words'*. The dramatist represents only the selected incidents and events from the lives of the characters in the form of dialogue and action. Therefore the language used in the play should be decorative, stylistic and becoming to the specific class to which the character belongs. It means a king should speak like a king and a clown should speak like a clown. Otherwise the audience will not believe in whatever is happening on the stage. Shakespeare has closely followed this principle in his plays. The characters belonging to the upper strata of the society in his plays mostly speak in verse and the characters from lower classes use prose. As every word in a play helps the playwright to further the action so the diction is very important substance of the play.

7.3.4 Subject or the Theme

The various events of the plot are held together by some central idea. This central idea is called the 'subject' or 'theme' of the play. If the theme of a play is noble and dignified, it will make the play great and successful. A great work of art comes into existence if the theme is noble and worthy of artistic treatment. And so the dramatist must deal with noble and dignified action. It is possible that some plays with a good plot may be having a little or no theme in them. Such plays may become temporarily successful with the audience. This success is short-lived as the audiences forget about the play after coming out of the theatre. Therefore along with a well-constructed plot, there should be a good theme in a play to make it universal.

7.3.5 Music

The dramatist is relied on music to create a specific effect on the audiences. Music means the sound, rhythm and melody of the speeches. The history of dramaturgy shows that the performances of the plays were accompanied by music produced by the musicians. But with the development in the field of science and technology, modern theatre has introduced the use of recorded sounds. The dramatist is now able to make the play more realistic by the use of a variety of recorded sounds like the sounds of animals, wind, storm, rain and lightning.

7.3.6 Spectacle

The element of spectacle is also enriched in the modern times. Spectacle means the visual elements of the production of a play. It includes the stage, furniture, scenery, costumes and curtains.

A costume means the different things which the actors use on their body. A costume includes clothing, wigs, and masks and make up. Costumes help the audience to understand about the time and the place of the action. A mask is a special element of costume. Though mask is rarely used in modern theatre, it was indispensable in ancient India. Makeup is sometimes used to exaggerate and distort facial features. It also helps to conceal the

signs of age or the colour of face. The scenery is a special element of stage properties. Its elements are balcony, trapdoors, elevators, and gallery. In modern theatre, lighting is used very effectively. It helps the dramatist to control the focus of the audience and create specific mood.

7.4 DRAMA: ITS TYPES

Drama has following types:

7.4.1 TRAGEDY

The history of drama shows that tragedy originated in religious festival of the Greek God, Dionysus in 6th century B.C. Etymologically the word 'tragedy' is derived from Greek word 'tragodi' meaning 'a goat song' It came to be used for plays probably because of the practice of sacrificing a goat during the festival of Dionysus. The other reason may be that the winner of the dramatic contest was given a goat as the award. To participate in the dramatic contest, the contestants were required to present a tetralogy of plays consisting of three tragedies and a satyr play. In ancient Greek literature the concept of tragedy is different from the modern concept. The modern tragedy is usually considered to as a play with unhappy ending. However, many of the Greek tragedies end on a happy note.

7.4.1.1 Definition of tragedy : Tragedy is defined as "the imitation of an action, serious, complete and of a certain magnitude, in a language beautified in different parts with different kinds of embellishment, through action and not narration, and through scenes of pity and fear bringing about the catharsis of these or such like emotions".

7.4.1.2 Tragedy as an imitative art: Plato considers 'imitation' to be an act of mimicry. But Aristotle has given a new meaning to this term. For him imitation does not mean servile copying but an imaginative recreation. Aristotle says that imitation is the basic principle of all fine arts. Tragedy is distinguished from other fine arts according to the object, medium and manner of imitation. On the basis of objects of imitation, tragedy is distinguished from comedy. Tragedy imitates serious actions whereas comedy imitates the non-serious. So far as the medium of imitation is concerned, tragedy is distinguished from the lyric, as tragedy uses several kinds of embellishments. Tragedy is differentiated from epic on the basis of its manner of imitation, as tragedy represents through action whereas epic narrates.

7.4.1.3 Length of a Tragedy: Aristotle has used the term 'magnitude' for the length of the action of a tragedy. In this respect, usually the tragedy is compared with the human body. As too short or too tall human body does not look beautiful, similarly, too short or too long tragedy is not good. As a tragedy is performed on the

stage within two or three hours, the dramatic action should not be too long as the audience will forget about the beginning before the dramatic action reaches to its end. It should not also be too short as it would not allow the writer to develop the essential aspects of the plot and characters.

7.4.1.4 Tragedy: It's Completeness: Any dramatic action must have a beginning, middle and an end. A good beginning is the one which is not dependent on any of the previous situation and from which further action flows out. A good middle arises out of the events which have gone before and leads the action towards its logical and convincing conclusion. A good end is the natural outcome of whatever has gone before without leading the action any further.

7.4.1.5 Tragedy: It's Function: The function of tragedy, like any other work of literature, is to 'delight' or to 'please'. While speaking about the function of a tragedy, Aristotle has used the term 'catharses'. But Aristotle has not defined 'catharsis' and so there are endless debates on the exact meaning of the term. Some scholars consider that 'catharsis' means purgation. According to the theory of purgation, the spectators in the theatre are relieved or cleansed or purged of the harmful emotions of pity and fear. According to the other group of scholars Catharsis is the resolution of dramatic tension, within the plot. It means in his play, the dramatist represents the incidents which arouse the emotions of pity and fear for the fate of the protagonist. During the course of the action, the dramatist resolves the conflicts which help him to take the action to its logical conclusion along with creating the emotions of pity and fear.

7.4.1.6 Types of Tragedy:

1. Heroic Tragedy,
2. Revenge Tragedy,
3. Shakespearean Tragedy,
4. Sentimental Tragedy,
5. Melodrama.

7.4.2 COMEDY

Comedy may be considered to be a representation of the character of a lower type. Here 'lower' means 'ridiculous.' By presenting the character in a ridiculous manner, the writer of a comedy aims at producing laughter. Though the genre of comedy is practiced since the ancient times with the practitioners like Aristophanes and Plautus, the scholars have not paid enough attention towards the serious study of its nature and function. While speaking about the function of comedy, George Meredith says that comedy appeals to the intelligence pure and simple and aims not at our ribs or armpits but at our heads. It means, it is the business of a comedy writer to look on what ails the world. He observes his

environment minutely and finds out its follies and exposes them. But while exposing those follies, the purpose of the writer is to 'correct' or 'reform' those follies. Some scholars are of the opinion that the function of a comedy is not 'to reform' or 'to correct' the follies of the world but to provide light-hearted mirth. But while creating mirth, the comedian encourages the audience to laugh with not laugh at the follies of the world. Such kind of play is purely meant for the entertainment of the audience.

Comedies are of following types:

7.4.2.1 Classical Comedy

This type of comedy is written as per the rules laid down by the ancient Greek and Roman masters. The function of such a comedy is 'corrective' or 'reformative'. In this comedy some human folly is exposed and ridiculed. It follows the rules of three unities—unity of time, place and action. The writer of this comedy strictly avoids the mingling of comic with tragic.

7.4.2.2 Romantic comedy

Romantic comedy does not follow the rules of writing a comedy laid down by the ancient classical writers. The writer freely mingles the comic with the tragic. The unities of time, place and action are modified as per the requirements of the plot. The aim of such a comedy is 'to produce innocent, good-natured laughter, thereby entertaining the audience without trying to teach anything.

7.4.2.3 Shakespearean Comedy

Shakespeare is a great writer of comedies. His comedies are called romantic or sunny comedies. With the help of his creative imagination, Shakespeare creates a brilliant world of romance which is far away from the drab realities of the everyday life. These comedies are usually set in some distant, far-off places, where the inhabitants have no other business but that of love-making. The lovers of a Shakespearean comedy fall in love at first sight and get married at the end. But the course of their love is always full of difficulties. There are made a lot of misunderstandings, family feuds, tears and sighs. Shakespeare forces his lovers to face these difficulties in order to test their love for each other. But ultimately, these lovers are helped to overcome these difficulties but the intervention of Goddess Fortune. Then comes the Goddess Marriage who unites the lovers in the bond of marriage followed by music, dance and merry-making.

7.4.2.4 Comedy of Humour

The characters in a Comedy of Humour represent some 'humour'. The actions and behaviour of the characters are governed by some kind of passion. As the characters represent some typical trait, there is a lack of individuality in them. Rather they become stereotypes. Generally, these characters are taken from low life. The purpose of the writer of such a comedy is to satirize the follies of the characters and correct them.

7.4.2.5 Comedy of Manner

The Comedy of Manners is also called Restoration Comedy. It focuses upon the mannerism of the upper classes of the society. The characters of this comedy belong to the upper class. Here the dramatist represents a fashionable men and women, with their manners, love-intrigues, scandals and affectations. These comedies attempt to imitate everything refined. So anything coarse or low is strictly avoided.

The language of such a comedy is very witty and refined. The focus of the dramatist is not on the 'individuality' of the character but on its manners, so the characters become lifeless. This type of comedy was very famous during the Restoration period with the writers like William Congreve, William Wycherley and Oliver Goldsmith practicing it.

7.4.2.6 Farce

A farce is a comedy that focuses on physical humour. The dramatist aims at creating hilarious laughter by representing absurd characters and situations on the stage. To create his characters and situations, the dramatist makes use of exaggeration and extravagance. Exaggerated characters and situations, improbable coincidences, mistaken identities and miscommunication are the common techniques used by the writers to make his plot more complicated. All these instruments enable the dramatist to entertain his audience in the most direct way.

7.4.3 The Masque

The characters in a masque wear some masks on their faces. Initially, a masque was a series of dances, illustrating some story, but afterwards it developed into a play. The writer of a masque chooses his characters and story from mythology. These masques were written to be performed on some private occasions by a limited number of characters. There is abundant use of music, dance, costly costumes and elaborate scenery.

7.4.4 Tragicomedy

This play is a combination of the elements of both the comedy and the tragedy. Naturally, the play ends on a happy note for some characters and on a sad note for the others. Shakespeare is a famous practitioner of this kind of play. Though Aristotle had opposed the mingling of the tragic with the comic, scholars like John Dryden and Dr. Samuel Johnson have defended this type of play by saying that it is nearer to the human life. These critics argue that as the life itself is a combination of happy and sad events there is no harm in combining them in plays. Shakespeare's well-known tragi-comedies are *The Winter's Tale*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Tempest*.

7.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 Explain various stages in the development of drama.
Q.2 Discuss various elements of drama.

- Q.3 Define the term 'tragedy'.
Q.4 What do you mean by Shakespearean tragedy?
Q.5 What is a comedy?
Q.6 Discuss various types of comedy.
Q.7 What is the difference between tragedy and tragic-comedy?
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7.6 RECOMMENDED READING

1. A History of English Literature – W.R Goodman, Vol. I & II.
2. History of the Theatre – Oscar Brockett & Franklin Hileby.
3. Theories of the Theatre: A Historical and Critical Survey from the Greeks to the Present – Marvin Carlson.
4. Tendencies of Modern English Drama – A.E. Morgan.
5. English Drama from Ibsen to Eliot – R. Williams.
6. Essays on Modern Dramatists- W.L. Phelps.



A CRITICAL STUDY OF “THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST”

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8.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce Oscar Wilde, the famous dramatist, to the students
 - To make them understand the play ‘The Importance of Being Earnest’, in detail.
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8.1 INTRODUCTION

The first part of this section introduces you to the life of Oscar Wilde, the writer of ‘The Importance of Being Earnest’ and his career as a literary artist. The second part is a brief critical analysis of the play ‘The Importance of Being Earnest’.

8.2 OSCAR WILDE

Oscar Wilde, a son of William and Lady Jane Francesca Wilde, was born in 1854 in Dublin, Ireland. Being a member of a well-to-do family, Oscar received all the essential educational facilities needed to develop him as an intellectual. His thirst for knowledge led him first to Trinity College, Dublin and then to

Oxford, where he got an opportunity to take lessons from the great academicians of his time like John Ruskin and Walter Pater. He graduated from Oxford and then lived for some time in Chelsea. , Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde went on a lecture tour to America in 1882 and expressed his thoughts on variety of subjects, particularly aesthetics. He was a strong supporter of the artistic movement called 'art for art's sake'. After getting back home, Wilde married a rich Irish woman, Constance Lloyd and settled in London. Though he was one of the most popular celebrity of his time, his personal life was marred by controversies. Particularly, his views about homosexuality and his relation with Lord Alfred Douglas, a young poet put him in socially embarrassing situations. He got entangled in legal controversy for his relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas. The court of law found him guilty of 'indecent acts' for which he was sentenced to two years imprisonment. After getting out of the prison, Wilde went to Paris where he lived a lonely life until his death in 1900.

Some of the well-known works by Oscar Wilde are:

1. Vera	-	1880
2. The Picture of Dorian Gray	-	1890
3. Intentions	-	1891
4. Lady Windermere's Fan	-	1892
5. Salome	-	1892
6. A Woman of No Importance	-	1893
7. The Importance of Being Earnest	-	1895
8. De Profundis	-	1897
9. The Ballad of Reading Gaol	-	1898

8.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

The play 'The Importance of Being Earnest' is written by Oscar Wilde and was first performed on February 14, 1895 in London. It is a farcical comedy based on the story of Algernon Moncrieff, a young man who usually try to escape the cumbersome social obligations by one or the other way. The play was an instant hit for its masterly craftsmanship, witty humour and crispy dialogues. Many of the critics wrote favorable reviews of the play, calling it as the best of Oscar Wilde's literary creations. The popularity of the play led the drama lovers to revive many times. It is also adapted for the cinema thrice, the latest being in 2002.

The play has following characters:

1. Mr. John Worthing
2. Mr. Algernon Moncrieff
3. Gwendolen Fairfax
4. Miss Cecily Cardew
5. Miss Prism
6. The Rev. Canon Chasubl
7. Merriman
8. Lane
9. Lady Bracknell

8.3.1 Summary of the 'The importance of being earnest'

The play, 'The Importance Of Being Earnest' is set in 1890s in London and the country. It is divided in three Acts.

ACT – I

The first Act of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' is set in London flat of Algernon Moncrieff. At the beginning, the audiences are introduced with Algernon Moncrieff. He is a young man in his thirties. He is shown preparing for the arrival of his Aunt Lady Bracknell and her daughter, Gwendolen. At that time, he is informed of the arrival of his friend, Ernest Worthing. Mr. Worthing was in love with Gwendolen and now he had come there to propose her marriage. Algernon who was a carefree young lad and believed in free life, laughs at the idea of marriage. When Mr. Worthing expresses his firm resolve to get married with Gwendolyn, Algernon objects to this proposal. His objection was due to the fact that Worthing has a cigarette case with an inscription 'From little Cecily, with her fondest love to her dear Uncle Jack.' In this matter, Algernon wanted to know why Mr. Worthing was referred as 'Jack' instead of Ernest. Now Algernon insists that Mr. Worthing should explain everything to Algernon if he wanted to marry with Gwendolen. Caught in such a difficult situation, Mr. Worthing admits of leading a double life. In the country, he was known by the name of Jack or John, which was, in fact, his real name and in London he was known as Ernest. Before his death, his father had assigned him the responsibility of looking after Cecily, a young and beautiful girl. For the benefit of Cecily, he was leading a serious life of Jack in the country. He had told Cecily that he had a younger brother, named Ernest who leads a wayward life in city and usually needs Jack to help him to come out of the mess. Actually, Mr. Worthing had no any brother. But he had created an imaginary brother in

order to escape from the boring and serious country life and experience the exciting city life in London. So whenever he wanted he used to come to London on the pretext of meeting his spoilt younger brother, Ernest.

When Algernon heard this story, he was amused. He told Mr. Worthing that he himself had invented an invalid friend, named Bunbury, who lived in the country. Whenever Algernon wanted to avoid any of the social obligations of his Aunt, he used to escape from it by saying that he was required to visit Bunbury. Then Algernon enquired more about Cecily and Mr. Worthing's country address. But Mr. Worthing refused to tell anything more about it.

At this moment, Lady Bracknell and her daughter, Gwendolen appear on the scene. As was earlier decided, Algernon took his aunt out of the room allowing Mr. Ernest Worthing to propose Gwendolen. She readily accepted his proposal as she was fascinated by his name 'Ernest'. She also added that she had always thought of marrying a man with a name of Ernest. When Mr. Worthing came to know about her intense liking for the name of 'Ernest', he immediately resolved to get rechristened as 'Ernest.' When the lovers were talking about their love, Lady Bracknell arrived there and discovered their love for each other. But before giving her consent, it was necessary for her to interrogate her would-be son-in-law properly. That is why she ordered Gwendolen to proceed towards the carriage. Then she asked Mr. Worthing about his parents. He told her that he didn't know anything about his real parents because as a baby he was found in a handbag on Victoria Station. When Lady Bracknell discovered that he was an orphan, she firmly declined him to marry her daughter. She even forbade him to have any contact with her daughter in future.

When Lady Bracknell left the scene, Gwendolen reappeared there and promised him of her firm resolve to get married none other than him. As now her mother was against their union, Gwendolen was required to visit his country home. Therefore, she asked Mr. Worthing his country address. When he told her that he lived at Manot House in Woolton, Hertfordshire, this address was overheard by Algernon. As his interest was aroused by Mr. Worthing's pretty and wealthy ward Cecily, he noted down it on the sleeve and declared that he was going 'Bunburying' immediately.

ACT – II

The second Act is set in Mr. Worthing's country house. Here the audiences are introduced with Cecily and her governess, Miss Prism. Cecily was taking her lessons from her governess. At the arrival of Dr. Chasuble, Miss Prism left with him for a short walk. Now Cecily was all alone. At that time, Algernon arrived there and introduced himself as Ernest Worthing, the younger brother of Mr. Jack Worthing. As Cecily had never seen Ernest Worthing before, she believed in him and heartily welcomed him. Actually, she had heard much about the fascinating life Ernest lived in London. The name 'Ernest' had long been fired her young imagination and so she was very much pleased to meet him. She even told Algernon that she had been fantasizing about Earnest for quite some time, and had even imagined that she had engaged to him. Her interest in 'Ernest' made Algernon plan to meet Dr. Chasuble and get himself rechristened as 'Ernest'.

When Dr. Chasuble and Miss Prism returned from their walk, they met Jack Worthing who had just returned from London. He was dressed in black mourning clothes. As was decided earlier Jack was to return back home on Monday. However, he had come early because his brother, Ernest, had died in Paris. Dr. Chasuble left the place after promising Jack to christen him in the afternoon. Then there came Cecily and told Uncle Jack that his brother, Ernest has come there and was waiting in the dining room. Jack tried to tell her that he didn't have a brother. But instead of listening to him, she ran into the house and came out with Algernon. When Jack saw him, he refused to shake hand with him. Cecily tried to pacify Uncle Jack by telling him that Ernest was a good person as he was taking care of his invalid friend, Bunbury. When everyone except Jack and Algernon left, Jack ordered Merriman to arrange for the dogcart, as Ernest wanted to leave for London immediately. Actually, Jack did not want Algernon to stay there anymore.

As soon as Algernon left to arrange for his baptism, there came Gwendolen in search of her lover. Cecily welcomed her on behalf of her Uncle. However, soon both the ladies started fighting thinking that both of them were engaged to one and the same man, Ernest Worthing. But when Algernon and Jack came on the scene together their misunderstanding is cleared. Now they understood that both of them were deceived by their respective lovers as none

of them had the name, Ernest. This united the ladies against the men. Now the men were left thinking about the way to come out of this situation.

ACT – III

The third Act takes the audience into the drawing room of Jack's house. Lady Bracknell has arrived there following her daughter, Gwendolen. When she came to know that Algernon and Cecily are engaged, she was surprised. But she was doubtful about the Cecily's suitability for her nephew, Algernon. But all her doubts are cleared when she was told that Cecily had a large fortune. She gave her consent to the marriage. However, Jack Worthing refused to allow Cecily to marry Algernon as Lady Bracknell was against his marriage with Gwendolen. Lady Bracknell was against Jack's marriage with her daughter as he was an orphan and from social point of view it would have been improper to accept an orphan as a son-in-law.

The deadlock continued until the arrival of Miss Prism on the scene. Lady Bracknell instantly recognized Miss Prism who had been her family nursemaid. Now the audiences came to know that Miss Prism was the same nursemaid who, twenty eight years ago, had disappeared with a baby boy belonging to Lady Bracknell's sister. Now Lady Bracknell anxiously asked Miss Prism about that boy. Miss Prism told her that after taking the baby boy for a walk in a perambulator, she absent-mindedly put the manuscript of a novel she was writing in the perambulator, and the baby in a handbag. Later she had left that handbag at Victoria Station. When Jack listened to this explanation, he brought there a handbag and showed it to Miss Prism. She recognized the handbag immediately. Then he told the gathering that he was the baby who was found in that handbag on Victoria Station twenty eight years ago. It means Jack was none other than the son of Lady Bracknell's late sister. Now it turned out that he was Algernon's older brother and so eligible to get married with Gwendolen.

But it was not the end of Jack's problem. As Gwendolen had determined only to marry with a man having the name 'Ernest', the stalemate continued. So she wanted to know the real name of Jack. Then Lady Bracknell told Jack that as he was the first-born child of the family and as per the tradition, he might have been named after his father, General Moncrieff. This explanation led Jack to examine the army lists. There he came to know that his father's name was

Ernest and hence his own name was also Ernest. This discovery made everybody happy. It led to the happy union Jack and Gwendolen, Algernon and Cecily, and Dr. Chasuble and Miss Prism. When Lady Bracknell saw Jack Worthing, now Ernest, embracing Gwendolen, she remarked that his behaviour showed the signs of triviality. Thereupon Ernest remarked that it was for the first time in his life that he had realized "the vital Importance of being Earnest". With this remark the play comes to an end.

8.3.2 CHARACTERS

The play contains both major and minor characters. The important amongst them are Algernon Moncrieff, Jack or Ernest Worthing, Gwendolen, Cecily and Lady Bracknell.

8.3.2.1 JACK WORTHING

Jack or Ernest Worthing is one of the the central characters of the play, 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. He is introduced to the audience at the very beginning of Act I. He had come to London to visit his beloved, Gwendolen Fairfax. But here we come to know that he was leading a double life. In the country, he was known as Jack Worthing and in London he had taken the name of Ernest. While explaining the reason for his double identity, Mr. Worthing tells his friend, Algernon that he was given the responsibility of Cecily by Mr. Thomas Cardew. Therefore, he was required to be serious. But as a young man, he used to get bored of playing this serious role. And to get temporary relief of this burden, he used to visit London under the pretext of meeting his Brother, Ernest. Actually, he had circulated a false story about his fictitious brother, Ernest that he was a careless young man who was spoiling his life in London. And so to take care of him Jack was required to visit him often.

On one such occasion, Jack had come to London with an intention to propose his beloved, Gwendolen. During the course of his interrogation by Lady Bracknell, Gwendolen's mother, he told her that he was an orphan and was found in a handbag on Victoria Station to Mr. Thomas Cardew. This information about Jack's origin made him unsuitable for the hand of Gwendolen as socially he was inferior to her. Though Lady Bracknell refused to accept Jack as her son-in-law, Gwendolen had determined to marry none other than Jack. Perhaps the most important reason for Gwendolen to choose him as her husband was his name Ernest. She was fascinated by

his being Ernest. That is why Jack decided to rechristen him as Ernest as early as possible.

However, at the end of the play it becomes clear that Jack's real name was Ernest and he was the elder brother of Algernon Moncrieff and Nephew to Lady Bracknell. It was so because as a child he was under the care of a nursemaid, named Miss Prism. One day Miss Prism put the baby in a perambulator and went for a walk. At that time, absent-mindedly, she put the manuscript of a three volume novel which she was writing in the perambulator and the baby was put in a handbag. Then she left the handbag on Victoria Station and disappeared from the scene. Afterwards this handbag was found by Mr. Thomas Cardew, who adopted the baby. Jack Worthing was the same baby put in the handbag by Miss Prism. Lady Bracknell recognized Miss Prism to be the same nursemaid who had disappeared twenty years ago with a baby boy of her sister. It means Jack was the nephew of Lady Bracknell. As per the convention of the time, being the eldest son, he was named after his father. So it was required to examine the list of the army. Accordingly, after due examination of the army records, it became clear that his father's name was Ernest and so his name was also Ernest. This fact made it clear that he was a suitable husband for Gwendolen.

Thus it becomes clear that the whole life Jack was speaking truth. Here it has to be taken into consideration that though Jack Worthing had assumed a double identity, he had no any evil plan in his mind. He did not want to deceive anybody. He had taken the name of Ernest only because he wanted to get free, at least for the time being, from his serious responsibility and spend some happy moments in London. There is no any proof in the play which shows that at any moment he wished to take disadvantage of anybody. Therefore, it can be said that Jack or Ernest Worthing is really a lovable character of the play.

8.3.2.2 ALGERNON MONCRIEFF

Algernon Moncrieff is one of the important characters in 'The Importance of Being Earnest'. By nature, he is light and playful. All the time, he has nothing but playfulness on his mind. To achieve his purpose, he is seen using wit and paradoxical utterances. He can be considered as a mouthpiece of the author himself because like him, Algernon also possesses the socio-cultural point of view.

Algernon is introduced to the audience at the beginning of Act I. The Act opens in his house in London. He was a rich person who lived in a well-furnished apartment on the Half-Moon Street in London. The opening conversation between Algernon and his servant throws ample light on the witty nature of this man. He was also a man of high intellectual capacities. It became clear in his meeting with his friend Ernest Worthing. He very pointedly asked Mr. Worthing why on his cigarette case his name was inscribed as Jack rather than Ernest. This question compels Mr. Worthing to disclose his double identity to Algernon. After this disclosure, he tells Mr. Worthing that he himself had also invented an imaginary friend, Bunbury. Whenever, he used to get rid of the social events of his Aunt, he used to go to the country on the pretext of visiting his friend.

So far as his love for Cecily is concerned, it is seen that he was very sincere and serious about it. In his very first meeting with Cecily, he impresses her so much that she confesses her love for him. Even, she tells him that she was already in love with him in her imagination. However, her love for Algernon was due to the fact that his name was Ernest. When Algernon comes to know about Cecily's fascination for the name 'Ernest', he decides to rechristen him as Ernest. This shows his sincerity in his relationship with Cecily.

It is seen that his aunt, Lady Bracknell always thinks of his well-being. That is why when she comes to know about the love affair between Algernon and Cecily, she confirms that Cecily had a large fortune. But he cannot marry his beloved unless Mr. Worthing gives his consent as Cecily was under his charge. And unless and until Lady Bracknell gives her consent to the marriage between her daughter and Mr. Worthing, he would not allow Cecily to get married with Algernon. However, at the end of the play, all the obstacles are removed and Algernon is united with Cecily.

8.3.2.3 GWENDOLEN FAIRFAX

Gwendolen Fairfax is a pretty young girl who lives with her mother, Lady Bracknell. At the very beginning of the play, it becomes clear that she is in love with Mr. Worthing. But the main reason of her love for him is neither his richness nor his handsomeness but it is his name Ernest. Surprisingly, she was very much fascinated by this name. Though Jack Worthing tries to explain the fact about his name, she was not ready to listen to him.

On the contrary, she announces her decision of marrying only that a man whose name was Ernest. That is why Jack Worthing decides to rechristen him as Ernest.

Gwendolen was under the influence of the imposing personality of her mother. Her general behaviour shows that she had adopted the manners and tendencies of high class society. Her mother always tries to impose her own views on Gwendolen. Though she had chosen her husband, it seems to be impossible for her to get married with him unless her mother gives her consent. It is seen from the fact that when Lady Bracknell comes to know about her daughter's love for Jack, she interrogates him thoroughly in order to find out his suitability. And when she comes to know that Jack was an orphan, she declared him to be unfit for Gwendolen. However, Gwendolen tries to come out of her mother's influence by telling Jack that she would certainly marry him. To fulfill her wish, she gets Jack's country address and visits him all alone.

After reaching Jack's country house, she meets Cecily there. Initially, she behaves in cordial and friendly manner with Cecily. But when she comes to know that Cecily is Jack's ward, her womanly jealousy is also seen in Gwendolen. And when she mistakenly thinks that both Cecily and she are in love with one and the same person, named Ernest, she fights with Cecily. But it has to be taken into consideration that Gwendolen had also the ability to forgive. Though she fights with Cecily, within a short span of time, she settles her differences with her and becomes her close friend. Similarly, she also forgives Jack for his deceptive ways and accepts him as her husband. This nature of Gwendolen makes the audience sure about her happy married life with Jack.

8.3.2.4 CECILY CARDEW

Cecily Cardew is young and pretty ward of Jack Worthing who stays with him in his country house. She receives her lesson from an elderly woman, named Miss Prism. But it seems that she is more interested in watering the plants than taking lessons in German grammar. Though she is referred in the first act of the play, the audiences could only meet her in the second Act. At this time she was watering the flower garden. Though she is quite young, she is clever enough to understand that Miss Prism and Dr. Chasuble were interested in each other. Therefore, when Dr. Chasuble arrives there, she sends Miss Prism with him for a walk.

Her helping nature is also seen from the fact that she wanted to meet Uncle Jack's brother, Ernest and cure him of his wickedness. She believed that it would help the brothers to understand each other in a better way, which would bring them emotionally closer. Therefore, when Algernon introduces himself as Ernest Worthing, she happily welcomes him. Even she notes down his words of admiration in her diary. She also tells him that she was so much fascinated by his name Ernest that she has imagined they are already engaged to each other, even before they met. Like Gwendolen, Cecily too would marry the man whose name is Ernest.

Cecily is a friendly person, who was always ready to welcome her guests. It is seen when Gwendolen comes there in order to meet Jack. Cecily very cordially welcomes Gwendolen and makes her feel comfortable in her new surroundings. But when she suspects that Gwendolen has come there to meet Ernest, her own fiancée, she expresses her womanly attitude towards her. However, after her doubt gets cleared, she readily unites with Gwendolen as if they are sisters. Thus, Cecily's is a lovable character in 'The Importance of Being Earnest'.

8.3.2.5 LADY BRACKNELL

Lady Bracknell is the mother of Gwendolen Fairfax and aunt of Jack and Algernon Moncrieff. She is the true representative of the fashionable high class society of London. By nature she is dominating. It is seen in her treatment of her daughter, Gwendolen and her nephew, Algernon. Though Gwendolen had selected her would be husband, Lady Bracknell would not accept him until she is satisfied with his worthiness. Therefore, when she comes to know that Gwendolen likes Jack, she thoroughly interrogates him. When she comes to know that Jack is an orphan, she refuses to accept him as her son-in-law.

Her same dominating attitude is seen in her dealing with Cecily-Algernon episode. Before giving her consent to the marriage, she confirms that Cecily had a large fortune. However, it has to be taken into consideration that Lady Bracknell's such kind of behaviour is the result of her too much concern for the well-being of her loved ones. Behind her domineering nature, Lady Bracknell is full of compassion for all those who come in her contact. It is seen in her attitude towards Cecily and Miss Prism. Actually, Miss Prism had committed a grave crime by taking away the baby. But Lady Bracknell readily forgives her as she is reunited with her nephew. Thus, the character of Lady Bracknell is a successful creation of Oscar Wilde that remains in the memory of the audience for quite a long time.

8.3.3 THEMES OF 'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST'

The comedy of manners has a long history beginning with Menander in Greek literature. This type of comedy flourished in England during the Restoration period. These plays are usually set in upper class society and make fun of the people who consider themselves socially superior. This comedy generally uses witty dialogue and complex scenes to comment on false social beliefs. Usually, it deals with the subject of marriage. The characters are types rather than individuals. The plot is rather complex with rapid twists in events. Now let's study 'The Importance of Being Earnest' in the light of above characteristic features.

The play, 'The Importance of Being Earnest' is set in high class society in London. Lady Bracknell and her daughter, Gwendolen are the true representatives of Victorian aristocracy. They are highly educated women who take much interest in fashions and mannerisms of the city life. Similarly, the other characters, Mr. Jack Worthing, Algernon Moncrieff and Cecily also belong to upper class society.

The dramatist presents all these characters in such a way that the audiences hardly succeed in laughing at their hollow mannerisms and empty sophistication. For example, there are two young girls, Gwendolen and Cecily, who are shown to be mad about the name 'Ernest'. Both of them were so fascinated by 'Ernest' that they were even ready to disobey their parents. It is particularly true of Gwendolen who runs away from the home and reaches to the country house of Mr. Worthing only with the hope of marrying 'Ernest'. However, it turns out that both the gentlemen were not 'Ernest'.

The dramatist has made an ample use of witty dialogues to expose the false beliefs of his characters. The plot is full of complex scenes like that of Jack's meeting with Gwendolen, Lady Bracknell's interrogation of Jack, Algernon's clever observation of Jack's cigarette case, his noting down the address on the sleeve, Miss Prism's pretentious walk with Dr. Chasuble and others.

The play deals with the subject of marriage. Towards the end, the audiences meet three couples – Jack and Gwendolen, Algernon and Cecily, Dr. Chasuble and Miss Prism – who are waiting for the ringing of the marriage bells. Though these

characters are cleverly drawn, all of them lack individuality. They are types rather than individuals. During the Victorian period one would come across such types in abundance all around oneself.

The dramatist has woven all these characters cleverly together and made his plot complex. There are turns and twists all over the plot. For example, Miss Prism's disappearance from the scene twenty eight years ago with a baby boy, Mr. Thomas Cardew's bringing the baby home and appointing him as the caretaker of his daughter, Miss Prism's chance meeting with Lady Bracknell again in the third Act, and Jack's being 'Ernest'.

Thus, the play 'The Importance of Being Earnest' employs almost all the characteristic features of a comedy of manners and hence it can be called as a typical comedy of manners.

8.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 Discuss the relationship between Jack and Gwendolen.
- Q.2 Do you think that Lady Bracknell is a domineering mother? Support your answer.
- Q.3 Is Algernon worthy of Pretty and innocent Cecily? Elaborate your opinion.
- Q.4 Draw the character sketch of Gwendolen Fairfax.
- Q.5 Who is the central character of the play 'The Importance of Being Earnest' – Jack or Algernon?
- Q.6 Discuss 'The Importance of Being Earnest' as a comedy of manners.

8.5 RECOMMENDED READING

- 1. The Importance of Being Earnest – Oscar Wilde
- 2. Oscar Wilde – James Laver
- 3. Themes and Conventions in the Comedy of Manners – R.C. Sharma
- 4. Rediscovering Oscar Wilde - Sandulescu, C. George, ed. (1994).



A CRITICAL STUDY OF “OEDIPUS REX”

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9.0 OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to Sophocles, his life and works.
- To make them study Oedipus Rex in detail.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This section is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the life and literary career of Sophocles and the second part studies various aspects of the play, “Oedipus Rex”.

9.2 SOPHOCLES

Sophocles was born in 496 B.C. in Colonus on the outskirts of Athens in Greece. As a child, Sophocles could get good education which helped him become a man of great intellectual capacity. He was the winner of many dramatic contests held in Greece in his time. His long career of almost 60 years established him as one of the most successful and influential writers of his time. He died in the year 406 B.C. leaving behind him a great legacy of 120 plays. Out of these plays, Antigone, Oedipus Rex, Electra, Ajax, Trachinae, Philoctetes and Oedipus at Colonus are the only plays that have survived into modern times.

9.3 OEDIPUS REX

The play ‘Oedipus Rex’ is also called as ‘Oedipus Tyrannus’. It is considered as the masterpiece of the master-craftsman, Sophocles. It deals with that period of the life of King Oedipus when

he became the King of Thebes and husband of Jocasta. It is at this time that he comes to know that he has murdered his father, Laius and married his mother, Jocasta. The disclosure of this hideous truth leads him to blind himself and Jocasta to commit suicide.

9.3.1 Summary of 'OEDIPUS REX'

Oedipus was the King of Thebes. He is introduced to the audience at the very beginning of the play. He had come outside his palace to meet a group of citizens led by a priest, named Zeus. During this meeting the priest told King Oedipus that the citizens of Thebes were in great distress. The suffering of the people was the result of some unknown curse. The repercussions of the curse were so terrible that the land of Thebes had become barren. There was no fodder for the herds of sheep. The women of the city were giving birth to dead children. There was an epidemic of plague and a large number of people were falling victims to it. Therefore, the priest requested the King to help his citizens to come out of this terrible situation.

King Oedipus told the priest that he was aware of the sufferings of his people. That is why he had sent Creon, his brother-in-law, to Delphi to find out the cause of the sufferings of the citizens and the solution to overcome it. At that very moment, Creon appeared on the scene. He told the King that the people of Thebes were suffering because the murderer of the former King Laius was living in the city without getting any punishment for his crime. Morally, it was unbecoming for Oedipus as well as the citizens of Thebes to allow the murderer to escape unpunished for his heinous crime. Therefore, the Thebans should take revenge of the murder of King Laius.

When Oedipus heard the story of the murder of King Laius, he enquired about the circumstances in which King Laius was killed. Creon told him that Laius was murdered by a stranger when Laius was on a journey. But the murder of King Laius was not investigated properly because at that time Thebans were facing a serious threat caused by Sphinx, a monster. The monster used to kill those who failed to solve his riddles. Here the audiences also come to know that it was Oedipus who had solved the riddle and rescued the city from the clutches of Sphinx. As a reward for his bravery, Oedipus was made the King of Thebes and was married to Jocasta, the widow of Laius. After listening to Creon's account, Oedipus declared that he would find out the murderer and punish him for his crime.

After consultation with Creon and other courtiers, Oedipus sent two messengers to Teiresias, the blind prophet, requesting him to come to Thebes and help the people to come out of their sufferings. Accordingly, Teiresias arrived there. King Oedipus

asked Teiresias about the murderer of King Laius. Teiresias told the gathering that he knew the murderer well but he will not disclose his name. Oedipus requested Teiresias once again. Yet Teiresias was not ready to tell the truth. Finally, Oedipus got irritated and called Teiresias ignorant. He also added that though Teiresias considered himself a clever and wise person, in reality, he had failed to solve the riddle of Sphinx. On the contrary, Oedipus himself had solved that riddle and saved the city from the atrocities of Sphinx. Teiresias listened to these words calmly. His silence enraged King Oedipus. Then Oedipus said that as Teiresias was not ready to announce the name of the murderer, he suspected that Teiresias himself might be the man behind the murder of King Laius. Listening to these words, Teiresias got very angry and announced that Oedipus was the real culprit who had murdered King Laius. It was because of Oedipus alone that the city of Thebes was suffering the pangs of hell.

When Creon came to know about the real culprit, he was disappointed. It led to the conflict between Oedipus and Creon. Oedipus even accused Creon of planning to murder him as he wanted to become the king of Thebes. Creon tried to clarify his position by saying that he has no interest in becoming king because kingship brings with it many anxieties and responsibilities. However, Oedipus was so angry that he wanted to punish Creon for his conspiracy. Even Jocasta tried to defend her brother, Creon. But Oedipus was not ready to listen to anybody. He wanted to banish Creon from Thebes. Finally, several requests from Jocasta, Creon and others pacified Oedipus and so he allowed Creon to live in Thebes. Still, he ordered Creon to get out of his sight and never to show him his face.

After Creon's departure, Jocasta asked Oedipus the reason of his quarrel with Creon. Thereupon Oedipus told Jocasta that Creon had made the prophet, Teiresias to announce that Oedipus was the murderer of Laius. When Jocasta heard about Teiresias, she told Oedipus not to worry about the prophecy as there can't be any truth in it. To explain her point, Jocasta narrated him a prophecy of the life of King Laius. As per that prophecy, it was said that Laius would be killed by his own son. Therefore, after the birth of a son to Laius and Jocasta, Laius had tied together both the legs of three days' old child and ordered to put it on a mountain cliff so that the child would die. The prophecy proved false as King Laius was killed by a stranger. Elaborating on the incident, she told Oedipus that King Laius was on a journey with his four companions. At that time a stranger killed four of them including Laius at a place where three roads meet. But the fifth man escaped and returned to Thebes with the news of Laius' murder. As the prophecy of Laius' death had proved false, Jocasta said that Oedipus should not worry about such prophecies at all.

When Oedipus heard the account of the death of King Laius, he was shocked. It was because he remembered an incident in which he had killed four people at a place where three roads met. But the fifth person had managed to escape. He thought that one of the four men he had killed might be King Laius. So he asked Jocasta how Laius looked like. When Jocasta told him that Laius was a tall man and looked almost like Oedipus. Now Oedipus suspected that he must be the murderer of King Laius. So he expressed his desire to see the fifth man who had brought the news of Laius' death. Jocasta said that she would send a messenger to bring that man to the palace.

Then Jocasta asked Oedipus why he was so much worried. Thereupon Oedipus told her about his parents, King Polybus and Queen Corinth. Once he heard from a drunkard that Polybus and Corinth were not Oedipus' real parents. When he asked his parents about it, they replied that it was a lie and he should not pay any attention to such rumours. But Oedipus was disturbed by the news and so he secretly left the palace and visited Delphi in order to know about the truth of his parents. But instead of answering his question, the oracle prophesied that Oedipus would murder his father and marry his mother. Oedipus was shattered by listening to this horrible prophecy. In order to prevent its fulfilment, Oedipus decided never to return to his parents in Corinth. In the course of his aimless journeying, he arrived at a spot where three roads met and got involved in a fight with a group of travelers. If one of those travelers whom Oedipus had killed was King Laius, then Oedipus must get punishment for his crime. Therefore it was very much essential for Oedipus to meet the survivor on that incident and get the details from him about the murder of King Laius.

When Jocasta heard this story, she said that Oedipus should not be worried about his fate as King Laius was not murdered by his son but by a stranger. At that moment a Corinthian shepherd arrived there with a message of King Polybus' death. He further said that the people of Corinth wanted Oedipus to be their King. When Jocasta heard the news of Polybus' death, she declared that the prophecy had proved wrong as King Polybus had met a natural death. Still Oedipus was worried about the half part of the prophecy which said that Oedipus would marry his mother. At this moment, the Corinthian shepherd told him that he should not be worried as the King Polybus and Queen Merope were not his real parents. Actually, he himself had found Oedipus on Mt. Cithaeron and presented him to King Polybus. While narrating this incident, the shepherd explained that a Theban shepherd had handed over the child with a tied legs.

When Jocasta heard this explanation, she realized that Oedipus was her own son. She felt heart-broken. But she decided to conceal the truth from Oedipus as it would have devastating

effect on him. In a terrible grief, Jocasta left for her palace. Then there came the Theban shepherd and confessed of giving the child to Corinthian shepherd. Now Oedipus understood the whole story. He realized that he had killed his father, that is, King Laius and married his mother, that is, Jocasta and fathered her children. This truth ruined him completely. Then he went to meet Jocasta. When he arrived at her palace, he found her hanging by a rope. He was shocked to see her dead body. His grief knew no bounds. As he did not want to see such a terrible sight, he blinded himself with pins. Blood began to flow profusely. Like a mad person, he started to move around aimlessly. He came across Creon and requested him to banish him from Thebes. But Creon could not fulfill his wish as he wanted to know the will of the God first. Finally, the play ends with a moral that human happiness is transient and that it can never last till the last day of a man's life.

9.3.2 Characters in 'OEDIPUS REX'

9.3.2.1 King OEDIPUS

Tragic Hero: Aristotle considers tragic hero as a person holding high position in life, who falls into misfortune because of some weakness or fault in his character. Aristotle says that a tragic hero should be a 'good' person, but not a 'perfect' one. Similarly, he should also not be an utter villain. It means a tragic hero is neither a paragon nor a scoundrel.

Oedipus as a king and as a man: Oedipus is a king who possesses good qualities of character. He is a good king, a great well-wisher of his people, an honest and great administrator and an outstanding intellect. So he is very fit to be a hero of tragedy. He has a great respect for his family. He is always ready to sacrifice himself for the well-being of his family. He is a good son, good husband and a good father. Similarly, he believes in the prophecies of gods and prophets. As a king, he is always ready to serve his people and helps them in all possible means.

Oedipus' Faults: However, Oedipus is not a 'perfect' person; he has his faults. He is hot-tempered, hasty in his judgment and very proud of his intelligence. We see him quickly getting angry with Teiresias because he thinks that Teiresias had conspired against him. Such kind of hasty behaviour is unbecoming for the king like Oedipus. Even his treatment of Creon is not acceptable. He hurriedly reaches to the conclusion that Creon, his brother-in-law, must have planned to dethrone him by calling him the murderer of King Laius. Oedipus is also a person of excessive pride in his own wisdom. That is why he looks down upon Teiresias for his failure to solve the riddle of Sphinx. In fact, it is because of his pride that Oedipus loses much of the sympathy of the audience.

His sin: Oedipus has already committed the crimes which make him sinner in the eyes of the gods, in his own eyes, and in the eyes of other people. It was so because he had killed his father and married his mother. But it would be wrong to say that Oedipus suffered because of his sin of pride. When he came to know about his fate from the oracle, he tried his utmost to avoid the fulfilment of the prophecies. It was completely in a state of ignorance that he killed his father and married his mother. His tragedy is a tragedy of error, not of any willful action. However, if he would not have been so proud and behaved a little more carefully, it would have been possible for him to avoid his quarrel with King Laius. But his pride did not allow him to think calmly and made him commit the great sin.

The Role of Chance: It is certain that his pride plays a vital role in the tragedy of Oedipus. But it is also true that chance was equally responsible for his tragedy. From the beginning, it is seen that Oedipus was driven by chance. For example, it was just by chance that he came to the place where three streets met and got involved in a quarrel with King Laius. This chance meeting resulted in the murder of Laius. Further, it was again by chance that Oedipus comes to Thebes and solves the riddle of Sphinx. As a result, he was offered kingship of Thebes and then he married to Jocasta. All these chance happenings led him to commit the greatest of all crimes. Naturally, he was destined to be punished for his crimes.

Conclusion: The above discussion shows that King Oedipus has all the qualities to be the hero of a tragedy. He is a character which falls prey to his pride and also to the powerful hands of destiny. The error he commits due to his excessive pride leads him hurriedly towards his downfall. But it should also be remembered that Oedipus was more a puppet in the hands of his destiny who takes a vicious turn that destroys him completely.

9.3.2.2 Jocasta

Jocasta is an important character in the play 'Oedipus Rex'. She is the Queen of Thebes. She plays an important role in the tragedy of Oedipus. She is skeptical about the prophets and their prophecies. It is seen that she does not believe in the prophecy of Teiresias. She tries to convince Oedipus that the prophecy regarding her former husband Laius has proved wrong. Therefore, Oedipus should also neglect the prophecy.

Jocasta helps Oedipus in the investigation of the murderer of Laius. It is because of her calling the messenger shepherd to the palace that discloses the mystery of Laius' murder. She believes that chance plays an important role in human life. When she came to know about the truth of Laius' murder, she tried to keep Oedipus

away from it. She wanted that Oedipus should not suffer from knowing that he had married his own mother. At the end, she hanged herself in a fit of intense grief. Her tragic death is the result of a very terrible stroke of fate. But from a moral point of view, Jocasta is neither guilty nor innocent.

9.3.2.3 Creon

Creon is the brother of Queen Jocasta. He is very faithful servant to the throne of Thebes. At the very beginning of the play, Creon is introduced to the audience. He had come to know the reason for the sufferings of the Theban people. It was because the murderer of the King Laius was living in Thebes. He was not punished for his crime. Creon was also a true friend and well-wisher of King Oedipus. He told Oedipus the circumstances in which King Laius was murdered.

When Teiresias announced that Oedipus was the murderer of Laius, Creon tried to understand the real circumstances. But Oedipus misunderstood Creon and blamed him. Yet Creon remained firm in his stand. His sister, Queen Jocasta had deep faith in him. She tried to put an end to the quarrel between Oedipus and Creon. At the end of the play, Creon is shown in the company of blind Oedipus. Here, he told Oedipus that he had come there not to blame him. On the contrary, he wanted Oedipus to meet his daughters so that he would get some comfort in their company. After the downfall of Oedipus, he became the King of Thebes. Yet he was a moderate and self-controlled man who is admired by all.

9.3.2.4 Teiresias

Teiresias is the blind prophet in the play, 'Oedipus Rex'. He is introduced at the very beginning of the play. He is an honourable person of Thebes. He was invited by Oedipus to his palace because he wanted to know the reason of the sufferings of his people. He was sure that Teiresias will help him to solve the problem of the state.

When Teiresias declared that Oedipus was the murderer of King Laius, Oedipus became very angry. Oedipus blamed Teiresias that he must be blaming him because of Creon. When Teiresias heard these words, he became angry. Though he was a great person known for his wisdom, he lost his self-control and threatened the King Oedipus of serious consequences. Such threats of Teiresias surprise the readers. Teiresias played an important role as he announced the fate of King Oedipus. He knew everything, whereas Oedipus was completely ignorant about his fate. Thus, as a prophet, Teiresias plays an important role in making the audience know the real culprit in the tragedy of King Oedipus.

9.3.3 King OEDIPUS as the tragic hero

Aristotle considers tragic hero as a 'distinguished person occupying a high position or having a high status in life and in very prosperous circumstances falling into misfortune on account of a "hamartia" or some defect of character.' In other words, a tragic hero should have high standing in the society. He should neither be a perfectly good nor utterly wicked person. He should be of intermediate type. The fall of this person from happiness to misery is the result of his tragic flaw.

King Oedipus of the play 'Oedipus Rex' has some of these qualities. Firstly, Oedipus is the son of King Laius and Queen Jocasta. He is brought up by King Polybus and Queen Merope of Corinth. Afterwards, he became the king of Thebes. Thus from social point of view he is an eminent person indispensable for the city of Thebes. Secondly, he is also a man of good moral character, though not a paragon of saintly virtues. There are certain defects in his character which, along with his fate, lead him towards his downfall.

As a king, Oedipus was a perfect example of a dutiful king. He is a well-wisher of his people. He is a great administrator and intellectual. It is because of his dutifulness towards Theban people that he is highly respected by them. All the time he is ready to help his people. For example, he had saved Thebes by conquering Sphinx. He had already sent Creon to find out the cause of the sufferings of his people. When Creon announces the reason, he declares that he would find out the criminal and punish him.

He is presented as a man who believes in oracles. Actually, his belief in prophesies is the very basis of the play. He is a man of family. He is a devoted husband to Jocasta and a loving father to his daughters. Even his relations with other people are also cordial.

However, it doesn't mean that he is a faultless person. He certainly has his own faults. He is a hot-tempered person. He quickly becomes angry first with Teiresias and then with Creon. He blames Creon of conspiring against him. This shows his arbitrariness and dictatorial tendency. His disbelief of Creon is presents him as a thoughtless person who prefers to behave as per his own whims.

Another aspect of Oedipus' personality is his absolute pride in his wisdom. This feeling of pride is nourished as he solves the riddle of Sphinx. He boasts of his wisdom even in front of the prophet, Teiresias. It is his sense of pride that alienates some of the sympathy of the audience. His attitude of intolerance towards both Teiresias and Creon undoubtedly leads him towards his downfall. But his pride is not the direct cause of his tragedy. As he is already aware of the oracle, he is seen trying his best to avoid

the fulfilment of the prophecies. There is no any fault of his in his killing his father and marrying his mother. It was completely in a state of ignorance that he committed these crimes. But there is a scope to think that Oedipus could have avoided it if he would have behaved a little more carefully. Actually, it seems that it was possible for him to avoid the quarrel on the street. But it was because of his hot-tempered nature that he got involved in the quarrel which led to his killing King Laius and then getting married with Jocasta. But it would be wrong to say that it was only because of his hot-tempered nature that his tragedy occurred.

But Oedipus' character proves that his tragedy lies in the discovery of his crimes. It seems that there was something in him which drove him towards discovery. Actually, Teiresias had refused to disclose the name of the murderer but Oedipus forced him to disclose it. We see Jocasta discouraging him from finding out the truths regarding the prophecies. But he did not pay any attention towards her. It is this insistence on the truth that leads to the discovery in which lies the tragedy.

In this way, Oedipus is a perfect tragic hero because his tragedy is as much due to his own faults as to the external forces. But we admire him for the way in which he endures his sufferings.

9.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 Write a note on the plot-construction of 'Oedipus Rex'.
- Q.2 Draw the character-sketch of Jocasta.
- Q.3 Draw the character-sketch of Teiresias.
- Q.4 Draw the character-sketch of Creon.
- Q.5 Discuss 'Oedipus Rex' as a typical tragedy.
- Q.6 Do you consider that Oedipus has the qualities of tragic hero? Support your answer.

9.5 RECOMMENDED READING

1. King Oedipus Retried - Brunner, M.
2. The Oedipus Tyrannus – R.C. Jebb.
3. Sophocles - C. Whitman.
4. Literature and Literacy in Ancient Greece-J.A Davidson.
5. The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy. P.E. Easterling.



SHORT STORY AS A FORM OF LITERATURE

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- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Definition of a Short Story
- 10.3 Origin of a Short Story
- 10.4 Characteristics of a Short Story
- 10.5 Elements of a Short Story
- 10.6 Check your progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

- To help students to understand the nature of a short story
- To introduce characteristics to the students and help them understand its elements

10.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we are going to study the short story as a form of literature, its development, characteristics and elements. This unit attempts to discuss all these aspects.

10.2 DEFINITION OF A SHORT STORY

According to Encyclopedia Britannica 'A short story is a brief fictional prose narrative that is shorter than a novel and usually deals with a few characters.

The short story is usually concerned with a single unified effect. It is conveyed in only a few significant episodes. The short story requires economy of setting, a concise narrative and a simple plot. The character is subtly disclosed through action or dramatic encounter. It is almost never fully developed. Despite its relatively limited scope, a short story provides for a complete reading.

10.3 BEGINNINGS / ORIGIN OF THE SHORT STORY

Short stories were popular entertainment even before the written word. Each culture had their favourite ancient and modern writers who crafted many classic tales. A short story can be a fairy tale or a religious parable or a fast paced romance or thriller.

Over the centuries short fiction was not considered as an art form until the 19th century. Writers Like Poe, Hawthorne, de Maupassant, Chekhov and Twain perfected it and developed into a legitimate art form.

Short Stories having their origins in religion, tradition, myth, magic, romance, adventure and heroism date back to our ancient

ancestors and tribesmen who were around events and narrated them to others.

The early man was telling short stories even before the written word was invented. These stories were often recited in verse or rhyme, handed down from one generation to the other. The adventure of Gilgamesh came to us from the Babylonians and a plethora of tales were woven around Egyptian kings, queens, gods and animal deities.

Indian and Middle eastern stories revolved around ancient wisdom. Aesop immortalized the animal parable. These collections came around 6th century B. C. The tales have a moral lesson which is relevant even today.

By the Middle Ages, folk tales, romantic, heroic or tragic ballads, Greek and Scandinavian myths, fairytales and farcical verse aimed at describing various lifestyles, customs, mannerisms and political affiliations became increasingly popular. Geoffrey Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' and 'A Thousand and One Arabian Nights' were extremely popular.

With the periodicals in the late 17th Century in Germany and Britain, editors were always looking for short material to fill their pages and satisfy burgeoning public demand. Short Stories naturally fitted into this niche. Charles Dickens gained a huge following with his serialised stories.

In the 19th Century, there was a lot of experimentation with the short story and led to the evolution of the modern short story.

The American Writer, Edgar Allan Poe became one of the most influential short story writers and the master of the horror genre. His tales namely 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', 'The Masque of The Red Death', 'The Cask of Amontillado' and 'The Tell-Tale Heart' remain unsurpassed in evoking mood, setting and characterization. On the other hand Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain leaned more towards realism William Sydney Porter whose pen-name was O' Henry relied heavily on coincidence and twist in the tale technique.

European writers made their mark in literary circle with short fiction. French writer, Guy de Maupassant created a realistic account of the French middle class and human behaviour. Rudyard Kipling wrote immensely popular stories about British military life as well as the children's classic 'The Jungle Book'. Anton Chekov depicted the life during upheaval and change in Russia through his tales. Joseph Conrad's tales were character driven revolving around realistic observations of naval life.

From the 1920s to 1950s, short stories took on many different themes, setting and character types. Edgar Rice Burroughs discovered 'Tarzan of the Apes', H. G. Wells enthralled readers with his science fiction and Dashiell Hammet presented the hard boiled, no holds barred crime fiction teeming with sex and violence.

Writers who achieved distinction with their short stories include James Joyce, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, George Orwell,

Katherine Manfield, Saki, James Thurber, Herman Melville, Arthur Conan Doyle and Dorothy Parker, and so on.

10.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A SHORT STORY

Short Stories tend to be less complex than novels. Usually they focus on one incident have a single plot, a single setting a limited number of characters and covers a short period of time.

Because of their short length, modern short stories may have an abrupt beginning or an end. They may or may not have a moral lesson.

The exact characteristics of a short story will vary with the author.

10.5 ELEMENTS OF A SHORT STORY

The five elements of a short story include Plot, character, setting, Atmosphere and style.

Plot: The Plot of a short story implies the arrangement of incidents or events in a story. It can be split into opening situation, Inciting force, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Acton, Final Outcome.

In the opening situation the reader is made aware of where and when the story occurs and the characters are introduced. The inciting force is the conflict established between the characters. In the Rising Action, the conflict between characters develops and becomes more pronounced. The Climax is a moment of greatest suspense. The falling action leads to a resolution or final outcome. In the final outcome, the author ties up all loose ends in the hope of satisfying the reader.

Character: The plot requires character/s - The main character must over come the problem. Most stories have minor characters who may help or hinder the main character's attempt to solve his problem. Accordingly characters may be flat or one dimensional, round or dynamic who learn and grow during the story, stereotyped characters who are well known and recognizable. Then there is a protagonist - the main hero and the antagonist who opposes the protagonist.

The Conflict: Conflict can be internal or external. External conflict can be between man versus nature, man versus society, man vs super natural or man vs time.

The Setting: is the physical background of the story-where and when of the events in the story.

The Atmosphere: is closely related to the setting. It sets the mood or tone of the story and is effected in characters, clothing, furniture, natural surroundings, light, darkness, shadows and weather.

Style: The ways the author expresses himself and conveys his ideas represents his style. His diction /word choice can be formal, informal, colloquial or slang.

More important is the author's point of view which implies the vantage point from which the author presents the action of the story. In other words it refers to the different types of narration:

Third person narration- when the person telling the story is not a part of the action.

First person: A major, minor or silent character who tells the story.

Omniscient narration: The author who knows everything about the characters and events and who can enter the mind of any character at will.

The writer may use certain literary tools like Irony, Symbolism and Imagery.

Irony refers to some sort of discrepancy between what is expected and what actually happens.

Symbolism refers to a literary symbol which means something itself in the story but also suggests a wealth of meaning beyond what it actually is- an object, a situation or an action. eg. The Gift of the Magi.

Imagery can be sensuous imagery or figurative imagery. Sensuous imagery refers to images that appeal to the five senses where as figurative imagery refers to the various figures of speech like metaphor and personification.

10.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 How is a short story different from a novel?
- Q.2 Write a short note on the origin of a short story.
- Q.3 Discuss the elements of a short story.
- Q.4 What are the sub-divisions of a plot?
- Q.5 Define Symbolism; Imagery and Irony.
- Q.6 What are the different points of view that a short story writer uses in his story?



A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED SHORT STORIES PART I

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- 11.4 Check Your Progress

11.0 OBJECTIVES

- To help students understand the authors Somerset Maugham, O' Henry, Gabriel Garcia Marquez.
- To make them know the critical summary of their stories prescribed in the syllabus
- To make them study the themes and characters in these stories.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

11.1.1 Introduction to William Somerset Maugham

William Somerset Maugham (1874 -1965) was an English playwright, novelist and a writer of short stories. His master piece 'Of Human Bondage along with his other works like 'The Moon and Six Pence', 'Cakes and Ale' and Razor's Edge won him critical acclaim.

Among his short stories, his most memorable are those which deal with the lives of Western British Colonists in America. Many of his stories were inspired by the accounts he heard during his travel of the Empire. Notable among his short stories are 'Rain', 'Footprints in the Jungle' and 'The Outstation'. Maugham has a controlled style which allows him to explore the passions and tensions within his protagonists without sounding melodramatic.

11.1.2 Summary of the Luncheon

The Story 'The Luncheon' relates about a lady who admires the author. Having won the author's favour, she expresses her wish to meet him at an expensive restaurant. Maugham exposes the false motives of the middle class eating habits with a touch of humour.

The story narrates an event, twenty years earlier when the author was living in Paris. It was here that he had met this admirer, a lady. She had met him at a play. She had read a book written by him and had written a letter to him about her views. Another letter was posted stating her visit and a desire to have a little luncheon at a rich restaurant 'Foyots' where French senators dined. Maugham was not a rich man and had never dreamt of entering this place but could not refuse her request. He estimated the cost of the luncheon as not more than fifteen Francs; he decided to cut down coffee from his menu so that he had enough for the next two weeks. He fixed their so called 'meeting' on Thursday at half past twelve. The lady was middle-aged, around forty, talkative but not attractive. She ordered for expensive dishes on the menu like salmon and Caviare while the author ordered for the cheapest dish mutton chops.

After the meal she ordered for white champagne. She kept enjoying the meal and chatting about art, literature and music while William kept worrying about the bill. The bill of fare was soaring. When the waiter had come with the bill, the woman brushed him aside and ordered for Asparagus, an extremely expensive dish. The author's heart sank and his mouth watered but he had to control his emotions. To add to his misery, she ordered for ice-cream and then coffee. While doing this, she kept announcing that 'she never ate anything for luncheon just a bite'. William started conniving how he could feign of being pick-pocketed and how he could pay the bill.

To his utter dismay, the head-waiter walked up to the table with a large basket full of huge peaches. She demanded peaches.

The bill was finally paid. William found himself with just a few Francs for the tip and not a penny left for the entire month. The author however, had his final revenge when he met the woman after twenty years and found that she weighed one hundred and thirty six kilograms.

11.1.3 Themes in the Luncheon

The primary theme of the short story 'Luncheon' by Somerset Maugham is appearance vs reality.

The speaker imagines his luncheon with a beautiful woman who is also graceful in her manners. But when he goes on his date, she appears to be exactly opposite to what he envisioned. Through her appearance as well as mannerisms she is a gluttonous and ravenous woman who is least bothered about the costs. She has a very good appetite and the bill soars up. The irony concealed in her dialogue 'she never ate anything for luncheon- just a bite' makes it a comic story in the true sense.

A simple luncheon exposes the absurd demands of society and allows Maugham to chastise society through his choice of narrator, characterization and setting.

Vivid imagery and symbols help reveal the protagonist's feelings as well as his acquaintance's personality. The 'luncheon' is symbolic of the concept of the survival of the fittest. The author/ protagonist is a kind host but the woman acquaintance is manipulating and insincere. The colour white in the image of her white large teeth and French white wines suggests her cold personality. The symbolic number 'are' in her ironic statement suggests boldness, consciousness, and self-centeredness.

Again, when the author sees the waiter as having a 'priest like face', he is expressing his anger about his financial means. The waiter is performing rituals and only expecting a fine tip.

11.1.4 Analysis of Characters in 'The Luncheon'

The story is typical of short stories in that it deals with just the waiter and two guests. The poor waiter who might be called a minor character tries his way to cater to the guests in expectation of a tip.

The woman is gluttonous and a raven who creates the conflict by representing a financial problem for the poor man. By constantly repeating her ironic expression 'I never eat more than one thing' she emphasized the conflict between what she says and what she does. The author- our poor man dislikes the woman and has his sweet revenge when he meets her after 20 years and finds that she weighs twenty-one stone.

The protagonist is a poor man who out of his gentlemanly conduct takes the woman for a luncheon. He gets increasingly nervous as the woman keeps ordering one expensive dish after other. The only positive experience of the author is that the woman speaks highly of his writing and boosts his ego. he is honest and sincere, even during his angry moments. The story depicts the protagonist's initial child like feelings of flattery and excitement to disgust and anger due to the unfortunate sequence of events caused by the insensitive woman. In the end, the young protagonist learns that he should not be too generous for fear of being taken advantage of.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

11.2.1 Introduction : O' Henry

William Sydney Porter was a celebrated American short-story writer. He wrote under the pseudonym O' Henry. His famous short stories include 'The Furnished Room', 'The Ransom of Red Chief', 'The Gift of the Magi' and 'After Twenty Years'.

The stories of O' Henry bear simple yet effective use of paradoxical coincidences to produce ironic endings. The characteristics of his stories include a humorous tone, realistic detail, and a surprise ending.

The story 'The Gift of the Magi' is told in the perspective of Della in the third person limited omniscient.

The title of the story has a biblical orientation. According to the Bible, the wise men of the East also called Magi or three kings of the Orient followed a guiding star to Israel to pay homage to the newborn Christ child, bringing with them gold, frankincense and myrrh. The magi were wise folks and their gifts were the wisest. According to the narrator that makes the two characters of the story Jim and Della- just like the magi : they gave each other the wisest gifts of all by means of sacrifice.

There are two other biblical allusions. Della's hair is said to be gorgeous and pretty that it would minimize the glory of the Queen of Sheba, and Jim's golden watch could have been the envy of king Solomon.

11.2.2 Summary of 'The Gift of The Magi'

The title of the story hints at the theme of unselfish love and the 'gift' are like the gifts given by the love men called magi, who brought gold, frankincense and myrrh to the newborn Jesus.

The story features two protagonists, Della and her young husband Mr. James Young. The story shows an interesting turn of events clustered with emotions of love and care. The high point of the story is the surprise ending where the characters exchange Christmas gifts acquired after selling their most precious possessions - Della cuts her hair and Jim sells his gold watch - for the sake of offering each other Christmas presents.

11.2.3 Themes in 'The Gift of The Magi'

The basic underlying theme of the story 'The Gift of The Magi' is love. For the young couple, the love for each other is the most important thing in their lives. Such is the intensity of their love that they are led to sacrifice their most valuable possessions to find Christmas gifts for each other. This contrasts with the drabness of their poverty and the dreary world outside.

The theme of marriage is defined in the relationship of the two protagonists through the bond of love, shared economics and shared emotions.

The theme of sacrifice is exemplified when the lovers sacrifice their valuable possessions on Christmas Eve. It is like a ritual act in which a consecrated offering is made to establish and perpetuate a sacred bond between the two.

The theme of love and sacrifice is widely played out throughout the storyline. Despite the risks, humiliation and costs of sacrifice, each of them is ready to lose what they have to express their love.

11.2.4 Analysis of the Characters

The main character of the story 'The Gift of the Magi' is a good looking pretty wife but also a helpless woman economically. Della is determined to sell her own locks for some dollars. This idea comes to her as she looks into a mirror. Her deep contemplation and sentiments of helplessness show how much she loves and

appreciates Jim and as a result she would like to offer him the best " Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him: Something fine and rare and sterling, something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honour of being owned by Jim" This statement shows how much Della values Jim and portrays her deep love for him.

Jim is over burdened with the responsibilities of a family at the age of twenty- two. He has many needs that he cannot fulfill for himself and his family. "Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two- and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new over coat and he was without gloves". Jim was able to forego all his needs to get Della her coveted combs which were definitely expensive. Towards the end, Jim is equally surprised at Stella's gift but he keeps his composure and responds with a smile. He tells Della that he had sold the watch to buy her the combs. Then he proceeds to tell her that they should put away their Christmas gifts and save them for a later date.

Madame Sofronie, the owner of a hair shop is in sharp contrast to the two protagonists Jim and Della. She is 'large' 'white' and 'chilly'. She is only concerned with the profit to be made from Della's hair, without any concern for emotions. She represents the bold woman of the materialistic world.

11.3 INTRODUCTION

11.3.1 Introduction to Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Gabriel Jose de la Concordia Garcia Marquez is a Colombian novelist and short story writer. He is considered one of the most significant authors of the 20th Century and was awarded the Noble Prize for Literature.

He initially pursued a career in journalism but then took to writing. He has received wide acclaim for his nonfiction works and short stories and is remembered for his two path breaking novels- 'One Hundred Years of Solitude' and 'Love in the Time of Cholera'. His works have been critically appreciated and also achieved commercial success. He is most notably famous for popularizing magical realism and the theme of solitude which runs through most of his works. His short story collections include, 'A very old man with Enormous Wings' (1955), 'Eyes of a Blue Dog' (1974), 'Collected Stories' (1984), 'Strange Pilgrims' (1993).

11.3.2 Summary of 'An Old Man With Enormous Wings'

One day while killing crabs during a prolonged rainstorm, Pelayo discovers a homeless, disoriented old man in his courtyard who has very large wings. The old man extremely filthy and apparently senile, speaking an unintelligible language. After consulting neighbors Pelayo and his wife Elisenda conclude that the old man must be an angel who may have come to take their sick child to heaven. Though they are advised to dub the old man to death, they take pity on him especially after their child recovers.

The couple keeps the old man with the chicken and he begins to attract crowds of curious people. The local priest, Father Gonzago announces that the old man cannot be an angel due to his shabby status and inability to speak Latin. He wishes to consult the Bishop.

As soon as the word spreads, pilgrims from all over come to seek advice and healing from him. A woman who counts heartbreaks and an insomniac who finds stars noisy are among some of the pilgrims. The crowd grows so large that Elisenda begins to charge for admission.

As Father Gonzago waits for the church's opinion on the old man, a traveling freak show arrives in the village. People flock to hear the story of the so called spider woman- a little girl who has been turned into a giant tarantula for disobeying her parents. This sad tale makes the crowd forget the old man.

Mean while Pelayo and Elisenda have grown rich from the admission fees Elisenda has charged. They build a big home. The old man continues to stay with them for several years. The little boy, of Elisenda also one day grows older, the chicken coop collapses and the old man moves into the adjacent shed. Elisenda is often annoyed when he moves from room to room inside the house.

Just when Pelayo and Elisenda are convinced that the old man will soon die, he regains his strength. His feathers grow back and he sings sailor songs at night. One day he stretches his wings and flies away as Elisenda watches.

11.3.3 Analysis of Characters

The Old Man with his human body and unusual wings is neither human nor surreal. On one hand, he is human being surrounded by filth, disease, infirmity and squalor. His reaction to the curious onlookers is also human but, indifferent to his pleas. He does not acknowledge their presence. The doctor is equally surprised that such an unhealthy sickly person is alive. According to critics. even though he could be an 'angel' all his qualities are obscured on earth. The old man certainly performs some miracles like sunflowers sprouting from a leper's sores, Pelayo referring to lunar dust and stellar parasites. In the end, the old man's true nature remains a mystery.

Pelayo

As compared to others, Pelayo is more kind to the old man, but he is also not very compassionate. He does not dub the old man but nevertheless he cages the old man in the chicken coop and extracts money from the public as admission fees. Pelayo is not a complex character but simply a family man concerned for his sick child. He leaves the theoretical and theological speculations to Father Gonzago. By allowing the old man to stay, Pelayo invites mystery wonder and magic in his simple life.

Elisenda

Elisenda is a practical woman. She suggests charging admission fee for the onlookers. Even though they become rich because of the old man, her attitude towards him is that of annoyance and exasperation. For her the old man is merely an object for roadside attraction and a means of earning money. Once this dwindles he is merely a nuisance for her. She even refers to her new home as a 'hell full of angels'. The old man becomes so ordinary in Elisenda's eyes that only when he flies away she realizes the wonder that he is, and realizing that something extraordinary has left her life forever..

11.3.4 Themes in 'The Old Man with Enormous Wings'

The Story 'The Old Man with Enormous Wings' examines the human response to the under dog- weak, dependent beings. The response is that of callousness and cruelty. For instance after their child recovers, the couple decide to put the old man to sea on a raft with provisions for three days rather than dubbing him to death. Again once they realize they can earn money by showcasing him, they cage him in a chicken coop at the mercy of strangers who gawk at him, pelt him with stones and even brand him.

On the other hand, as opposed to the callousness and exploitation, the old man is extremely patient. His refusal to leave for the sake of the poor couple is an act of compassion.

Use of Magical Realism:- In this story there is a distinctive blend of fantasy and realism. The homely details of Pelayo and Elisenda life are combined with fantastic elements such as a flying man and a spider woman to create a tone of a fairy tale. There is a mingling of the fantastic and the ordinary in all the descriptions - The relentless rain, the swarm of crabs and it is in this dreamlike setting that the old man with wings appears.

The satiric tone mocks the church and human nature. The author criticizes the church through Father Gonzago. The church's wait and see tactic makes it sound too literal minded and out of touch with the basic elements of reality. There is a narrowness of wisdom that afflicts everyone from the wise neighbour woman to the crowds of onlookers and pilgrims with their selfish concerns. Elisenda wants to keep her house 'angel free'.

'Wings' in the story represent power, speed and limitless freedom of motion. Angels are often represented as winged creatures. Marquez subverts all these ideas, and presents them ironically. The wings of the angel convey a sense of age and disease but still are a source of attraction to pilgrims' The doctor examines the old man and finds that the wings are natural and supernatural at the same time. The ultimate aim of the author is to suggest that the old man has the wings of an angel but the frailties of a human.

The Spiderwoman represents the fickle minded nature of human beings. The villagers find the heart wrenching story of the spider woman more credible than the 'minor miracles' of the old

man. They find more pity for the spider woman where as the old man's situation is obscure in their eyes.

11.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- Q.1 What is the dilemma faced by the hero in 'The Luncheon'
- Q.2 Discuss the themes explored by Maugham in 'The Luncheon'.
- Q.3 Analyse the story 'The Gift of the Magi' as a story of true love.
- Q.4 What is the significance of the title 'The Gift of the Magi'
- Q.5 How does the author satirise society through the story 'A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings'.
- Q.6 Describe the statement meted out to the Old Man by human beings in the story 'A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings'.



12

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED SHORT STORIES PART II

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12.0 OBJECTIVES

- To make you understand the authors Dorothy Parker, Oscar Wilde and Washington Irving as short story writers.
 - To help you know the critical summary of their stories prescribed under the syllabus.
 - To introduce themes and Characters in these stories to you.
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12.1 INTRODUCTION 1

12.1.1 Introduction to Dorothy Parker

Dorothy Parker (1893-1967) was an American short story writer, poet and critic. She was a legendary figure in the New York literary scene. Many of her short stories were published in The New

Yorker. Her style is full of 'instant wit' and 'cruel humour'. Her short story collections 'After Such pleasures' (1932) and 'Here lies' (1939) won wide acclaim especially for her understanding of human nature. Among her best known stories are 'A Big Blonde', 'A Telephone Call' and 'The Waltz'.

12.1.2 Summary of 'A Telephone Call'

Inside a quiet apartment, a woman awaits a telephone call. The expected call is from a man she has recently had sex with. The action of the story entirely takes place inside the woman's head. Readers basically understand the woman's situation. Her feelings are obvious from the first sentence 'Please God, let him telephone me now.' Then there is nothing but the inner ranting and raving, the circular thinking and illogical jumps and the desperate prayers of a woman who has lost her power. The story's humour is built on the constant use of repetition, fast pacing, rhetorical leaps from one line to the other and the contrast of pathetic hopes and brave insights juxtaposed on each other. The premise of the entire story rests on - man pays attention to woman, man and woman have sex, man goes away, woman becomes anxious and the story ends with more desperate prayers of a woman who has lost her power and experiences anxiety, sadness, joy, expectation, obsession, pride, hate and so on.

12.1.3 Themes in 'A Telephone Call'

In 'A Telephone Call' Dorothy Parker uses diction, tone and point of view to expose obsession and give it a voice. Parker shows the deep feelings of a woman experiencing an infatuation. The language usage and tone keeps a high paced unstable feeling throughout the story.

The story has an interior monologue narration Parker purposely uses this to highlight the theme of obsession. This is driver home by the fact that the reader hears the thoughts inside her head and feels the same obsession.

The entire list of emotions and reactions of the woman to her own thoughts form subthemes. But the two main themes are just two-Love and Absence. The author brings up issues such as the constraints of society upon gender. The author uses a very uncomplicated situation to highlight the power dynamics in a man-woman relationship. The critic April Middlejan, in her article 'On the wire with Death and Desire: The Telephone and lovers discusses how the telephone is an intimate form of communication that brings together lowers while at the same time separating and emphasizing the distance between them. She suggests that the reason the woman cannot call her lover because it would put the woman in the

position of too much power. Middlejan's article also points out that the woman in the story exhibits the three stages of grief associated with death of her relationship - denial, anger and bargaining.

12.1.4 Character Analysis of 'A Telephone Call'

The telephone is almost like a character in the story. There are specific social rules for using the telephone and they place men and women in different and unequal position of power. The telephone becomes the main antagonist - the cause of anxiety but at the same time a potential saviour. The woman in her obsession uses aggressive and violent language towards the telephone. All the desires in her are provoked by the telephone but the real blame lies with the caller.

Apart from the woman, there is a second pseudo-character which is G'd. He is omnipresent but absent in all forms.

Both the telephone and G' d have male connotations reflecting the power equation.

The woman in question displays obsession. Her monologue shows her thoughts as unbalanced and incoherent. She sounds hysterical but the story is told entirely through her point of view. The reader tries to empathize with her feelings.

12.2 INTRODUCTION - 2

12.2.1 Introduction to Oscar Wilde

Apart from being a true literary genius of his times in genres such as drama, essay, Oscar Wilde was equally famous for his short stories. 'The Happy Prince and other stories' is a collection of short stories for children published in May 1888. The book consists of five stories - 'The Happy Prince', 'The Nightingale and the Rose' 'The Selfish Giant' 'The Devoted Friend' and 'The Remarkable Rocket.'

The Happy Prince has been adapted for radio dramas operas and animation films.

12.2.2 Summary of 'The Happy Prince'

The story deals with a prince who had everything in life and had never seen any sorrow in his life.

As with all mortals, one day the prince died. The people around him were deeply in grief and extremely unhappy. They made a statue of him in lead and decked it with various jewels. Blue jewels were fixed in his eyes. The statue was kept over a pillar so that everyone could see him and remember him.

One day a swallow came to visit the place and settled between the feet of the statue. At night, when the swallow was asleep, a drop fell on his head when the swallow looked up, he saw

that the statue of the prince was shedding tears. The swallow too became sad.

When the swallow asked the prince 'why are you crying, my dear?', the Prince answered, 'I have seen everything happy in my life but here I am seeing that somebody is unhappy and sad.'

The swallow was surprised and asked him the reason. The prince told him about the poor woman at a far off place who did not have money to buy food and medicines for her sick son. The prince removed the jewels on his sword requested the swallow to give it to the woman. The woman became happy.

When the swallow asked the prince why he was not feeling cold. The prince replied that he got warmth from the good deed.

As winter came, the swallow wanted to fly to a warm place to his family members. When he wanted to bid good bye the prince requested him for a few more tasks to be done. One by one the prince gave out all the jewels and also all the pieces of cloth on his body to help the needy - the poor writer, the matchbox girl and so on.

A day came when the prince looked bare, ugly and shabby. The little swallow did not leave his side, to help him. Then the snow came. The swallow grew colder and his end drew near. The prince bid goodbye. The swallow died, but something also, broke inside the prince. It was his heart.

One day the mayor and the councilors saw the condition of the statue and the dead bird. They removed the statue and made a statue of the mayor using the lead. The heart could not be melted. So they threw the prince's heart and the dead swallow in a dust heap.

God saw this and ordered his angels to bring the two most precious things from the town. They brought the broken heart and the dead swallow. God said 'you are right'

It said that the bird lives with God in Eden and the happy prince is always known in the name of God.

12.2.3 Character Analysis of 'The Happy Prince'

The most interesting observation about the two main characters in the happy Prince is that both the characters are non human yet display the most humane qualities.

The swallow is one who devotes his life serving others. He is different from other swallows. He knows that he will die in the cold yet he persists. He stays with the Happy Prince and performs the tasks entrusted to him. The swallow perishes but lives with God.

The Prince too is no living being. He is a statue decorated with gold leaves and precious stones. He is called Happy because

there is smile on his life. This smile soon transforms into tearful eyes because the Happy Prince cannot bear the plight of the poor. He decides to help them. The swallow acts as his messenger or agent. The swallow's death breaks the prince's heart.

The mayor and the other kinsmen represent the materialistic nature of human being in Society. The Mayor and Town councilors are exploiters of the poor. They are hypocrites. The Mayor wants his own statue erected and even orders that birds should not be allowed to die near the statue.

12.2.4 Themes in the Happy Prince

The Happy Prince is like a fairy tale but more appropriately it is an allegory bringing out the importance of love, sacrifice and charity.

The first theme is that outward appearance is not the yardstick of measuring beauty. The Prince who is laid bare with a broken heart in the priced possession of God and not when he is decorated with Gold and precious stones. The prince has a lead heart but it is full of sympathy.

The second theme is that love and sacrifice are two saving forces. The world is full of hypocrisy and exploitation but the sacrifice and charity of the Prince and the swallow stand out.

The third theme is the wide gap between the rich and the poor. The author wanted to bring out the Victorian society which had a similar chasm between the rich and the poor where the poor had to undergo exploitation due to the industrial squalor.

12.3 INTRODUCTION - 3

12.3.1 Introduction to Washington Irving

Irving Washington achieved fame as an American author, essayist, biographer and historian of the early 19th Century. He is best known for his short stories namely 'The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow' and 'Rip Van Winkle' both published in his book 'The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.

He is largely referred to as the first American Man of letters. He firmly based his short stories in the American ethos though he took his sources from German or Dutch folklore. He did not seem to have a moral purpose and wrote to entertain rather than enlighten. Critics are divided in their praise for Irving the writer and Irving the pioneer and often termed him as an overrated writer.

12.3.2 Summary of Rip Van Winkle

The story of Rip Van Winkle is set during the American Revolutionary War. In a pleasant village near New York's Catskill mountains lived a colonial Anglo-American villager of Dutch descent

by the name Rip Van Winkle. He was kindly amiable though somewhat a recluse. He loved the wilderness around him but was also loved by the towns folk especially the children whom he pampered with his toys and tells stories. Rip Van Winkle avoided all gainful employment due to which his wife Dame Van Winkle used to chastise him and allowed his farm and home fall into disarray.

One autumn, Rip wandered up the mountains with his dog, wolf. He heard his name being shouted. Rip discovered that the speaker is a antiquated Dutch man carrying a keg up the mountain and requires his help. They did not talk but both hiked up to a hollow where there was a group of other ornately dressed silent bearded men who are playing nine pins. Without any conversation, Rip began to drink some of their liquor and soon fell asleep.

When he woke up. he found himself in unusual circumstances. His gun was rotted and rusty. His beard had grown a foot long and wolf was nowhere to be found. Rip returned to his village but he could not recognize anyone. On inquiry he discovered that his wife and friends had died. He lands into trouble on declaring that he is a loyal subject of King George III, little aware that the American Revolution had taken place and the town's inn portrait had been replaced with George Washington. His name had been taken by another (his own son)

Rip learned that he had been away for twenty years and the men he met in the mountains are rumored to be the ghosts of Hendrik Hudson's crew. An old local luckily recognized Rip and his now adult daughter took him in his care. Rip resumed his old lifestyle and his tale proves an ideal for other henpecked husbands. They all wished they could share Rip's luck and have the luxury of sleeping through the hardships of war.

12.3.3 Themes in Rip Van Winkle

A major theme is change with continuity and preservation of tradition. After Rip awakens from his prolonged slumber and goes back to his village, he does not recognize anyone. he is unfamiliar even with their fashions and customs. The village has undergone a remarkable change with rows of houses, all new. His own house is in a dilapidated state. The inn has changed to a hotel. His wife and old friends are dead. There have been larger changes. After the American revolution a new country has emerged. It is only the Hudson river and the Caskill mountains that have remained unchanged during Kip's sleep.

On the other hand an old man and an old man Peter Vanderdonk recognise him and testify to the truth of Rip's tale about the nine pin bowlers from the mountains. The main theme of the

story emerges here. In spite of radical changes, old traditions cannot be eradicated entirely and the new society is always a combination of the old and the new. There is also continuity. Family lines as in the case of Rip, his son and grandson remain alive and thriving.

12.3.4 Character Analysis

Rip Van Winkle is a great neighbour but unproductive. His domestic life falls apart. Though he has descended from Dutch gallantry, he is peaceful by nature. He is extremely helpful to others and is an obedient, henpecked husband.

Dame Van Winkle is the nagging wife. She spares no efforts shouting insults at Rip and tracking him down in the village to berate him. She is the antagonist but a flat character.

Nicholas Vedder is the landlord of the inn and the leader of the group of idlers. He never speaks but makes his opinions based on how he smokes his pipe.

Derrick Van Bummel is the schoolmaster who is savvy with lengthy words. He fights in the Revolutionary war and later gets a seat in the Congress.

Judith Gardenier is the oldest inhabitant who is also a historian and chronicler of the province. He corroborates Rip's story, and helps him to be reaccepted.

Then there are many other minor characters like the Squire, Master Simon, Frank, Herman, George Somers who form part of the action.

12.4 Check your Progress

- Q.1 What themes are explored by Dorothy Parker in her story 'A Telephone Call'?
 - Q.2 Write a character sketch of the Protagonist In 'The Telephone Call'.
 - Q.3 In what way does the story underline the male dominant view of society? Discuss.
 - Q.4 Why did the Happy Prince weep?
 - Q.5 How has the author brought out hypocrisy in the story?
 - Q.6 Discuss the themes in the Happy Prince.
 - Q.7 Comment on the end of the story 'the Happy Prince'.
-
- Q.8 Discuss how Rip Van Winkle was a successful human being?
 - Q.9 What are the themes explored by Irving through the story of Rip Van Winkle ?

- Q.10 Write an essay that focuses on the truths presented in the short story Rip Van Winkle.
- Q.11 If you slept today and woke up 20 years later, what questions will be posed to you?



INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

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13.2. Check your Progress

13.0 OBJECTIVES

- To make students aware of comprehending a poem and analyzing it.
 - To introduce poem as a genre of literary art.
 - To introduce students to some unseen poems so as to make them practice
 - To help the students prepare with answers for the questions asked below the poems.
-

13.1 INTRODUCTION

As writing poetry is an art, reading poetry also is an art. We cannot enjoy reading anything without understanding it. And understanding poetry requires a special taste and aesthetic sense. Poetry is the language of heart. It flows from heart to heart. In this section we have chosen various poems reflecting on various aspects of life.

When you read a poem, don't read it as if you are reading a prose, but feel it. Apply it to your life. Experience its impact on you. Then only you can understand its value.

Following are some examples of the poems. The first one is followed by the questions and answers, and the rest of them are followed by the questions. Read them, and write the answers to the questions on a separate paper.

None of them, however, will appear in the examination, because there would be an unseen poem in the examination.

3.1.1 What is the Poem about?

The question to ask here is; what event, situation or experience does the poem describe or record? (e.g. many 'love' poems record a break up of a relationship or stages of a relationship, many 'personal' poems are written because the poet is trying to understand themselves or some part of their own thinking)

13.1.2 Objective – or theme, or message of the poet

The question to ask here is; what is the poet's purpose in writing this? What message does he or she want to communicate? (i.e. a poet may simply wish to express emotion, to get something off their chest, to purposefully try to create a type of poem, to try to make us see things from their point of view, to change our thinking about certain things)

Whether you are reading a poem for pleasure, or simply trying to pass an exam, these helpful hints should allow you to get to grips with what the poet is trying to say.

Puzzling over a poem? Try the following tips and you will soon be discussing poetry with confidence!

13.1.3 Give a Close reading to the text of the poem

It might be tempting to stop and puzzle over any tricky bits, but by reading the poem all the way through, you should be able to pick up the overall idea the poet is trying to convey. Consider the subject matter – what the poem is literally about – as well as any themes that emerge – these are the ideas that the poet wants you to think about after reading the poem.

13.1.4 What is the mood of the poem?

Think about how the writer wants you to feel at the end of the poem. Is the overall tone uplifting, or does the poem leave you feeling sad? Some poems have a deliberate change of mood within them, where an apparently downbeat poem ends with a joyful scene (such as Imtiaz Dharker's *The Blessing*) or vice versa.

13.1.5 Structure of the poem

The poet will have planned the structure of their poem carefully, so look at how many stanzas or verses the poem is divided into. Why do you think the poet has chosen to structure the poem in the way they have? Perhaps each new stanza deals with a new idea or mood, or maybe the poem consists of just one short stanza in order to suggest a brief, fast-moving event.

13.1.6 Sounds of the words

Poetry is designed to be read aloud, so forget your embarrassment and recite the poem to yourself. Doing this should allow you to hear whether the poem has any regular rhyme or

rhythm, as well as any words the poet has chosen because of the way they sound. For example, the writer may be using alliteration (where two or more words in close succession begin with the same consonant) in order to draw our attention to a certain line or image, or assonance (the repetition of vowel sounds within words).

13.1.7 Other Techniques used by the poet

For example, look at how the poet uses imagery – in other words, how language is used to help the reader picture the events of the poem. In order to do this, the poet might use simile or metaphor, to help the reader draw a comparison between ideas. A simile uses “like” or “as” to draw attention to the comparison.

13.2. Check your Progress:

Q.1 What elements of a poem should you consider while studying a poem?



A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED POEMS PART I

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14.0 Objectives

- To introduce the students to poets like John Milton, Robert Browning and William Blake.
- To make the students aware of the texts of the poems by these poets which are prescribed for study.
- To prepare the students for the examination by providing possible interpretation of the texts.

14.1 John Milton's On His Blindness

14.1.1 About the Poet- John Milton and the Poem

John Milton was an English poet, a scholarly man of letters, and a civil servant for the Commonwealth (republic) of England under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious flux and political upheaval, and is best known for his epic poem Paradise Lost.

Milton's poetry and prose reflect deep personal convictions, a passion for freedom and self determination, and the urgent issues and political turbulence of his day. Writing in English, Latin, and Italian, he achieved international renown within his lifetime, and his

celebrated 'Areopaegitica', (written in condemnation of pre-publication censorship) is among history's most influential and impassioned defenses of free speech and freedom of the press. William Hayley's 1796 biography called him the "greatest English author", and he remains generally regarded "as one of the preeminent writers in the English language"; though critical reception has oscillated in the centuries since his death (often on account of his republicanism). Samuel Johnson praised *Paradise Lost* as "a poem which...with respect to design may claim the first place, and with respect to performance, the second, among the productions of the human mind". Though Johnson (a Tory and recipient of royal patronage) described his politics as those of an "acrimonious and surly republican".

Because of his republicanism, Milton has been the subject of centuries of British partisanship (a "nonconformist" biography by John Toland, a hostile account by Anthony à Wood etc.).

The phases of Milton's life parallel the major historical and political divisions in Stuart Britain. Under the increasingly personal rule of Charles I and its breakdown in constitutional confusion and war, Milton studied, travelled, wrote poetry mostly for private circulation, and launched a career as pamphleteer and publicist. Under the Commonwealth of England, from being thought dangerously radical and even heretical, the shift in accepted attitudes in government placed him in public office, and he even acted as an official spokesman in certain of his publications. The Restoration of 1660 deprived Milton, now completely blind, of his public platform, but this period saw him complete most of his major works of poetry.

Milton's views developed from his very extensive reading, as well as travel and experience, from his student days of the 1620s to the English Revolution. By the time of his death in 1674, Milton was impoverished and on the margins of English intellectual life, yet unrepentant for his political choices, and of Europe-wide fame.

14.1.2 Sonnet XIX On His Blindness

John Milton

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present

My true account, lest He returning chide,
'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?'
I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.'

14.1.3 Summary of The Sonnet

Milton's sight had been long threatened before it was finally extinguished. In a letter to the Greek Philaras, the agent in London of the Duke of Parma, dated September 1654, Milton says it was ten years, more or less, since he had first found his eyes failing. The blindness had become total probably about March 1652, in which month Weckherlin was appointed by the Council of State to assist Milton as secretary. The calamity was precipitated by his persistence in writing his *Defension pro populo Anglicano contra Salmasium*, though warned by his physician of the consequences.

The reader will observe that in the present lament, Milton does not bewail his own privation, but insists wholly on the wreck of the heaven-appointed task to which he considered himself called and set apart.

'My often thought is,' he writes to Philaras, 1654, 'that since to all of us are decreed many days of darkness, as saith the Wise Man, Eccles. 11, 8, my dark thus far, by the singular favour of Providence, hath been much tolerable than that dark of the grave, passed as it hath been amid leisure and study, cheered by the visits and conversation of friends.'

14.1.4 Theme of the Poem

In this sonnet, the speaker meditates on the fact that he has become blind (Milton himself was blind when he wrote this). He expresses his frustration at being prevented by his disability from serving God as well as he desires to. He is answered by "Patience," who tells him that God has many who hurry to do his bidding, and does not really need man's work. Rather, what is valued is the ability to bear God's "mild yoke," to tolerate whatever God asks faithfully and without complaint. As the famous last line sums it up, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

This poem presents a carefully reasoned argument, on the basis of Christian faith, for the acceptance of physical impairment. The speaker learns that, rather than being an obstacle to his fulfillment of God's work for him, his blindness is a part of that work,

and that his achievement lies in living patiently with it. (Milton himself went on to write his twelve-book epic poem, "Paradise Lost," after becoming blind.

14.2 Robert Browning- My Last Duchess

14.2.1 About the Poet and the Poem

The dramatic monologue is a form invented and practiced principally by Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson, Dante Rossetti, and other Victorians, have been much debated in the last several decades. Everyone agrees that to be a dramatic monologue a poem must have a speaker and an implied auditor, and that the reader often perceives a gap between what that speaker says and what he or she actually reveals. In one of the most influential, though hotly contested definitions, Robert Langbaum saw the form as a continuation of an essentially Romantic "poetry of experience" in which the reader experiences a tension between sympathy and judgment. One problem with this approach, as Glenn Everett has argued, lies in the fact that contemporary readers of Browning's poems found them vastly different from Langbaum's Wordsworthian model.

Many writers on the subject have disagreed, pointing out that readers do not seem ever to sympathize with the speakers in some of Browning's major poems, such as "Porphria's Lover" or "My Last Duchess." Glenn Everett proposes that Browninesque dramatic monologue has three requirements:

1. The reader takes the part of the silent listener.
2. The speaker uses a case-making, argumentative tone.
1. We complete the dramatic scene from within, by means of inference and imagination.

14.2.2 My Last Duchess

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Fra Pandolf's hands
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
the curtain I have drawn for you, but I)

And seemed they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess's cheek: perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half flush that dies along her throat": such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of you. She had
A heart--how shall I say?--too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace--all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men--good! but thanked
Somehow--I know not how--as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech--(which I have not)--to make your will
Quite clear to such a one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss
Or there exceed the mark"--and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse
--E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
the company below, then. I repeat
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretense
Of mine dowry will be disallowed
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go

Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea horse, thought a rarity,
Which clasps of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

14.2.3 Summary of the Poem

Written in 1842 by Robert Browning, "My Last Duchess" is the dramatic monologue of the duke of Ferrara who is negotiating his second marriage through an agent of the count of Tyrol on the grand staircase of the ducal palace at Ferrara in northern Italy. Executing the elements of a dramatic monologue, the duke reveals his situation and much more than he intends to the both the agent and the reader.

Using iambic pentameter AABB couplets Robert Browning reveals the horrifying story of the murder of the duke's previous wife through the duke's conversation with the agent. As the duke attempts to paint an inaccurate picture of himself to the agent, desiring to appear as a noble, but abused and caring, loving husband who had no choice but to murder his prideful, disrespectful wife, the duke's true controlling, manipulative, jealous nature is revealed.

The duke's desire for control is made evident by the structure of the poem, through his appreciation of art, and his response to the trivial incidences that led to the death of his wife. The frequent use of caesura throughout the poem emphasize the duke's control over the conversation. The duke's appreciation of art reveals the control he has over the artists that produce his works of art; the portrait of his last duchess and the statue of Neptune. Although the duke was unable to control the duchess when she was alive, after her death he is in complete control of her. The duke says "none puts by the curtain I have drawn for you, but I," revealing that now he is able to control both the duchess's countenance and who views the portrait by a curtain covering the portrait (10).

The duke's loss of control is also depicted through the rhythm of the poem. The run over lines in the poem, or enjambment in the poem, reveal the duke's nervous uneasiness over his wife's murder. For example, near the end of the poem, the duke loses control. The reader can only imagine the horrified agent rising to go down the staircase, the duke's uneasiness as he loses control, and his desire to regain control of the situation as he says, "Nay we'll go down together, sir"(53).

The duke wants to appear as a hurt and abused husband whose disrespectful wife left him no alternative but to kill her. However his appreciation of art reveals that he values things that he can control and is contrasted with the images of nature that

surround the duchess. The "daylight in the West.....the bough of cherries," and "the white mule," all natural objects that are associated with the duchess' happiness. These images of nature are a sharp contrast to the artificial objects the duke values. His unhappiness over the duchess' association with nature is revealed in the line "I know not how--as if she ranked my gift of a nine-hundred-years-old-name with anybody's gift"(34). It is clear that the duke believes that his name, something artificial, is of greater value than the natural objects that cause the duchess joy.

In the end it is the duke's loss of control that causes him to kill her. His inability to control the live duchess herself, resulted in her death, and now all that remains is another valued object, which he is in complete control of.

14.3 William Blake's Piping Down the Valleys Wild

14.3.1 About the Poet and the Poem

British poet, painter, visionary mystic, and engraver, who illustrated and printed his own books. Blake proclaimed the supremacy of the imagination over the rationalism and materialism of the 18th-century. He joined for a time the Swedenborgian Church of the New Jerusalem in London and considered Newtonian science to be superstitious nonsense. Mocking criticism and misunderstanding shadowed Blake's career as a writer and artist and it was left to later generations to recognize his importance.

To see a world in a grain of sand
And heaven in a wild flower
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.

(from 'Auguries of Innocence')

Blake wrote his early poems at the age of 12. However, being apprenticed early to a manual occupation, journalistic-social career was not open to him. His first book of poems, POETICAL SKETCHES, appeared in 1783 and was followed by SONGS OF INNOCENCE (1789), and SONGS OF EXPERIENCE (1794). Each copy of Songs of Innocence was unique and the poems were never in the same order. The book was not a commercial or critical success. Blake's most famous poem, 'The Tyger', was part of his Songs of Experience. Typical for Blake's poems were long, flowing lines and violent energy, combined with aphoristic clarity and moments of lyric tenderness. Blake was not blinded by conventions,

but approached his subjects sincerely with a mind unclouded by current opinions. On the other hand this made him also an outsider. He approved of free love, and sympathized with the actions of the French revolutionaries but the Reign of Terror sickened him. In 1790 Blake engraved THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL, his principal prose work, in which he expressed his revolt against the established values of his time: "Prisons are built with stones of Law, brothels with bricks of Religion." Radically Blake sided with the Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost and attacked the conventional religious views in a series of paradoxical aphorisms. But the poet's life in the realms of images did not please his wife who once remarked: "I have very little of Mr. Blake's company. He is always in Paradise." Some of Blake's contemporaries called him a harmless lunatic.

14.3.2 Piping Down the Valleys Wild

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

'Pipe a song about a lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again.'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer.'
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

14.3.3 Summary of the Poem

Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) juxtapose the innocent, pastoral world of childhood against an adult world of corruption and repression; while such poems as "The Lamb" represent a meek virtue, poems like "The Tiger" exhibit opposing, darker forces. Thus the collection as a whole explores the value and limitations of two different perspectives on the world. Many of the poems fall into pairs, so that the same situation or problem is seen through the lens of innocence first and then experience. Blake does not identify himself wholly with either view; most of the poems are dramatic--that is, in the voice of a speaker other than the poet himself. Blake stands outside innocence and experience, in a distanced position from which he hopes to be able to recognize and correct the fallacies of both. In particular, he pits himself against despotic authority, restrictive morality, sexual repression, and institutionalized religion; his great insight is into the way these separate modes of control work together to squelch what is most holy in human beings.

Blake imagines that a child on a cloud ordered him to write these poems for children. While Blake descended down the wild forest stretching to the valley down below, he was playing the sweet melodious tunes of the pan-pipe with a pleasant glee; a feeling of great happiness; and in the midst of preludes of the music that he played, he claimed to have seen an angelic child standing on the cloud and laughing with joy, instructed him to play the tune and pipe the song about the Lamb. This order was later fulfilled in Blake's third "*Songs of Innocence*"; "Little Lamb, who made thee?" The lamb symbolizes youth and meekness.

Blake complied with the little child's order, piped the song and played the tune with a merry spirit. After he had finished playing for the first time, the child ordered Blake to pipe the song again. So Blake piped the song again and the child wept as he heard it. The next thing that the child ordered was for Blake to stop playing the pipe and put it down aside. Blake was to sing his songs verbally in the merriest note and he did as he was told. The child wept even louder and with greater joy when he heard Blake sang

his songs without the pipe. Then lastly, the child ordered the piper (Blake) to sit down and write in a book, that all may read for generations to come. "In a Book" here refers to the "Songs of Innocence".

Blake then created a traditional pen of the (rural) country, which was made out of reed and wrote all his happy songs. He made the ink out of water and all the songs he wrote were meant for every child to hear and enjoy.

14.4 Check your Progress

- Q.1 Discuss the thematic concerns of the sonnet *On his Blindness*.
- Q.2 What is a dramatic monologue? How does Robert Browning bring out the Features of the character of the Duchess in the poem *My Last Duchess*?
- Q.3 What does William Blake want to say in the poem *Piping Down the Valleys Wild*?
- Q.4 How far doe he succeed in his attempt?



A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED POEMS PART II

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15.0 Objectives

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- To make the students aware of the texts of the poems by these poets which are prescribed for study.
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15.1 Sir Walter Scott-Lochinvar

15.1.1 About the Poet and the Poem

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish writer and poet and one of the greatest historical novelists, was born on August 15, 1771, in Edinburgh as the son of a solicitor Walter Scott and Anne, a daughter of professor of medicine. An early illness left him lame in the right leg, but he grew up to be a man over six feet and great physical endurance. Scott's interest in the old Border tales and ballads had early been awakened, and he devoted much of his leisure to the exploration of the Border country. He attended

Edinburgh High School and studied at Edinburgh University arts and law. Scott was apprenticed to his father in 1786 and in 1792 he was called to the bar. In 1799 he was appointed sheriff depute of the county of Selkirk. In 1797 Scott married Margaret Charlotte Charpenter. They had five children

In 1802-03 Scott's first major work, *Minstrelsy Of The Scottish Border* appeared. As a poet Scott rose into fame with the publication of *The Lay Of The Last Minstrel* (1805) about an old border country legend. It became a huge success and made him the most popular author of the day. It was followed by *Marmion* (1808), a historical romance in tetrameter. *The Lady In The Lake* appeared in 1810 and *Rokeby* in 1813. Scott's last major poem, *The Lord Of The Isles*, was published in 1815

In 1806 Scott became clerk to the Court of Session in Edinburgh. To increase his income he started a printing and publishing business with his friend James Ballantyne. The enterprise crashed and Scott accepted all debts and tried to pay them off with his writings.

15.1.2 Lochinvar

O young Lochinvar is come out of the west,

Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broad sword he weapons had none,
He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopp'd not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he enter'd the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long woo'd your daughter, my suit you denied; --
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide --
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kiss'd the goblet: the knight took it up,
He quaff'd off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She look'd down to blush, and she look'd up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, --
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a gailiard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bride-maidens whisper'd, "'twere better by far
To have match'd our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reach'd the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

15.1.3 Summary of the Poem

The Poem "Lochinvar" by Walter Scott (1771-1832) is a heroic ballad about the effect of a young gallant's actions on those around him. Scott grew up in Scotland and became a national hero; he was fascinated with military personages and this poem squarely fits into that mold. Scott himself was absorbed by the vicissitudes of

war, including the national defeat at the Battle of Flodden Field. This engagement, with its enormous death toll and the purity with which it is supposed to have been fought, is a rich part of Scottish heritage. Lochinvar itself refers to a lake in Scotland and the hilly area lends the poem its name.

The poem opens with an interjection "Oh!" that sets the poem up for the introduction of a dashing knight. Without firearms and armed with only broadsword Lochinvar rides his fast horse quickly towards an as-yet unknown destination. The reader sees he is 'faithful in love and gallant in war'. This is the first in a series of rhyming couplets that pair 'Lochinvar' with 'war'. This is an association that Scott badly wants the reader to make. There are many positive descriptions of Lochinvar's courage that follow.

Lochinvar's coming in from the west is a metaphor for him as a sort-of sun. Thus the other characters are planets revolving about him, the story's prime mover. In the second stanza we learn that he is charging headlong towards a wedding where a 'dastard', a sneaking coward, is marrying Ellen of Lochinvar. The bride 'had consented', virtually her only action in the poem.

'Boldly' Lochinvar enters the reception hall. This contrasts with the 'poor, craven bridegroom who never says a word. The bride's father only asks what intention has for them, hand on his sword and resigned to his fate.

Dauntless in love, Lochinvar says he is willing to accept that Ellen will be wed to another: 'There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far, That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.' He insists he is here only to enjoy the festivities. He has no such plans. He takes one dance with the bride after she blesses his wine. Demurely she accepts, blushing.

The two resonate with grace and fill the room with their presence. Like the sun she is illuminated by his light. The groom hangs there ashamed and helpless while the bride's parents can do nothing to stop them. They are immobilized by his 'stately form'. The wedding party assents to the match between young Lochinvar and Ellen: 'Twere better by far To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.'

It only takes 'one touch of his hand and one word in her ear' for her to bend to his incredible will. On his horse he gallops away with Ellen. The clans give chase but their bride is lost through their inactivity. Thus the bridegroom proves that he is a 'laggard in love', unable to stand up for himself. The poem is meant to illustrate a lesson about the dashing courage of the active human spirit. This is

in direct juxtaposition to the lazy, ineffectual characters in Lochinvar's orbit.

15.2 John Keats' Ode to a Nightingale

15.2.1 About the Poet and the Poem

John Keats was born in London on October 31, 1795, to a prosperous livery-stable manager. John was the oldest of five children (one died in infancy), who remained deeply devoted to each other. Only a few months after their father died of a fractured skull in 1804, Keats' mother remarried. Almost as quickly, she left her second husband and the prosperous business she had inherited from Keats' father. She moved with the children to live with her mother at Edmonton, near London, however, she died of tuberculosis in 1810, leaving the children in the care of their grandmother. At school, Keats and his brothers were popular. Keats read widely and avidly. His first poem, "Lines in Imitation of Spenser," was written in 1814. In that year, he moved to London and resumed his surgical studies in 1815 as a student at Guy's hospital. Before leaving his medical career to devote himself exclusively to his poetry, Keats also worked as a dresser and junior house surgeon. While in London, he met Leigh Hunt, the editor of *The Examiner*, who introduced him to other young Romantic poets, including Shelley. Keats' poem, "O Solitude," appeared in *The Examiner*. Keats' first book, *Poems*, was published in 1817. "Endymion," his first long poem, appeared when he was 21. Keats' greatest works were written in the late 1810s: "Lamia," "The Eve of St. Agnes," and the great odes: "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode To Autumn," and "Ode on a Grecian Urn." For a short time, he wrote for *The Champion* as a theatrical critic. Keats spent three months in 1818 caring for his brother Tom, who was dying of tuberculosis. Tom died in December. In 1820, the second volume of Keats' poems was published to considerable critical acclaim. Keats had, however, already diagnosed his own tuberculosis, and his poems reflect his deep sorrow at being unable to marry Fanny Brawne, the woman he loved. Percy Shelley invited Keats to join him at Pisa, in Italy, but Keats went to Rome instead, believing the climate would be good for his health; he died in Rome on February 23, 1821 at the age of 25. Keats had already dictated the epitaph he wanted

carved on his headstone: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

15.2.2 Ode to a Nightingale

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness, -
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,

Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain -
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: - Do I wake or sleep?

15.2.3 Summary

The speaker opens with a declaration of his own heartache. He feels numb, as though he had taken a drug only a moment ago. He is addressing a nightingale he hears singing somewhere in the forest and says that his “drowsy numbness” is not from envy of the nightingale’s happiness, but rather from sharing it too completely; he is “too happy” that the nightingale sings the music of summer from amid some unseen plot of green trees and shadows.

In the second stanza, the speaker longs for the oblivion of alcohol, expressing his wish for wine, “a draught of vintage,” that would taste like the country and like peasant dances, and let him “leave the world unseen” and disappear into the dim forest with the nightingale. In the third stanza, he explains his desire to fade away, saying he would like to forget the troubles the nightingale has never known: “the weariness, the fever, and the fret” of human life, with its consciousness that everything is mortal and nothing lasts. Youth “grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,” and “beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes.”

In the fourth stanza, the speaker tells the nightingale to fly away, and he will follow, not through alcohol (“Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards”), but through poetry, which will give him “viewless wings.” He says he is already with the nightingale and describes the forest glade, where even the moonlight is hidden by the trees, except the light that breaks through when the breezes blow the branches. In the fifth stanza, the speaker says that he cannot see the flowers in the glade, but can guess them “in embalmed darkness”: white hawthorne, eglantine, violets, and the musk-rose, “the murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.” In the sixth stanza, the speaker listens in the dark to the nightingale, saying that he has often been “half in love” with the idea of dying and called Death soft names in many rhymes. Surrounded by the nightingale’s song, the speaker thinks that the idea of death seems richer than ever, and he longs to “cease upon the midnight with no pain” while the nightingale pours its soul ecstatically forth. If he were to die, the nightingale would continue to sing, he says, but he would “have ears in vain” and be no longer able to hear.

In the seventh stanza, the speaker tells the nightingale that it is immortal, that it was not “born for death.” He says that the voice he hears singing has always been heard, by ancient emperors and clowns, by homesick Ruth; he even says the song has often charmed open magic windows looking out over “the foam / Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.” In the eighth stanza, the word forlorn tolls like a bell to restore the speaker from his preoccupation with the nightingale and back into himself. As the nightingale flies farther away from him, he laments that his imagination has failed him and says that he can no longer recall whether the nightingale’s music was “a vision, or a waking dream.” Now that the music is gone, the speaker cannot recall whether he himself is awake or asleep.

15.2.4 Form

Like most of the other odes, “Ode to a Nightingale” is written in ten-line stanzas. However, unlike most of the other poems, it is metrically variable—though not so much as “Ode to Psyche.” The first seven and last two lines of each stanza are written in iambic pentameter; the eighth line of each stanza is written in trimeter, with only three accented syllables instead of five. “Nightingale” also differs from the other odes in that its rhyme scheme is the same in every stanza (every other ode varies the order of rhyme in the final three or four lines except “To Psyche,” which has the loosest structure of all the odes). Each stanza in “Nightingale” is rhymed ABABCDECDE, Keats’s most basic scheme throughout the odes.

15.2.5 Themes

With “Ode to a Nightingale,” Keats’s speaker begins his fullest and deepest exploration of the themes of creative expression and the mortality of human life. In this ode, the transience of life and the tragedy of old age (“where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, / Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies”) is set against the eternal renewal of the nightingale’s fluid music (“Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!”). The speaker reprises the “drowsy numbness” he experienced in “Ode on Indolence,” but where in “Indolence” that numbness was a sign of disconnection from experience, in “Nightingale” it is a sign of too full a connection: “being too happy in thine happiness,” as the speaker tells the nightingale. Hearing the song of the nightingale, the speaker longs to flee the human world and join the bird. His first thought is to reach the bird’s state through alcohol—in the second stanza, he

longs for a “draught of vintage” to transport him out of himself. But after his meditation in the third stanza on the transience of life, he rejects the idea of being “charioted by Bacchus and his pards” (Bacchus was the Roman god of wine and was supposed to have been carried by a chariot pulled by leopards) and chooses instead to embrace, for the first time since he refused to follow the figures in “Indolence,” “the viewless wings of Poesy.” The rapture of poetic inspiration matches the endless creative rapture of the nightingale’s music and lets the speaker, in stanzas five through seven, imagine himself with the bird in the darkened forest. The ecstatic music even encourages the speaker to embrace the idea of dying, of painlessly succumbing to death while enraptured by the nightingale’s music and never experiencing any further pain or disappointment. But when his meditation causes him to utter the word “forlorn,” he comes back to himself, recognizing his fancy for what it is—an imagined escape from the inescapable (“Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well / As she is fam’d to do, deceiving elf”). As the nightingale flies away, the intensity of the speaker’s experience has left him shaken, unable to remember whether he is awake or asleep.

In “Indolence,” the speaker rejected all artistic effort. In “Psyche,” he was willing to embrace the creative imagination, but only for its own internal pleasures. But in the nightingale’s song, he finds a form of outward expression that translates the work of the imagination into the outside world, and this is the discovery that compels him to embrace Poesy’s “viewless wings” at last. The “art” of the nightingale is endlessly changeable and renewable; it is music without record, existing only in a perpetual present. As befits his celebration of music, the speaker’s language, sensually rich though it is, serves to suppress the sense of sight in favor of the other senses. He can imagine the light of the moon, “But here there is no light”; he knows he is surrounded by flowers, but he “cannot see what flowers” are at his feet. This suppression will find its match in “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” which is in many ways a companion poem to “Ode to a Nightingale.” In the later poem, the speaker will finally confront a created art-object not subject to any of the limitations of time; in “Nightingale,” he has achieved creative expression and has placed his faith in it, but that expression—the nightingale’s song—is spontaneous and without physical manifestation.

“Ode to a Nightingale” is the longest of the 1819 odes with 8 stanzas containing 10 lines each. The poem begins by describing

the state of the poet, using negative statements to intensify the description of the poet's physical state such as "numbless pains" and "not through envy of thy happy lot" (lines 1-5). While the ode is written "to a Nightingale", the emphasis of the first line is placed upon the narrator rather than the bird, and Helen Vendler suggests that the negation of the reader as a party in the discourse happens just as the song of the nightingale becomes the "voice of pure self-expression". In the third stanza, the poet asks the nightingale to "Fade far away", casting it off just as the narrator in "Ode to Indolence" rejects the Love, Ambition, and Poesy and the poet in "Ode on a Grecian Urn" banishes the figures on the urn to silence. In the fourth stanza, the poet states that he will fly to the nightingale rather than it to him, moving upon the "wings of Poesy", which leaves Walter Jackson Bate to believe that while the poet intends to identify with the bird by describing the poem as being "to" it, the real identification in the narrative exits between the poet and his perceptions of the nightingale's song. In its closing, the poem questions whether the bird's song has been real or part of a dream: "Was it a vision, or a waking dream? / Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?" (lines 79-80), and the theme of imagination once again arises as the poet appears, according to Timothy Hilton, unable to distinguish between his own artistic imagination and the song which he believes to have spurred it into action.

15.3 Soap, by Nissim Ezekiel

15.3.1 About the Poem and the Poet

Considered to be the Father of post independence Indian verse in English, Nissim Ezekiel was a prolific poet, playwright, critic, broadcaster and social commentator. He was born on December 24, 1924 in a Jew family. His father was a professor of botany and mother was principal of her own school. Ezekiel was inclined to the poets such as T.S. Eliot, Yeats, Ezra Pound in his school days. The influence of all these literary personalities was apparent in his early works. His formal use of the English language was linked to colonialism and resulted in controversy.

His first collection of poetry 'Time To Change' was published by Fortune Press (London) in 1952. His poetry has all the elements of love, loneliness, lust, and creativity. Nissim Ezekiel went on to join The Illustrated Weekly of India as an assistant editor in 1953. 'Sixty Poems' was his next book followed by 'The Unfinished Man'. Nissim Ezekiel started writing in formal English but with the passage of time his writing underwent a metamorphosis. As the

time passed he acknowledged that 'the darkness has its own secrets which light does not know.' His poem 'The Night Of Scorpion' is considered to be one of the best works in Indian English poetry and is used as a study material in India and British schools.

Nissim Ezekiel worked as an advertising copywriter and general manager of a picture frame company . He was the art critic of The Times Of India (1964-66) and editor of The Poetry India(1966-67). He was also the co-founder of the literary monthly Imprint. Ezekiel was awarded the Sahitya Akademi award in 1983. In 1988 he received another honor,Padma Shri, for his contribution to the Indian English writing.

His Soap is one of those very popular poems in English that lashes out the way the Indian English speakers speak the language among themselves. They prefer speaking in present continuous tense. The Soap is a satire on that style.

15.3.2 Text of the poem

Soap

Some people are not having manners,
this I am always observing,
For example other day I find
I am needing soap
For ordinary washing myself purposes.
So I'm going to one small shop
nearby in my lane and I'm asking
for well-known brand soap.

That shopman he's giving me soap
but I'm finding it defective version.
So I'm saying very politely — -
though in Hindi I'm saying it,
and my Hindi is not so good as my English,
Please to excuse me
but this is defective version of well-known brand soap.

That shopman is saying
and very rudely he is saying it,
What is wrong with soap?
Still I am keeping my temper
and repeating very smilingly
Please to note this defect in soap,
and still he is denying the truth.

So I'm getting very angry that time
and with loud voice I am saying
YOU ARE BLIND OR WHAT?
Now he is shouting
YOU ARE CALLING ME BLIND OR WHAT?
Come outside and I will show you
Then I am shouting
What you will show me
Which I haven't got already?
It is vulgar thing to say
but I am saying it.

Now small crowd is collecting
and shopman is much bigger than me,
and I am not caring so much
for small defect in well-known brand soap.
So I'm saying
Alright OK Alright OK
this time I will take
but not next time.

15.3.3 Summary of the Poem

The poem pictures an ordinary experience of a teenager in this poem. he says that he needed a soap and went to fetch it from

the shop. He says that some people do not have manners, and narrates his encounter with the shop keeper. While reading the poem the reader has to look at the use of the English language in this poem. The reader should give the incident a least importance for that is not the focal point of the poem. The central idea, however, is the inappropriate use of the English language.

he says-

Some people are not having manners,
this I am always observing,
For example other day I find
I am needing soap
For ordinary washing myself purposes.

In these lines the poet uses present continuous tense instead of the past. The poet has written many such poems which comment on the wrong usage of the English language. As per the incident the poet wanted a bathing soap of a good brand, but the shop keeper was showing him an ordinary one. The poet didn't like it, though. An argument is flared up between them two, and they tried to impress each other in English-wrong English. The poet calls him blind, and the shop keeper turns to be angry with him. The next part of the poem seems to be funnier for they abuse and threaten each other in a very Indian way... *Come outside and I will show you*. Finally the poet recedes and agrees to accept the same piece of Soap, for people started gathering around, and the poet thought that he was too small to fight the old man. The poet focuses on the Indian culture, public places and the strange way the people behave. The poem is one of the Very Indian Poems Written in Indian English.

15.4 Check your progress

- Q.1 What are the thematic concerns of the poem Lochinvar
- Q.2 How does the poet John Keats bring out the features of the bird Nightingale in the poem *Ode to a Nightingale*?
- Q.3 Explain how Nissim Ezekiel satirize the Indian way of speaking in English.



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