MAENG-403

English Poetry from the Fourteenth to Eighteenth Century

MA ENGLISH

1st Semester

Rajiv Gandhi University
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English Poetry from the Elizabethan to the Eighteenth Century

MAENG403
I SEMESTER

RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY

Arunachal Pradesh,INDIA - 791 112

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About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post- graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

About IDE

The formal system of higher education in our country is facing the problems of access, limitation of seats, lack of facilities and infrastructure. Academicians from various disciplines opine that it is learning which is more important and not the channel of education. The education through distance mode is an alternative mode of imparting instruction to overcome the problems of access, infrastructure and socio-economic barriers. This will meet the demand for qualitative higher education of millions of people who cannot get admission in the regular system and wish to pursue their education. It also helps interested employed and unemployed men and women to continue with their higher education. Distance education is a distinct approach to impart education to learners who remained away in the space and/or time from the teachers and teaching institutions on account of economic, social and other considerations. Our main aim is to provide higher education opportunities to those who are unable to join regular academic and vocational education programmes in the affiliated colleges of the University and make higher education reach to the doorsteps in rural and geographically remote areas of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and North-eastern part of India in general. In 2008, the Centre for Distance Education has been renamed as "Institute of Distance Education (IDE)."

Continuing the endeavor to expand the learning opportunities for distant learners, IDE has introduced Post Graduate Courses in 5 subjects (Education, English, Hindi, History and Political Science) from the Academic Session 2013-14.

The Institute of Distance Education is housed in the Physical Sciences Faculty Building (first floor) next to the University Library. The University campus is 6 kms from NERIST point on National Highway 52A. The University buses ply to NERIST point regularly.

Outstanding Features of Institute of Distance Education:

(i) At Par with Regular Mode

Eligibility requirements, curricular content, mode of examination and the award of degrees are on par with the colleges affiliated to the Rajiv Gandhi University and the Department(s) of the University.

(ii) Self-Instructional Study Material (SISM)

The students are provided SISM prepared by the Institute and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC), New Delhi. This will be provided at the time of admission at the IDE or its Study Centres. SISM is provided only in English except Hindi subject.

(iii) Contact and Counselling Programme (CCP)

The course curriculum of every programme involves counselling in the form of personal contact programme of duration of approximately 7-15 days. The CCP shall not be compulsory for BA. However for professional courses and MA the attendance in CCP will be mandatory.

(iv) Field Training and Project

For professional course(s) there shall be provision of field training and project writing in the concerned subject.

(v) Medium of Instruction and Examination

The medium of instruction and examination will be English for all the subjects except for those subjects where the learners will need to write in the respective languages.

(vi) Subject/Counselling Coordinators

For developing study material, the IDE appoints subject coordinators from within and outside the University. In order to run the PCCP effectively Counselling Coordinators are engaged from the Departments of the University, The Counselling-Coordinators do necessary coordination for involving resource persons in contact and counselling programme and assignment evaluation. The learners can also contact them for clarifying their difficulties in then respective subjects.

SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

Syllabi
NIT I: Passages for Explaination
UNIT II: Fourteenth Century Poetry Geofry Chaucer: *The Prologue to Canterbury Tales*
UNIT III: Elizabethan Poetry William Shakespeare: *Sonnet 60 & 67*
UNIT IV: Renaissance and Metaphysical Poetry John Donne: *The Good Morrow & The Sunne Rising* John Milton: *Paradise Lost Book I*
UNIT V: Eighteenth Century Poetry Thomas Gray: *Elegy Written in Country Churchyard*

UNIT I PASSAGES FOR EXPLANATION WITH REFERNCE TO CONTEXT

Structure

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The initial writings in English, which were in Old English, made their appearance in the early Middle Ages. The most ancient work that is known to survived on Old English is the Hymn of Caedmon. The oral culture is known to have been extremely popular in the ancient English culture with maximum literary works being written with a motive of being enacted on stage. Epic poems, therefore gained great popularity with several such poems that included Beowulf, surviving to the present day. They exist in the rich corpus of Anglo-Saxon literature which bear much resemblance to the present day's Icelandic, Norwegian, North Frisian and the Northumbrian, and Scots English dialects of modern English. The earliest dramatic representation in England was in Latin. It was performed but priests who used it as a means of conveying the truth of religion to the illiterate masses.

This unit will give a detailed study of the important passages from different poems. These have been written by great poets such as John Milton, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth, P.B Shelley, Alfred Lord Tennyson and T.S Eliot.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the characteristics of the seventeenth century
- List the characteristics of the age of sensibility
- Interpret the use of mock-heroic verse in Rape of the Lock
- List the poets of the nineteenth century
- Recognize the two main literary figures of the twentieth century

1.2 SEVENTEENTH CENTURY POETRY

One wonders whether the character of poetry, irrespective of the century it belonged o, was dependent on the non-literary development. The practice of innovative and influential poets mainly determined the poetry of the seventeenth century. Great poets shape the literature of their century, as the two great poets of seventeenth century England, namely, William Shakespeare and John Milton.

The seventeenth century falls into the Early Modern peiod of Europe and that period was characterized by the following:

- Dutch golden age
- The Baroque cultural movement
- The French grand Siecle dominated by Louis XIV
- The scientific revolution
- The general crisis

The general crisis in this period was characterized in Europe by the following:

- Thirty years' age
- The Great Turkish War
- The end of the Dutch Revolt
- The disintegration of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth
- The English Civil war

During the general crisis, the European politics was dominated by Louis XIV of France. Louis XIV expanded the boarders of France to include the following:

- Rousillon
- Artois
- Dunkrik
- Franche-Comte
- Strasbourg
- Alsace
- Lorraine

By the end of the seventeenth century, Europeans were aware of the following subjects:

- Logarithms
- Electricity
- Telescope
- Microscope
- Calculus
- Universal gravitation
- Newton's law of motion
- Air pressure
- Calculating machines

The scientists who initiated the Scientific revolution in these times were as follows:

- Issac Newton
- Gottfried Leibniz
- Galileo Galilei
- Rene Descartes
- Pierre Fermat
- Robert Hooke
- Robert Boyle
- Antonie van Leeuwenhoek
- William Gilbert

1.2.1 John Donne

John Donne was one of the most prominent literary figures of the early seventeenth century. His works stand on two distinct accomplishments:

1. The witty, sensual love poetry of his early career
2. The serious, devout religious writing of his later career

He began to write serious religious literature when he became the Dean of St. Paul's. Donne's poetry was so influential that it was considered as the basis of the metaphysical school of poetry. It was characterized later by many writers such as Richard Crashaw, Abraham Cowley and George Herbert. Donne was quite influential as an Anglican divine as well. His highly personal accounts of seeking God and an authentic faith address, the universal difficulty of living a spiritual and a worldly life as well as hardships of the Anglican Church of the seventeenth century.

Ben Johnson was one of the major critics of John Donne. Donne always had friendly relations with Jonson. They both read and critiqued each other's work. Jonson thought that Dome was witty but he decried his earthly subject matter and his innovations in a poetic manner.

Donne's lack of reverse and stylistic experimentation was appreciated by many nineteenth century writers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert browning and Thomas DeQuincey. Donne celebrated his works by infusing them with life and filling them with primeval emotion. Donne's status in English literature was assured in the twentieth century when major critics namely, T.S Eliot, Lionel Trilling and Cleanth Brooks, acknowledged Donnes's ability to write about human experience in poetry. Donne has never been universally appreciated.

According to some critics, Donne writes in distinct personas without any regard for consistency. His earlier poems were those of a witty courtier seeking favour and patronage while his later poems were concerned with theology and personal salvation. While his earliest essays were strongly anti-Catholic, some of his later verse seemed to show Catholic Sympathies. Such inconsistencies have led to charges that Donne was insincere and self-serving and that his writings did not reflect his personal beliefs but his attempt to rise in English society. A strongest statement of this position came up in John Carey's 1981 biography of Donne. It was highly influential and frequently cited volume. According to Carey, apostasy and ambition were the two major driving forces of Donne's career. He described Donne as violent man; whose poetry was powerful only to the extent that it reflected the poet's personal aspirations.

Donne's image as a forceful poet with a masculine drive to dominate has been a frequent theme of Donne criticism since Carey's biography. Donne's views have permitted alternate contemporary views of his attitude towards women, specifically with respect to Donee's feelings for his wife, Anne More Donne. Donne's melancholy and his spiritual anxiety have been interpreted by critics as a reflection of his deep concerns about creating a Christian Communtiy and having a right relationship with God.

1.2.2 John Milton

Although John Milton's poetry represents only about one-fifth of his total literary production, the prose works are more obscure, largely because he wrote in genres that no longer appeal to a large audience. Milton's prose is usually read today for what it reveals about his biography and his thought. His most prominent theme was liberty- religious, domestic and civil.

However, his prose works were not as popular as his poetry because he opted to write in genres that were not very appealing to a large audience. Milton's prose provided detailed information on his life and thoughts.

The themes he wrote on included religious, domestic, and civil liberty. He wrote five anti-prelatical tracts, four tracts that justified divorce and five pamphlets in defense of the English Puritan Cause.

1.2.3 Selected Passages from Paradise Lost

(i)

Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit

Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast

Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,

With loss of EDEN, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,

Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top

Of OREB, or of SINAI, didst inspire

That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,

In the beginning how the Hea'vns and Earth

Rose out of CHAOS:

Explanation: These are the beginning lines of the poem, Paradise Lost, by John Milton. In these lines, he is talking about Man's first disobedience. Man here refers to Adam and the first disobedience refers to not obeying God's command when He forbade Adam and Eve from eating the fruit of the Tree of Life. The mortal taste of mankind. He says in the fourth line 'one greater man' restored to mankind the blissful seat. This 'greater man' was Jesus<the Son of God. Milton here is referring to the supreme sacrifice that Jesus made by shedding His precious blood by dying on the Cross of Calvary for the sins of mankind. This sacrifice helped mankind regains its lost seat in heaven.

In the next lines, Milton is invoking his heavenly muse. He calls for her help in writing this epic. This muse is the same as Urania, traditionally the muse of astronomy. However, several theories have it that Milton could be invoking the holy spirit in helping him writing this epic.

In asking the heavenly muse, Milton asks her to sing as she is the same muse who inspired the shepherd Moses on top of Mt.Horeb or Sinai. It was that shepherd , Moses, who first taught God's way to the chosen seed. The chosen seed here refers to the people of Israel. The people of Israel have been referred to as the chosen people all through the bible. It was Moses who taught the Israelites about how the heaven and the earth were created out of what was chaos.

(ii)

A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round

As one great Furnance flam'd, yet from those flames

No light, but rather darkness visible

Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe,

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace [65]

And rest can never dwell, hope never comes

That comes to all; but torture without end

Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed

With ever-burning Sulphur uncosum'd:

Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd [70]

From those revellious, here thir Prison ordain'd

In utter darkness, and thir portion set

As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n

As from the Centre thrice to th, utmost pole.

Explanation: Milton in the given lines is describing hell. He describes hell as being a dungeon that has been covered by flames. It had flames and only flames all around it, yet those flames gave out no light. They only had the power to burn but did not give out any light, due to which the dungeon remained dark. There were only sights of cries and groans. They are places of immense sorrow and grief where peace and rest never come. It is endless torture which remains unconsumed by ever-burning sulphur. This is the kind of place that God has prepared for those who are rebellious and do not obey God's word and command. It is into this prison that he will throw such people. The place is filled with utter darkness with their portion set. This place is thrice as far removed from God and the light of heaven as the distance between centre of the earth and the utmost pole.

1.3 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY POETRY

During the Age of sensibility, literature reflected the worldview of the Age of Enlightenment (or Age of reason)- an approach to religion, society, economy and politics that was rational and scientific. An approach that promoted a secular view of the world and a general sense of progress. The prominent philosophers of this Age were inspired by the works of Descartes, Locke and Bacon of the previous century.

These philosophers opted to act on universally valid principles that governed nature, humanity and society. They not only questioned spiritual and scientific authority but also intolerance, censorship, dogmatism and economic and social restraints. For them, the rational instrument of progress was the state. Rationalism and skepticism were the characteristics of this Age. This led to deism and later on brought about towards romanticism.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, The castle of Otranto, a novel by Horace Walpole created the Gothic fiction genre, which was a combination of horror and romance. Anne Radcliffe was the pioneering gothic

novelist who introduced the gothic villain, who later developed into the Byronic Hero. The mysteries of Udolpho which she wrote in 1794 is one of her most popular works. In fact, it is often cited as the best example of the Gothic novel. Vathek 1786 by William Beckford, and The Monk 1796 by Matthew Lewis, were among the early works in the genre of gothic and horror literature.

European Literature of the eighteenth century refers to poetry, drama and novels written in the Continent during that age. In the eighteenth century, the modern novel developed as a literary genre. In fact many early English novelists belonged to this period such as Daniel Defoe (with Robinson Crusoe in 1719). Subgenres of the nivel during the 18th century were the:

- *Epistolary novel*
- *Sentimental novel*
- *Histories*
- *Gothic novel*
- *Libertine novel*

Eighteenth-century Europe in the Age of Enlightenment and slowly and steadily transformed into Romanticism. In the field of visual arts, it was the period of Neoclassicism.

1.3.1 John Dryden

John Dryden (1631-1700) was an English poet, literary critic, dramatist and leader in Restoration comedy. He was the writer of several plays of which Marriage A-la-Mode (1672) , was a comedy and All for love (1678), a tragedy.

He was a king's scholar who studied the classics as Westminster. He wrote the Elegy, Lachrymae Musarum in 1649, as his contribution to the collection of tributes to honour Henry, Lord Hastings. In 1650, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1654, he lost his father and also graduated. While in London in 1657 Dryden began working with the civil service and also started to earnestly write play of heroic tragedy and satire of varying success. His important work was Heroic Stanzas (1658), on the death of Oliver Cromwell. He also wrote for a bookseller. Once Charles II came back to power, he celebrated the King's divine right with, his poem Astraea Redux (1660) followed by To His Sacred Majesty, a Panegyrick on his Coronation (1661).his works found favour with those in power.

On 1 December 1663, Dryden was wedded to Lady Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Berkshire. They had three sons. His first play The Wild Gallant was first staged in 1662. The Rival Ladies (1663) showed Spanish influences. Attached to it is one of his famous prefaces where he describes his principles of dramatic criticism. His first successful play, written in heroic couplets was The Indian Emperor (1665). The same year of the Great fire in London, Annus Mirabilis(1666) celebrates the English Navy's victory over the Dutch. Dryden had retired to the country to escape the threat of plague but he continued to write. The Maiden Queen composed in blank verse, rhyming couplets and prose and The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery was produced in 1667. An Essay of Dramatic Poesy(1668) was written two years after the Restoration when the theatres were thrown open again. In 1668 Dryden signed a contract with the King's Theatre Company and produced three plans in an year. His efforts were rewarded ny the Archbishop of Canterbury in the form of an M.A. that same year, he became Poet Laureate and later the Royal Historiographer. This ensured a regular and steady income for him.

The play Marriage A-La-Mode(1672) was followed by his unsuccessful work on the theme of Paradise lost, The State if Innocence, staged in 1674. After 1676, He began to use blank verse, and he proposed his best play, All for Love in 1678. It is his most popular work based on Antony and Cleopatra. He was the master of comparative criticism. He used prose and dialogue for debate, and wit and satire to illustrate disparities between the church and state. A year later Dryden was beaten by thungs, an attack that had been ordered by the Earl of Rochester when Dryden was suspected of collaboration on An Essay upon Satire, which vilified various prominent figures, of which the real author was never realized.

His other works included:

- *Shaftesbury (a political satire)*
- *Absalom and Achitophel (an allegorical poem)*
- *Religio Laici (a didactic poem supportingAnglicanism)*
- *Threnodia Angustalis (an ode to Charles II)*
- *The Hindi and The Panther (1678) (a work marking his final conversion to Roman Catholicism)*

Following the revolution of 1688 his Laureateship was lost when William III occupied the throne. He refused to take an oath of allegiance and he lost favour in court due to his politics and religion. His plays and poetic translations from Latin and Greek became his only source of income. The tragic-comedy Don Sebastian (1690) was comparable to All for Love. Another tragic-comedy Love Triumphant (1694) came to be his last play. Included in his ensuing critical essays was A Dinosaur concerning the Original and Progress of Satire. Dryden would also take on the massive task of translating the works of Virgil to prose.

1.3.2 Alexander Pope

The Rape of Lock is considered as the best example of mock-heroic verse in the English language. Written in heroic couplets, the poem was probably composed during the late summer of 1711 and first published in the May edition of Lintot's Miscellany in 1712. There were 334 lines in the poem originally, in two cantos. Two years later, a more elaborate version appeared and it was extended to 794 lines in five cantos. After a final revision it was included in Pope's work (17170. Inspired by an actual event, The Rape of Lock recounts the circumstances surrounding the theft of a young woman's hair by an impassioned male admirer, which led to a conflict between the families in question. The poem was aimed restoring harmonious relations between the two separated families. It was called a heoic-comical poem and treated a trivial issue in a completely epic style. This resulted in a lot of humour. It employs the elevated heroic language that Dryden, his literary forbear, had mastered when he translated Virgil incorporating amusing parodies of passages from Milton's paradise lost, Aeneid (by Virgil) and Iliad (by Homer). The Rape of Lock established Pope as a master of metrics and satire.

The original version of The Rape of the Lock accomplished its task – as the estranged families were brought together- and was promptly accepted gaining positive feedback from the public and the critics alike. Joseph Addison, who preferred first version which he felt was perfect. He had discouraged Pope from Revising it. However, after adding the 'machinery" and other material, the poem soon became Pope's most brilliant work. It brought hi, fame and wealth as it was reprinted seven times by 1723. It remained popular throughout the eighteenth century. Samuel Johnson called it 'the most attractive of ludicrous compositions' where "New things are made familiar and familiar things are made new'. Even though there was a decline in the appreciation of Pope's poetry in the nineteenth century, it was still enjoyed by Victorian readers and critics. James Russell Lowell praised its wit, fancy and invention. According to Leslie Stephen Pope's poem 'is allowed, even by his bitterest critics, to be a masterpiece pf delicate fancy'.

1.3.3 Selected Passages from Rape of the Lock

Sol thro'white curtains shot a tim'rous Ray.

And op'd those Eyes that must eclipse the Day;

Now lapdogs give themselves the rowzing Shake,

And sleepless Lovers, just at twelve, awake:

Thrice rung the Bell, the slipper knock,d the ground,

And the press'd Watch return'd a silver sound.

Belinda still her downy Pillow Prest,

Her Guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy rest.

'Twas he had summon'd to her silent Bed

The morning-dream that hover'd o'er her Head.

A youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night beau,

(That ev'n in Slumber caus'd her Cheek to glow)

Seem'd to her ear his winning Lips to Lay,

And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say.

(Canto I)

Explanation: Following his invocation of the muse, the poet says that the sun through the white curtain has shot a ray. It has initiated the happenings of a day in a rich household. Lapdogs are seen shaking them out of sleep, bells begin to ring, and though it is already noon, Belinda is still sleeping. She is dreaming, and we learn that it is 'her guardian Sylph', Ariel, who is responsible for sending this dream. The dream is about a handsome young man, information that these are 'unnumber'd spirits' protecting her. These spirits are an army of supernatural creatures who once were known to be living on earth as human women. The young man explains that they are the ones who invisibly guard the chastity of women. The credit for this although is generally by mistake given to "Honour" instead of their divine stewardship. Out of these creatures, one specific group- the Sylphs that live in the air- serve as Belinda's personal guardians; they are devoted, lower-like to any woman that 'rejects' mankind', and they understand and reward the vanities of a beautiful and playful women, such as Belinda. Areil, the chief of all Belinda's puckish protectors, gives her a warning in this dream that 'some dread event' will happen to her that day. He can tell her nothing more besides this and concludes by saying that she should be 'beware of man'! It is now that Belinda wakes up, when her Lapdog, shocks, licks her. When a billet-doux, or love letter, is delivered to her, she forgets all about the dream. She then goes to her dressing table and goes through an elaborate ritual of dressing. Here, her own image is the mirror is described as a 'heavenly image', a 'goddess'. The Sylphs, invisible, assist their charge as she gets ready for the activities of the day.

ACTIVITY

Find out the major characteristics of the Age of Sensibility.

1.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- **One wonders whether the character of poetry, irrespective of the century it belonged to, was dependant on the non-literary developments. The practice of innovative and influential poets mainly determined the poetry of the seventeenth century.**
- **John Donne was one of the most prominent literary figures of the early seventeenth century. He began to write serious religious literature when he became the dean of St. Paul's. Donne's poetry was so influential that it was considered as the basis of the metaphysical school of poetry.**
- **According to some critics Donne writes in distinct personas without any regard to consistency. His earlier poems were those of a witty courtier seeking favor and patronage while his later poems were concerned with theology and personal salvation.**
- **Although John Milton's poetry represents only about one-fifth of his total literary production, the prose works are more obscure, largely because he wrote in genres that no longer appeal to a large audience.**
- **During the Age of sensibility, literature reflected the worldview of the Age of Enlightenment (or Age of reason) – an approach to religion, society, economy and politics that was rational and scientific.**
- **Towards the eng of the eighteenth century, The castle of Otranto, a novel by Horace Walpole created the Gothic fiction genre, which was a combination of horror and romance.**
- **European literature of the eighteenth century refers to poetry, drama and novels written in the continent during that age.**
- **John Dryden (1631-1700) was an English Poet, literary critic, dramatist and leader in Restoration Comedy. He was the writer of several plays, of which Marriage A-La-Mode (1672), was a comedy and All for Love (1678), a tragedy.**
- **The play Marriage A-La-Mode (1672) was followed by Dryden's unsuccessful work on the theme of Paradise Lost, The State of Innocence, staged in 1674. After 1676, he began to use blank verse, and he produced his best play, All for Love in 1678.**
- **Following the revolution of 1688 John Dryden lost his Laureateship when William III occupied the throne. He refused to take an oath of allegiance and he lost favor in court due to his politics and religion.**
- **The Rape of the Lock is considered the best example of mock-Heroic verse in the English Language. Written in heroic couplets, the poem was probably composed during the late summer of 1711 and first published in the May edition of Linton's Miscellany in 1712.**
- **The nineteenth century was marked by the accession to the British throne by Queen Victoria in 1837. Poetry at the beginning of this period had been refreshed as well as sometimes muddied by two generations of Romantic innovation.**
- **Twentieth century English literary history underwent a change in poetic essence and experience. This was significant as it dismissed the view of poetry represented by Palgrave's Golden Treasury (first published in 1864 and used as a school textbook in Britain well into the 1930s) in favor of the view which looked upon poetry as intellectual, logical and analytical.**
- **The career of William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) represents the history of English poetry in his lifetime. He was influenced by Spenser, Shelley, Rossetti and the aesthetic movement of the late nineteenth century.**
- **Yeats spent a considerable time in London where he got a chance to interact with the younger English poets.**
- **Yeats hated Victorian science and he felt that it had made belief in orthodox Christianity impossible so he continually sought for a new religion, at first an aesthetic religion, 'almost an infallible church of poetic tradition, of a fardel of stories, and of personages, and of emotions, inseperable from their first expression passed on from the generation to generation by poets and painters with some help from philosophers and theologians'**

..7 KEY TERMS

- **Deism: The belief, based solely on reason, in a God who created the universe and then abandoned it, assuming no control over life.**
- **Heroic couplet: It is a tradition form for English poetry, commonly used for epic and narrative poetry.**
- **Neo-classicism: A revival in literature in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, characterized by a regard for the classical ideals of reason, for, and restraint.**

..8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. **List the major developments that took place in the seventeenth century.**
2. **Write a short note on the writings of John Donne.**
3. **What is your opinion on The Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock?**

Long-Answer Questions

1. **Explain the concept of Hell in Paradise Lost.**
2. **How was Rape of the Lock regarded by the critics of the eighteenth century?**
3. **Describe the significance of nature in Ode to the West Wind.**

1.9 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. **During the general crisis, in seventeenth century, the European politics was dominated by Louis XIV of France.**
2. **Ben Johnson was one of the major critics of John Donne.**
3. **First disobedience in the poem Paradise Lost refers to not obeying God's command when he forbade Adam and Eve from eating the fruit of the Tree of life.**
4. **In paradise lost, the people of Israel have been referred to as the chosen p1.10eople all through the Bible.**
5. **Daniel Defoe wrote Robinson Crusoe in 1719.**
6. **The Rape of the Lock was composed during the late summer of 1711.**
7. **Belinda's guardian Sylph is Ariel. He is responsible for sending her the various dreams.**
8. **Belinda's puckish protectors warn her about some dread event that will happen to her that day. They can tell her nothing more besides this and conclude by saying that she should be beware of Man.**
9. **The lotus-Eaters was written By Tennyson.**
10. **Tennyson's most controlled and perfectly wrought dramatic monologue is Ulysses.**
11. **The two leaders who were responsible for dramatic change in twentieth century English literary history are T.S Eliot and Ezra Pound.**
12. **The epigraph is taken from Dante's Inferno, Canto XXVII, lines 61-66.**

1.10 FURTHER READING

A.B Abrams (Ed). (1975). The English Romantics. New York: Oxford university press.
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Hough, G. (1965). The Romantic Poets. London: Hutchinson.
Kumar, Shiv K. (2003). British Victorian Literature. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers.

2.4 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that:

- **Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London, Circa 1343. His parents were Johnson Chaucer and Agnes Copton. His father was a wealthy wine merchant and second-in-command to the King's butler.**
- **There are no authoritarian records of his early life and learning. However, it can supposed from his works that he had the knowledge of French, Latin and Italian languages.**
- **Chaucer passed away on 25 October 1400 and was buried at the entry of the chapel of St. Benedict in South Transept.**
- **The Canterbury Tales in a frame story, or rather, stories within a story. Chaucer informs us, within the Prologue, about the framework of the plot.**
- **Chaucer's characters are extremely fascinating and life-life. In Canterbury tales, we come across dishonest people like the merchant, the foul-mouthed miller and the reeve (senior government official).**
- **The character, who is closest to reality, is the Wife of Bath. She is a widow from the city of Bath who is neither all good nor all bad.**
- **Chaucer also displays his sense of humour by making comments on the lack of hygiene during the period by drawing the character of a cook named Roger.**
- **The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales marks the attainment of Chaucer's ripeness as a poet. It is one of the most important pieces of literature ever written.**
- **The narrator starts the portrayal of his characters with the Knight followed by the Prioress, the Monk, the Friar, the Squire and the Yeoman, the Merchant, the Clerk and the Man of Law, the Franklin, the Guildsmen and the Cook, the Shipman and the physician, the Wife of Bath, the Parson and the Plowman, the Miller, the Manciple and the Reeve, the Summoner and the Pardoner.**
- **Though researchers are of the opinion that Shakespearean sonnets were written between 1592 and 1593, the exact time of writing the sonnets was not clear.**
- **With just a small number of exceptions- Sonnets 99, 126 and 145- Shakespeare's poetry follows the English form of sonnet.**
- **Shakespeare's 154 sonnets, in grouping, are frequently explained as a serious. This is often categorized into two parts. Sonnets 1-126 basically deal with a young man and the speaker's friendship with him. Sonnets 127-152 talk about the speaker's friendship with a woman.**
- **The English sonnet series touched the climax of its fame in the 1590s during which time Astrophel and Stella (1591) by Sir Philip Sidney was commonly celebrated as the foremost literary piece of the day.**
- **The fervour, passion and emotional vibrancy of the lyrics have induced a lot of readers and critics over the centuries into thinking that these must certainly be based on memories. In any condition, no proof survives to prove that this is the case.**
- **Sonnet 60 is contemplation or transience. Sonnet 60 is symbolic of 60 minutes in an hour just as 12 marks the twelve hours of the day.**
- **Sonnet 60 endeavours to explain the nature of time as it passes by and the kind of impact that it has no one's life.**
- **Sonnet 73 received sharp criticism by many critics but still it is known as one of his best sonnets.**
- **This sonnet's theme is the inter-relation of old age and death. The poet has used the metaphor of autumn leaves which fall from the trees.**
- **The poem can be compared to John Keats' Ode to Autumn, where he glorifies autumn season because of its ripeness and maturity.**

- **Shakespeare is concerned with the reality of death. But his intention is not to make his readers afraid of death rather he emphasizes on the power and force of love which will be remaining behind only when death captures body.**
- **Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than a likeness, i.e., something is said to be that which it only resembles e.g., 'I fall upon the thorns of life' (Shelley's Ode to the West Wind). 'the very honey of earthly joy' (Cowley's The Wish).**
- **Sonnet 73 is highly metaphorical. The poem is full of metaphors; it grows with the growth of metaphors each implying something different.**
- **The poem seems to be personal journey of poet from youth to old age. Shakespeare also seems to be depressed by the adverse effects of time and old age but he gives a remedy at the end of it that only true love can survive even at the end of your life.**
- **Overall, the structure and use of metaphors are two connected entities toward the overall progression within the sonnet. Seen as harsh critic on age, Shakespeare sets up the negative effects of aging in the three quantities of this poem.**

2.5 KEY TERMS

- **Renaissance: The period in European history from about the 14th through 16th centuries regarded as making the end of the Middle Ages and featuring major cultural and artistic change.**
- **Elizabethan Era: The time associated with the queen of England, Elizabeth I. The Elizabethan Era was named after the rule of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603).**
- **Metaphor: Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than likeness, i.e., something is said to be that which it only resembles.**
- **Prologue: An introductory part of a play. It gives information to the audience about the play.**
- **Sonnet: Originated in Italy, it is a lyric poem of fourteen lines.**

2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

1. **Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), one of the greatest poets of the Middle Ages, is known as the Father of English Literature. Chaucer was active in developing Middle English in a time when French and Latin were dominant languages in use. While court poetry was being written in Latin and Anglo-Norman, Chaucer was writing in English. The Decasyllabic couplet that Chaucer used in most of the Canterbury Tales later developed into the heroic couplet. The heroic couplet was generally used for epic and narrative poetry in English. Chaucer was the pioneer in using the iambic pentameter.**
2. **Chaucer's characters are extremely fascinating and life-like. In Canterbury Tales, we come across dishonest people like the merchant, the foul- mouthed miller and the reeve (senior government official). The reeve proves to be a thief, the merchant is about to go bankrupt and the miller cheats his customers while weighing the grains.**
3. **He is fond of hunting and has a lot of horses.**
4. **The narrator now goes on to give an account of the Prioress, that is, madame Eglentyne.**
5. **The wife of Bath is perhaps Chaucer's most attractive character who has gone down in the pages of history.**
6. **Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets.**
7. **Shakespeare's consisted of three quatrains and one couplet.**
8. **Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than a likeness; this has been increasingly used in Sonnet 73.**
9. **This sonnet's theme is the inter-relation of old age and death.**

2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. **Give a brief biography of Geoffrey Chaucer.**
2. **Write short notes on the Prioress, Monk and Friar as represented in The Canterbury Tales.**
3. **Write a brief note on the characteristics of Shakespeare's sonnets.**

Long-Answer Questions

1. **'Chaucer's characters represent the society of medieval Europe'. Do you agree with the statement? Justify your answer.**
2. **Analyse Chaucer's narrative art in The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.**
3. **Explain sonnet 60 of Shakespeare.**

2.8 FURTHER READING

Strohm, P. (1989). Social Chaucer. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Lee, P. (1991). Chaucer and the Subject of History. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Patersoon, D. (2010). Reading Shakespeare's Sonnnets: A New commentary. London: Faber & Faber.

UNIT 3 SHAKESPEARE

2.3 SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

Though researchers are of the opinion that Shakespearean sonnets were written between 1592 and 1593, the exact time of writing the sonnets was not clear. His friend's had a few of his sonnets in text from as early as 1598. In 1599, two of these 138 and 144 were printed in The Passionate Pilgrim, a collection of verses by various poets.in 1609, the sonnets as we know them were printed by Thomas Thorpe as Shakespeare's Sonnets. Since this anthology has numerous errors, academicians are of the opinion that the proof has probably not gone through Shakespeare's hands ever. Yet Thorpe's edition is the foundation for all modern works.

With just a small number of exceptions- Sonnets 99, 126 and 145- Shakespeare's poetry follows the English form of sonnet. All sonnets are a fourteen-line poem in iambic pentameter, differentiated into four parts: three quatrains, or groups of four lines, followed by a couplet of two lines. Characteristically, a dissimilar-through linked- idea finds its appearance in every quatrain. The reasoning or subject of the poem is summarized or generalized in the concluding couplet. It is noteworthy that more than a few of Shakespeare's couplets do not have this typical characteristic. Shakespeare did, in any case, bring the conservative English sonnet rhyme 'abab, cdcd, efef, gg' into exercise.

Shakespeare's 154 sonnets, in grouping, are frequently explained as a series. This is often categorized into two parts. Sonnets 1-126 basically deal with a young man and the speaker's friendship with him. Sonnets 127-152 talk about the speaker's friendship with a woman. Only in some of the poems in the first collection, it is evident that the human being referred to is a gentleman. Furthermore, most of the poems in the series taken in totality are not straightforward addresses to another human being. The two concluding sonnets, 153 and 154, are open translations of traditional verses about Cupid. Certain critics are of the opinion that they meet a scrupulous objective- although they donot have the same opinion about what this maybe – but more than a few others see them as being non-considerate.

The English sonnet series touched the climax of its fame in the 1950s during which time Astrophel and Stella (1591) by Sir Philip Sidney was commonly celebrated as the foremost literary piece of the day. It inspired several English poets to create their own sonnet compilations as well. All these, which also contained Shakespeare's sonnets, are fairly obligated to the literary conferences, established by the Canzoniere-a sonnet series created by the fourteenth century Italian poet Petrarch. By the time Shakespeare started composing sonnets, an anti-Petrarchan conference had begun. It passed satirical comments or was known to make use of conventional motifs and methods. Critics of Shakespeare's sonnets often draw contrasts between these and the ones of his precursors and contemporaries. It constitutes Sidney, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, Samuel Daniel and Edmund Spenser.

The crux of the twentieth century critical remarks on the sonnets, in any case, is their subjects and poetic method. Analysis of official elements in the poems comprises surveys of the rhetorical tools, syntax and diction that Shakespeare employed here. The many and imprecise interpretations of his words and phrases have proved to be particularly fascinating and challenging- both for academicians and common readers. The impediment and indecision of Shakespeare's maetaphorical language is also a critical issue, as is the hard-to-believe variety of tone and mood in the series. Shakespeare's divergences form or alterations of the poetic styles employed by other sonneteers have been a prominent theme of criticism as well.

More than a few of Shakespeare's themes are traditional sonnet topics like love and beauty, and the related motifs of time and change. Although Shakespeare takes care of these subjects in his unique style-most distinguished of these being his poems of love and admiration being addressed not to a fair maiden, but to a young man. He included another theme of fervor: a righteous and nice-looking woman. Reviewers have often drawn attention to Shakespeare's complex and opposing representation of love in the sonnets. Debates have been carried out about the poet's declaration that through his poetries he will make the young man's beauty immortal, leading to his contrasting the critical nature of time. The subjects of friendship and its disloyalty are also critical topics worth deliberation, similar to the nature of the relationships between the poet and the young friend. The indistinct eroticism of the sonnets has affected readers differently. This has been accompanied by the declaration from some critics that the friendship between the two men is asexual and others saying that it is sexual in nature.

The fervor, passion and emotional vibrancy of the lyrics have induced a lot of readers and critics over the centuries into thinking that these must certainly be based on memoirs. In any condition, no proof survives to prove that this is the case. However, people over the centuries have been continually speculating about the substance of these sonnets. Literary critics have been trying to look into them from the angle of 'what they tell us about their inventor'. Furthermore, researchers have tried to identify the individuals who were the real prototypes for the individuals the poet addresses in these poems. The enigma that still persists is that we have no fixed opinion about the degree to which Shakespeare's own knowledge is depicted in these poems are based on actual individuals or are the sole creation of Shakespeare's study, fantasy and understanding of the human spirit.

Inconsistencies and uncertainities can be spotted in Shakespeare's sonnets. These poems present a stiff competition to generalizations and conclusions both in the characteristic and collective forms. Their complex language and differing viewpoints have led to a whole range of interpretations, all of which may at times emerge relevant- even as they are disagreeing with each other. Some reviewers read the sonnets as personal parables. Certainly, commentators maintain that speculating about what these verses indicate about Shakespeare's life, morals and sexuality is an unprofitable literary Endeavour. The readers identify him intimately with all the characters he creates. His vivid thoughts and sentimental emotions take our own undecided feelings regarding questions that concern us all, to the climax: love, friendship, jealousy, hope and dissatisfaction.

2.3.1 Sonnet 60

Sonnet 60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,

So do our minutes hasten to their end;

Each changing place with that which goes before,

In sequent toil all forwards do contend.

Nativity, once on the main of light,

Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,

Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,

And time that gave doth now his gift confound.

Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth

And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,

Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,

And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:

And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,

Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

The sonnet is contemplation on transience. Sonnet 60 is symbolic of 60 minutes in an hour just as 12 marks the twelve hours of the day. After some deliberation, the beloved is mentioned in the final line as one who can be protected from the destruction caused by time. In spite of this assertion, the reader is once again reminded of the fact that everything that is perish at the hands of time. Similarly, our past moves forward as irreversibly as the waves move forward beating incessantly on the shore.

Summary

This sonnet endeavours to explain the nature of time as it passes by and the kind of impact that it has no one's life. In the first quartrain, the speaker, compares the minutes of an hour that pass by so quickly just as the waves that come that strike 'pebbled shore' in a regular sequence replacing one after the another. In the second quartrain, the speaker compares the journey of a human being with that of the sun. When an infant is born ('Nativity'), it rises over the ocean meaning he/she grows up ('the main of light'), then crawls upward towards noon (the 'crown' of maturity')- attains maturity, then suddenly his fortunes get affected by the 'crooked eclipses', which fight against and amaze the sun's glory. In the third quatrain, time is compared with a devastating monster which cuts short youthful bloom, creates wrinkles on the forehead, greedily eats the wonders of nature and trims down with his scythe everything that is standing strong. The speaker also emphasizes the point that his verse will be able withstand the test of time and thus, will continue to admire the 'worth' of the beloved regardless of the 'cruel hand' of time.

Commentary

This sonnet is written in a systematic manner and follows the quatrain/quatrain/quatrain/ couplet structure that characterizes the Shakespearen sonnet. Shakespeare in every quatrain has made use of a metaphor to explain the passage of time in human life. The metaphor, used in the first quatrain, is that of the tide. Just as the waves move forward and replace one another on the beach, in the same manner, minutes struggle forward in 'sequent toil'. In the second quatrain, the metaphor used is that of sun during the day. In the third quatrain, the metaphor takes the form of a personified force, a devastating monster, who plows trenches in beauty, gulps down nature, and cuts down all that stands with his scythe.

This is one of the most popular sonnets and probably the best description of the theme of the ravage of time. Every quatrain deals with the theme is an exception manner with the destructive force of time increasing with each consecutive lines. Even though the poet knows that destruction caused by Time is unavoidable yet the poet is optimistic that his literary writing (verse) will stand the test of Time.

in quatrain one the flow of time is contrasted with the ceaseless thumping of the waves against a shore, each wave building in force and then crushing down again only to be followed by another in its place. The second quatrain draws on the sun as a metaphor for human life: it is born (Nativity0 and 'crawls' (like a baby) until it reaches its highest point, whereupon it is 'crown'd' (with maturity) and then advances to fall back into darkness or death. Line 8 ends the metaphor with the affirmation that Time both gives the gift of life and takes it away again. This sentiment is reiterated in lines 9-12, with great emphasis. Time wipes out the accomplishments of youth: he digs deep wrinkles in a beautiful face and devours the preciousness of nature in its most perfect shape- 'And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.' (Time and Death each were often pictured carrying a scythe). However, the final couplet delves into the poet's intention to overcome Time himself, challenging his 'cruel hand'.

2.3.2 Form and Structure

Sonnet 60 exhibits the conventional attributes of a Shakespearean sonnet-three quatrains and a couplet written in iambic parameter with an ABAB CDCD EFEF GG rhyme scheme. In fact, Helen Vendler calls Sonnet 60 'one of the perfect examples of the 4-4-4-2 Shakespearean sonnet form'. According to Vendler, 'Each quatrain introduces a new and important modification in concept and tone, while the couplet- here a 'reversing' couplet contradicting the body of the sonnet- adds yet a fourth dimension.' In other words, Vendler is of the opinion that each section of the poem provides new insight and content; hence, there are four distinctive parts or 'dimensions' of the sonnet-each quatrain is not merely presenting the same idea, while the couplet is not just summarizing the quatrains. However, sonnet 60 contains distinctive characteristics, such as several trochees, which differentiate it from some of Shakespearean's other sonnets and further assist to build up the main ideas of the sonnet. Shakespeare's sonnets generally contain iambs, feet that have an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, but Sonnet 60 includes several trochees, feet that have stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. Vendler writes that the first two lines of the sonnet begin with trochees, which 'draw attention to the hastening of the waves, the attacks by eclipses and by Time, and the countervailing praising by verse.' According to Robert Arbour, after these initial trochees, Shakespeare ends each of these first two lines with a 'calm, iambic meter'.

2.3.3 Analysis and Criticism

This poem has many opposing images, like time, conflict, and the sea. According to Stephen Booth's criticism of Sonnet 60, the poet has made use of various battle ground words to signify the battle that the speak wages against time in his attempt to be one with the youth. The words chosen by Shakespeare such as toil, transfix, fight, contend, glory, confound, and scythe all suggest a fierce clash to which the speaker finds himself permanently attached.

The poet explains the third quatrain as the deprivation of his fascination's beauty, the weapons that time systematically uses to slowly cut down what the speaker regards valuable in a severe blow. The comprehensiveness of time's destruction is made comprehensible as if man's beauty and goodness are created only for time to annihilate.

2.3.4 Sonnet 73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold

When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang

Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,

Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

In me thou seest the twilight of such day

As after sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death's second self, that seals up all inrest.

In me thou seest the glowing of such fire

That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,

As the deathbed whereon it must expire

Consumed with that which it was nourished by.

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,

To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

Sonnet 73 received sharp criticism by many critics but still it is known as one of his best sonnets. Theme is not entirely different from other sonnets as it also talks of ravages of time, transience of life, mortality, old age, destructive nature of time, but the tone of the poem is introspective and pensive. The sonnet is pensive in tone, and although it is written to a young friend. It is written to a young friend. It is wholly introspective until the final couplet, which finally turns to the person who is addressed 'thou' in one line.

This sonnet's theme is the inter-relation of old age and death. The poet has used the metaphor of autumn leaves which fall from the trees. Old age is also like those 'yellow leaves' which fall from the branches of life. The poem deals with the inevitability of death. This poem is addressed to a lover whom the poet informs about mortality of life. The poem is relevant to each and every age in history and even today as it talks of universal truth.

Every one during his life span feels the difficulties of old age. Throughout his sonnet, Shakespeare wants his audience to observe and analyze the outcomes and blemishes of old age. In the first quatrain, the poet tells his beloved that his age is like a 'time of year', like autumn season when leaves completely fall from the trees and weather grows cold and birds also leave their branches.

The poem can be compared to John Keats' Ode to Autumn, where he glorifies autumn season because of its ripeness and maturity. Every one celebrates spring but Keats sings and celebrates autumn unconventionally as this is the season when fruits get ripened, crops are stored in granary and farmers sit idle. This season has its own charm and value. If everyone sings celebrate the blossoming of flowers and chipring of birds, who will sing about autumn.

But here, Shakespeare seems to be haunted by traumatic effects of old age. He informs the readers about inevitable relationship of old age and death. This sonnet also remind us of modern poet W.B Yeats who in his poem Sailing to Byzantium mentions that old age is like a 'tattered coat', he looks like a scarecrow. He is not befitting for carnal pleasures. That is why, he appeals to the readers to go to a city of Byzantium which stands for immortality of art. Byzantium is present day Ithaca. Yeats is emphasizing on immortality of art in theform of a golden bird which is eternal. Here also, Shakespeare mentions that in old age, body can no longer bear old, eyes can no longer have clear vision and his age is like late twilight and the remaining light is replacing with darkness which is actually 'Death's Second Self'. As a result, when night approaches, this faded light also goes away and complete darkness is pervaded which finally results in death.

Thus the poet beautifully uses the metaphor of 'yellow leaves' and autumn season. The poet traces all moments in approaching old age. Speaker compares himself to the glowing remnants of fire which lies on the ashes of his youth. And in the final stage, youth disappears forever as the fire goes out and life is extinguished from the strength of youth and old age finally, prevails youth.

Shakespeare is concerned with the reality of death. But his intention is not to make his readers afraid of death rather he emphasizes on the power and force of love which will be remaining behind only when death captures body. Thus life is short-lived and transient but only the song of true love can respond to death as love is not a slave to time; it does not yield to the power of time and ages.

The closing couplet is like an admonition as it focuses on the fruitful nature of love' only love can strengthen the power of knowledge and only love can bear the adverse consequences led by the assault of old age. It is not clear from the sonnet whether he is pinpointing his growing age or his lover's but the poem is applicable to one and all as it is based on inevitability of death. The poem also reminds us of John Donne's Death be Not Proud in which he challenges death unconventionally that it should not feel swollen with pride as mighty kings can even defeat it. But here not might and material can win over death but only true love which never yields to time. The speaker seems to be distressed by his inevitable fate; old age, death and eternal separation from the fair lord.

Use of Metaphor in Sonnet

Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identify rather than a likeness, i.e., something is said to be that which it only resembles, e.g., 'I fall upon the thorns of Life' (Shelley's Ode to the West Wind), 'the very honey of earthly joy' (Cowley's The Wish0. Hamlet's famous soliloquy begins,

"To be or not to be, that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind of suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles

And by opposing end them."

Hamlet is trying to decide which is the nobler course of action, suffering the blows of fortune or fighting them. The third and fourth lines both employ metaphors: outrageous fortune is described in terms of slings and arrows, and troubles are described on terms of a sea. Thus Hamlet's troubles are only his personal feelings of unhappiness but by associating his feelings with such large and chaotic subjects as warfare and the sea, the individual experience is linked with vast and important aspects of life- almost making a huge statement about human experience.

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which similarities of two unlike things are seen as identical. For example, He is a donkey. In smile, the comparison becomes He is like a Donkey. Metaphor is always an implied or compressed comparison. Aristotle is poetics claims that for one to master the use of metaphor is '…a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar.' In Macbeth, 'There is daggers in man's smile', the implication is 'Men conceal enmity beneath their apparent good will as man might conceal a dagger under cloak'.

Sonnet 73 is highly metaphorical. The poem is full of metaphors: it grows with the growth of metaphors each implying something different. The first quatrain focuses on the metaphor of winter day and emphasizes the harshness and emptiness of old age. As winter's cold breeze is unbearable, old body is also unable to bear the cold. In the second quatrain, the metaphor shifts to twilight which does not emphasize on the chill of old age bur rather the gradual fading of light of youth. Both the metaphors and employed by the poet talk something of cyclic nature as cold can turn into hot and dark can turn into light but old stage is the final stage which only mingles with death. Winter follows Spring and Spring will follow Winter surely and after the Twilight fades, dawn comes next definitely but in human life youth will never come back again.

The poem is highly remarkable because of its abundant use of metaphors. Metaphor employed by the poet is not only deco rational but rather thematic. Different variety of metaphors gives the poem aestheticism. The poem received criticism because of its complexity. The poem seems to be the personal journey of poet from youth to old age. Shakespeare also seems to be depressed by the adverse effects of time and old age but he gives a remedy at the end of it that only true love can survive even at the end of your life.

Overall, the structure and use of metaphors are two connected entities toward the overall progression within the sonnet. Seen as a harsh critic on age, Shakespeare sets up the negative effects of aging in the three quatrains of this poem. These aspects not only take on a universal aspect from the symbols, but represent the inevitability of a gradual lapse in the element of time in general from their placement in the poem. Further, many of the metaphors utilized in this sonnet were personified and overwhelmed by this connection between the speaker's youth and death bed. This inevitability leads to the purpose and transformation experienced from our author by the final lines of the poem. A deeper appreciation for his lover in spite of his narcissistic views towards death serves as the overall rationale behind Sonnet 73.

ACTIVITY

Whom do you think can be compared with Shakespeare in the modern times?

Did You Know

Sonnet 73 is one of the best known sonnets of Shakespeare.

2.4 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that:

- **Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London, Circa 1343. His parents were Johnson Chaucer and Agnes Copton. His father was a wealthy wine merchant and second-in-command to the King's butler.**
- **There are no authoritarian records of his early life and learning. However, it can supposed from his works that he had the knowledge of French, Latin and Italian languages.**
- **Chaucer passed away on 25 October 1400 and was buried at the entry of the chapel of St. Benedict in South Transept.**
- **The Canterbury Tales in a frame story, or rather, stories within a story. Chaucer informs us, within the Prologue, about the framework of the plot.**
- **Chaucer's characters are extremely fascinating and life-life. In Canterbury tales, we come across dishonest people like the merchant, the foul-mouthed miller and the reeve (senior government official).**
- **The character, who is closest to reality, is the Wife of Bath. She is a widow from the city of Bath who is neither all good nor all bad.**
- **Chaucer also displays his sense of humour by making comments on the lack of hygiene during the period by drawing the character of a cook named Roger.**
- **The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales marks the attainment of Chaucer's ripeness as a poet. It is one of the most important pieces of literature ever written.**
- **The narrator starts the portrayal of his characters with the Knight followed by the Prioress, the Monk, the Friar, the Squire and the Yeoman, the Merchant, the Clerk and the Man of Law, the Franklin, the Guildsmen and the Cook, the Shipman and the physician, the Wife of Bath, the Parson and the Plowman, the Miller, the Manciple and the Reeve, the Summoner and the Pardoner.**
- **Though researchers are of the opinion that Shakespearean sonnets were written between 1592 and 1593, the exact time of writing the sonnets was not clear.**
- **With just a small number of exceptions- Sonnets 99, 126 and 145- Shakespeare's poetry follows the English form of sonnet.**
- **Shakespeare's 154 sonnets, in grouping, are frequently explained as a serious. This is often categorized into two parts. Sonnets 1-126 basically deal with a young man and the speaker's friendship with him. Sonnets 127-152 talk about the speaker's friendship with a woman.**
- **The English sonnet series touched the climax of its fame in the 1590s during which time Astrophel and Stella (1591) by Sir Philip Sidney was commonly celebrated as the foremost literary piece of the day.**
- **The fervour, passion and emotional vibrancy of the lyrics have induced a lot of readers and critics over the centuries into thinking that these must certainly be based on memories. In any condition, no proof survives to prove that this is the case.**
- **Sonnet 60 is contemplation or transience. Sonnet 60 is symbolic of 60 minutes in an hour just as 12 marks the twelve hours of the day.**
- **Sonnet 60 endeavours to explain the nature of time as it passes by and the kind of impact that it has no one's life.**
- **Sonnet 73 received sharp criticism by many critics but still it is known as one of his best sonnets.**
- **This sonnet's theme is the inter-relation of old age and death. The poet has used the metaphor of autumn leaves which fall from the trees.**
- **The poem can be compared to John Keats' Ode to Autumn, where he glorifies autumn season because of its ripeness and maturity.**
- **Shakespeare is concerned with the reality of death. But his intention is not to make his readers afraid of death rather he emphasizes on the power and force of love which will be remaining behind only when death captures body.**
- **Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than a likeness, i.e., something is said to be that which it only resembles e.g., 'I fall upon the thorns of life' (Shelley's Ode to the West Wind). 'the very honey of earthly joy' (Cowley's The Wish).**

- **Sonnet 73 is highly metaphorical. The poem is full of metaphors; it grows with the growth of metaphors each implying something different.**
- **The poem seems to be personal journey of poet from youth to old age. Shakespeare also seems to be depressed by the adverse effects of time and old age but he gives a remedy at the end of it that only true love can survive even at the end of your life.**
- **Overall, the structure and use of metaphors are two connected entities toward the overall progression within the sonnet. Seen as harsh critic on age, Shakespeare sets up the negative effects of aging in the three quantities of this poem.**

2.5 KEY TERMS

- **Renaissance: The period in European history from about the 14th through 16th centuries regarded as making the end of the Middle Ages and featuring major cultural and artistic change.**
- **Elizabethan Era: The time associated with the queen of England, Elizabeth I. The Elizabethan Era was named after the rule of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603).**
- **Metaphor: Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than likeness, i.e., something is said to be that which it only resembles.**
- **Prologue: An introductory part of a play. It gives information to the audience about the play.**
- **Sonnet: Originated in Italy, it is a lyric poem of fourteen lines.**

2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

10. **Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400), one of the greatest poets of the Middle Ages, is known as the Father of English Literature. Chaucer was active in developing Middle English in a time when French and Latin were dominant languages in use. While court poetry was being written in Latin and Anglo-Norman, Chaucer was writing in English. The Decasyllabic couplet that Chaucer used in most of the Canterbury Tales later developed into the heroic couplet. The heroic couplet was generally used for epic and narrative poetry in English. Chaucer was the pioneer in using the iambic pentameter.**
11. **Chaucer's characters are extremely fascinating and life-like. In Canterbury Tales, we come across dishonest people like the merchant, the foul- mouthed miller and the reeve (senior government official). The reeve proves to be a thief, the merchant is about to go bankrupt and the miller cheats his customers while weighing the grains.**
12. **He is fond of hunting and has a lot of horses.**
13. **The narrator now goes on to give an account of the Prioress, that is, madame Eglentyne.**
14. **The wife of Bath is perhaps Chaucer's most attractive character who has gone down in the pages of history.**
15. **Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets.**
16. **Shakespeare's consisted of three quatrains and one couplet.**
17. **Metaphor is a figure of speech of comparison stating an identity rather than a likeness; this has been increasingly used in Sonnet 73.**
18. **This sonnet's theme is the inter-relation of old age and death.**

2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

4. **Give a brief biography of Geoffrey Chaucer.**
5. **Write short notes on the Prioress, Monk and Friar as represented in The Canterbury Tales.**

6. **Write a brief note on the characteristics of Shakespeare's sonnets.**

Long-Answer Questions

4. **'Chaucer's characters represent the society of medieval Europe'. Do you agree with the statement? Justify your answer.**
5. **Analyse Chaucer's narrative art in The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.**
6. **Explain sonnet 60 of Shakespeare.**

2.8 FURTHER READING

Strohm, P. (1989). Social Chaucer. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Lee, P. (1991). Chaucer and the Subject of History. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

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Unit 3 RENAISSANCE AND METAPHYSICAL POETS

Structure

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you studied some of the literary writings of Chaucer and Shakespeare.

Literature as a term is used to describe whatever is written or spoken. It basically comprises creative writing, innovative style and imagination. Literature has various forms; some popular ones are fiction, drama, prose and poetry. Following the death of Shakespeare, the poet and playwright Ben Jonson became the primary literary figure of the Jacobean Era. His characters personified the Theory of Humours. As per theory, behavioural differences are given rise to form the existence of one of the body's four humours (blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile). Jonson was a ruler of style and an excellent satirist. Volpone by him displayed the ways in which a bunch of scammers were made fool of by a renowned con-artist, vice being punished by vice and virtue being rewarded. Other than Shakespeare, who soared over the initial seventeenth century, the primary poets of the early seventeenth century included John Donne and the other metaphysical poets.

Under the influence of continental Baroque, besides adopting as his subject matter a combination of Christian mysticism and eroticism, metaphysical poetry and irregular or unpoetic metaphors.

John Donne is the master of conceits and analogies. In his poem, A Valediction Forbidding Mourning, he uses the conciet of compass. Husband and wife are parting from each other and the two ends of a compass embody this couple. The more the distance, the more they are tilted towards each other which actually

strengthens their love. If the wife is shedding tears, husband says that she is shedding his blood and if she will sigh in despair and distress, she will sigh away his soul. A conceit is that stylistic device by which the poet can show similarity even between most dissimilar things. As in the poem Flea is based on a conceit by which a flea is termed as a 'marriage bed'. Unusual images are coined together in his poems.

With the declining years of the Renaissance Queen had waned the patriotic unity of the country, and the wisdom necessary to cement the factions and to review patriotic fervor was not possessed by the new king. The people resented the new taxes made necessary by the Monarch's lavish expenditures and resented the attempted at an alliance with Spain through the betrothal of the King's son Charles.

John Milton got famous for his Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained and Areopagitica. When Scotland proclaimed Charles II the king of Ireland, Scotland and England, Cromwell immediately took steps to break Scotland's resistance succeeding in his purpose by 1651. The place of the provisional Rump, expelled in 1683, was taken by the Nominated or 'Barebone's' Parliament. Upon cromwell's death (1658) there succeeded a period of strife, under his son Richard. Finally the Parliament voted (1660) to restore the monarchy with Charles II as King. It was during this period that poets like Thomas Gray and Alexander Pope made a mark with their literary writings.

3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- **Explain the metaphysical conceit used by John Donne**
- **Analyse the epic Paradise lost**
- **Describe the characteristics of an epic**
- **Explain the autobiographical elements in Paradise Lost**
- **Discuss the concept of hell in the poem**
- **Assess the character of satan**
- **Describe the theme of Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard**
- **Identify the mock-heroic style of the Lock**

3.2 JOHN DONNE

John Donne was born in the Elizabethan England. He was born into a religious Catholic family in 1572. He was an extremely devout man who was persecuted as he was a Christian. Though Donne is reputed for his sonnets and love songs, he had, in his early life, written religious poetry as well. His love poems and sonnets are marked by the multiplicity of attitudes and moods. Metaphysics is a part of philosophy dealing with any subject that surpasses its traceability through the senses. Therefore, the mind, the time, free will, God and here, love, are all matters of metaphysical thought. The Good Morrow is a key sample of one of Donne's metaphysical poems.

According to John Dryden, Donne, 'He affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign; and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softness of love. In this . . . Mr. Crowley has copied him to a fault.'

Probably, the only writer before Dryden to speak of a certain metaphysical school or group of metaphysical poets is John Donne, Drummond of Hawthorden (1585-1649), who in one of his letters speaks of 'metaphysical ideas and scholastical quidditues."

3.2.1 Characteristics of Metaphysical Poetry

Metaphysical poetry is a kind of poetry that lays stress on the belief that the logical aspects rules the emotional; signified by sarcasm, absurdity and extraordinary comparisons of unlike features; the latter often being fanciful, to the limit of peculiarity. 'Metaphysical poets' was s term for the first time by the eighteenth century poet and critic Dr. Samuel Johnson. He considered a certain group of poets, metaphysical, because he wanted to portray a loose group of British lyric poets who belonged to the seventeenth century. These poets were generally interested in metaphysical issues and had a common method of examining them. Their writings were marked by the innovations of metaphor (these included comparisons known as metaphysical conceits). The changing times had a significant influence on their poetry.

Most of the Donne's poems, such as The Sun Rising, The Good-Morrow and A Valediction: Of Weeping are based on the theme of love and involve a beloved or a pair of lovers. They are represented as complete words unto themselves. The lovers are deeply in love with each other and oblivious to the world around them. Donne uses the analogy to express the extent to which the lovers are involved with each other. They are so engrossed that they forget their surroundings and behave as if they are the only people in existence. Nothing else matters to them except they themselves.

In the Sun Rising, the poet ends the poem by requesting the sun to shine only on his beloved and himself. He tries to convince the Sun by saying that by shinning on the two of them he will actually be shinning on the whole world.

Just like other metaphysical poets, Donne used vanity and analogies to build thematic relations between dissimilar objects. In the Good-Morrow, for instance, the orator uses metaphors brilliantly and employs spheres to jump from the description of the world to a description of globes before going on to describe his beloved's eyes and the flawlessness of their romance. Going beyond mere praise of his lover, the orator compares her to the sphere, where is a shape without faults; a shape that has without corners or edges. By comparing her to a sphere he also draws attention to the way his lover's face now means the world to him, or has come to represent the world. In his work A Valediction: Of Weeping, the orator uses sphere-shaped tears to establish a connection with pregnancy, the moon and the world. This is yet another example of the use of the sphere to demonstrate the perfect personality and physicality of the person being addressed.

3.2.2 The Good Morrow

I wonder by my troth, what thou and I

Did, till we loved? Were we not wean'd till then?

But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly?

Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den?

'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;

If ever any beauty I did see,

Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,

Which watch not one another out of fear;

For love all love of other sights control,

And makes one little room an everywhere.

Let ses-discoverers to new world have gone;

Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;

Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,

And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;

Where can we find two better hemispheres

Without sharp north, without declining west ?

Whatever dies, was not mix'd equally;

If our two loves be one, or thou and I

Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

The Good Morrow is a metaphysical poem consisting of twenty-one lines, divided into three stanzas. The poet speaks to the woman he loves as they wake up after spending the night together. The poem starts with a direct question from the poet to his love. The poet maintains that he and his lover started living only when they fell in love. Earlier, they were just infants at their mother's breasts or were involved in childish 'country pleasures'.

Michael Hall says that the Good Morrow is a chronological and spatial poem. It is with the aid of this poem that the orator exposes his increasing maturity and awareness of his love as a reply to his thrilling passion. The musical theme of the poem reinforces this union. There are few examples that prove that the poem is sequential, such as it goes on from a metaphorical phase of early life in the first stanza, to the dawn of the present in the next stanza and finally in the final stanza, to a never-ending point of view of their association in the times to come. The poetry indicates that is also considers space, as love is at first represented as being confined to 'one little room', or a cave, and later it is expected to expand to fill the whole 'world', and thereafter contracting all this love into a influential force that is contained in the lover's eyes. One can also consider the poem as the achievement of maturity by the storyteller, which can be witnessed in the succession of his life of physical pull to that of pure love, which in the end eagerly waits to conclude in being joined with his lover for perpetuity. Furthermore, a rising awareness is experienced by the storyteller about his love for the beloved. At first, he was in the company of other ladies, and he almost immediately realized that all these ladies just reflected the one that he was infact looking for- the one true lady in his life. As well, the poetry is based on a subject of initiation.

The poem starts with the speaker characteristically sleeping in a cave, just like Plato's analogy. Though, he is lastly released by his woman who makes him go in to the daylight, or the Good Morrow. He is now changed man who is getting increasingly aware of his love for the woman. Furthermore, the narrator stresses this union through the musicality of the verse. At first, the poem is concentrated on the couple with

references that highlight 'we', but ends with sound that highlights 'I'. This is a symbol of the union of the two separate beings into a single 'I'.

Donne's poetry is typically dramatic. A fine method of observing this is to see how the poem begins. In The Good Morrow, the 'I' voice keeps putting fourth questions to which he insists an answer. Although the question put is a semi-rhetorical question-the other person is never allowed a moment to reply! This is in striking contrast to the much gentle second stanza. It begins with a note of confined triumph and finishes with a convincing plea to enjoy their world. There are no uncertainities any more.

Michael Hall, while analyzing the poem, says that, there are but a few people who expresses love as completely as John Donne. Donne, in this poem, makes full use of the innumerable devices of poetry for communicating his appeal message to his beloved. He makes use of structure, symbolic language, prespective and tone that supports the speaker in his undertaking, in a creative manner. In any case, all the characteristics of the poem are not completely evident because of the perceptive references and allusions by the knowledgeable poet. Instances of these elements which have not been clearly brought forth can be seen in the use of 'seven sleepers den' in the first stanza, the discovering metaphors of the second stanza and the semi-circular images used in the last stanza. Superficially, these allusions may appear to have been aimlessly made a part of the central concept. However, as the poem progresses, we will be able to understand that these allusions contribute immensely to further support the poet's message. We will find out that Donne's poetry is of the genre that effectively makes use of the devices in order to increase the poetic capacity of the verse. The intellectual allusions and references enhance narrator's message to his lover.

The structure of the poem is such that it enhances the poet's message to his beloved. It contains three stanzas, each including seven lines. Besides, every stanza has been further divided into a quatrain and a triplet. In his book, John Donne and the Metaphysical Gesture, Judah Stampfer notes that each 'iambic pentameter quatrain is rounded out, not with a couplet, but a triplet with an Alexandrine close a,b,a,b,c,c,c.' This division is not solely reflected in the rhyme scheme, but also in the verse. For example, the quatrain is used for revealing the poets state of mind; whereas, the triplet permits him to ponder on that outlook. Besides, the first stanza methodically makes use of the assonance for reinforcing the term 'we', which is achieved by the long 'e' sound being repeated through different words. For instance, each of these terms have been taken from the first stanza: 'we', 'wean'd'. 'countrey', 'childlishly', 'sleepers', 'fancies', 'bee', 'any', 'beauty', 'see', 'desir'd','dreame', 'thee'. It is evident that far from being a coincidence this is an incredible technique to lay further stress on the two lovers being united as one. In any case, Donne makes use of the assonance for the reverse influence in the final stanza. Rather than concentrating on the couple, the narrator concentrates on himself by the reinforcement of the term 'I'. This is achieved by the long 'I' sound being repeated. For instance, each of these terms can be seen in the third stanza: 'I', 'thine', 'mine', 'finde', 'decining', 'dyes', 'alike', 'die'. Undoubtedly, the long 'e' sound has been used in the third stanza, but it is the long 'I' sound that rules. This results in an evident contradiction to that which the narrator says, besides the musical nature of the poem. From a musical prespective, instead of being primarily focused on the union, the narrator seems to be increasingly concerned with himself.

The symbolic language that Donne uses coupled with the narrator's perspective and the tone, add beauty to the poem. Firstly, one can see the presence of sexual symbolism in the first paragraph. For instance, terms like 'wean'd' and 'suck'd' bring out breast symbols. Such weighty words even enable the identification of 'country pleasures' in the form of metaphor for breasts. One more metaphorical example is the term 'beauty' in line 6 that in fact is the representation of the woman. One can even the notice the presence of 'metaphysical conceits' in the poem. An instance is the semi-circular imagery that represents the lovers in the final paragraph. In the next paragraph, there is an instance of hyperpole where the narrator says 'makes one little room, an everywhere.' This is evidently exaggerated and is physically impossible as well. Paradox has also been used in the poem. As an instance, where the speaker says; 'true plain hearts doe in the faces rest'. Evidently, this phrase is paradoxical since it is impossible for hearts to be resting in faces.

One can also find an instance of metonymy in the final paragraph with the narrator stating: 'My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears'. The narrator here does not actually mean that his face literally appears in his lover's eye, but that she is aware of him. Again, on can see the presence of two allusions in the poem, one with the 'seven sleepers den', the other with the 'hemispheres'. Moreover, an excellent instance of imagery

in the poem exists. One can find an appearance of this in the poem itself, and in the title The Good Morrow. Besides, representing the actual sunrise, it also depicts the birth of The Good Morrow. This is not only represents the physical sunrise, but also symbolizes the birth of an awakened person. Besides, the speaker's perspective is form the first-person viewpoint. In spite of the presence of two persons in the poem, it is only the voice of the male narrator that is prominent. Lastly, the tone is that of casual intimacy. There are hints pertaining to the casual atmosphere of the poem.

This is made evident by taking a glance at the rough language that the narrator uses, like: 'suck'd', 'sonrted' and 'got'. In spite of the roughness, the narrator is evidently infatuated with the women being addressed.

It is possible to interpret the phrase 'seven sleepers den', which is first brought in the poem, in several ways. This phrase may most directly be hinting at a 'Christian and Mohammedan legend of the seven youths of Ephesus who hid in a cave for 287 years so as toavoid pagan persecution during the dawn of Christianity'. Surprisingly, these young people, instead of dying, continued to sleep for the entire period. Therefore, the narrator may possibly by drawing a comparison between the time before they became aware about their love through the term the 'seven sleepers' by saying that they both 'snorted', or continued to sleep, in that which seemed to be a seemingly unending amount of time and between the time when they fully became aware about their love and confessed it to one another. In any case, besides line 4, no allusions exist to carry the comparison further. There is, however, another possibility. In his article 'Plato in John Donne's, 'The Good Morrow', Christopher Nassar makes a proposal that this reference could be exactly referring to Plato's Cave Allegory. Book VII of 'The Republic' gives a description of an earth in which humanity has been held in chains, which have been tied around their legs and necks. They can merely see the reflections on the wall caused by themselves and other objects that block the firelight. Therefore, all the prisoners feel is real is actually all an illusion. They are committing a mistake of thinking about shadows as being 'shadows of shadows for reality'. The analogy goes on with the release of a prisoner and his ascension from the cave to the external world. It is here that he ultimately discovers God, the world's actual fact,as well as the illusionary character of the cave. Donne's narrator continues to draw comparison between his life before love with the imprisonment of Plato's prisoners. Typically, when comparisons are drawn against their present love,'all past pleasures have been merely fancies, and the women he 'desir'd, and got' were merely a 'dream of this one woman.' Finally, on ascending from the cave, he realizes the supreme fact of his lover and no longer has the desire to go back to the lustful cave of the previous times.

The main objective of the exploration metaphors in the second stanza is to continue revealing that the narrator prefers his newly-built association instead of earthly and carnal things. The triplet of the second sparagraph sees the narrator stating that:

Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone,

Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have showne,

Let us possesse one world, each hath one, and is one.

The evident digressing from the topic, in fat, goes on to support the Platonic relationship of the first stanza. Firstly, we should keep in mind the fact that the worldly chasings of Elizabethan England happened to be very different as compared to the current times. Constantly exploring the world happened to be one of the main activities that largely interested the people. Despite its continuing for quite a period of time,it was actually in the 'Elizabethan-Jacobean era' when discovery 'saw its really great floresence'. Moreover, 'with the Thames, the most popular of local thoroughfares and with sailors scattered throughout the city, the average Londoner of Elizabeth's day could hardly help knowing something of ships and sea travel'. However, there were several of this period who had knowledge about the Americas; however, only some had actually gone there. Whatever know-how they had
was insubstantial. This knowledge resulted in the Elizabethans possessing an unclear view of the New world. Thus, such 'new worlds' signify a kind of dream, with them desiring to follow these dreams being directly associated with the illusions of the cave. The narrator sees this famous pastime merely as something being used to pacify slaves. He believes that this is far from being an activity for a liberal like himself. He does not

anymore feel that he needs to be searching for a 'new world' as he claims to have already found it in his being united with his lover. 'In possessing one another, each has gained world enough'.

The semi-circular imagery in stanza three can be translated as something that is both acute in the spatial sense, and associated with a ridiculous Platonic perspective on the basis of mankind. Donne 'collapses his geographical metaphor into the tiny reflection of each lover's face in the other's eye.' Therefore, while he openly confesses his love for his beloved in paragraph tw0, the narrator also goes on to state that it is their eyes which contain their entire world of love. In any case, this perspective turns out to be very tough to be supported on seeing the lines that follow. This is due to Donne's narrator symbolically describing the pair as two different 'hemispheres' in fact signify the eyes. In any case, as the narrator is describing the couple, what might have been more exact would have been the narrator mentioning the four couples instead of two. Moreover, the cardinal point imagery is unclear when this interpretation is being used. Moreover, the semi-circular imagery even bears allusions to an absurd speech that Aristophanes makes in Plato's Symposium.

In his speech, Aristophanes is seen to relate a humorous legend of how mankind originated. Typically, Aristophanes is seen to state that in the starting of time, human beings assumed the shape of a globe. Every 'individual' had four legs, four arms with a single head and a face on each side. According to the story, the Greek God Zeus as a punishment for annoying him made two divisions of every individual, thereby separating them into two different things. However, in spite of being different human beings, they continued to be divine halves who unendingly sought to reunite as one body. This instinct which comes naturally of that of reuniting the halves is how Aristophanes explains love. Thus, Donne's narrator is under the belief that he has found his other half in his beloved, and together they form the original whole. Moreover, this interpretation clarifies the cardinal metaphor. For instance, the narrator states: 'Where can we find two better hemispheres/Without sharp North, without declining West.' The narrator here states the absence of 'North' and 'West' in their new united spherical world. The association will be all but cold, or 'sharp', it will not diminish or be 'declining'. Rather, their relationship will be one which would be warm and filled with eternal love.

On the whole, the poem brings the poetic tools and learned allusions that Donne has so beautifully used, supporting the speaker. First of all, we carried out an analysis of the unique structure and musical elements in the poem. Then we went on to examine the way Donne has made use of the figurative language, perspective and tone for creating a narrator that readers would find easy to believe. Then, we looked closely at 'seven sleepers den' phrase, discovering that it has its roots in both Christian, mythology and Platonic allegory. Then, we went omto gain a clearer comprehension of how Donne has used exploration metaphor in paragraph two. Then we examined the Platonic base for the semi-circular, metaphor in paragraph three. Lastly, we investigated the poem from a holistic viewpoint and realize as to how each of these various elements had their own contribution to the entire message. Therefore, we can conclude by saying that Donne's The Good Morrow is a poem that effectively makes use of tools for maximizing the poetic capacity of the verse. It consists of intellectual references that go on to support the message of the speaker for his lover.'

Uncertainty

The poem seems to conclude on a note of some uncertainity: 'If … or … ' Perchange after all Donne cannot any longer keep up the vanity that nothing will come to change their love or encroach upon it.

3.2.3 The Sun Rising

Busy old fool, unruly sun,

Why dost thou thus,

Through windows, and through curtains call on us?

Must to thy motions lover's seasons run?

Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide.

Late school boys and sour prentices,

Go tell court hunstmen that the king will ride,

Call country ants to harvest offices,

Love, all alike, no season knows nor climr,

Nor hours, days, months which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverned and strong

Why shouldst thou think?

I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,

But that I would not lose her sight so long;

If her eyes have not blinded thine,

Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,

Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine.

Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.

Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,

And thou shalt hear, all here in one bed lay.

She's all states, and all princes, I,

Nothing else is.

Princes do but play us; compared to this,

All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.

Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,

In that the world's contracted thus.

Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be

To warm the world, that's done in warning us.

Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;

This bed thy center is, these walls, thy sphere.

The Sun Rising is a witty and amusing poem. It is light verse, but it is also extremely serious. It is, in fact, a good example of the fact that seriousness is different from solemnity and may be accompanied with a good deal of frivolity. This poem also illustrates Donne's revolt against the artificially and absurdity of the fashionable love poetry of courtly chivalry in which the conceit of the beloved's eyes being regarded as brighter than the sun

had long become a tedious formula. Donne laughs at the hyperboles or the fantastic exaggerations of the courtly poetry by pretending to accept them. He piles hyperbole on hyperbole praises his mistress in the most extravagant manner, but the poem is not intended to be merely satire. It is a genuine and sincere expression of the poet's deep sense of the beauty and perfection of his loved one. Its final objective is to express the poet's feeling of happiness and completeness in the possession of his mistress. She is so all-perfect, all-lovely, all-complete, that she, and she alone, justifies the fantastic hyperboles of courtly poetry.

The poet treats the sun familiar, colloquially, and irreverently. It is one of the paradoxes of the poem that the poet uses the adjective 'unruly' for the sun when the sun is really the standard of order, regulation, and law.

Busy old fool, unruly sun, Why dost thou thus,

Through windows, and through curtains call on us?

But order and rule in the sphere of Nature threaten the pleasure of Love. So the poet rails against the sun. love transcends time, and so the poet-lover feels a scorn for the sun which is an index of passing time. The tones of the poem, and the changes and developments of the tone, are of great importance. The poem begins with a rhetorical arrogant address to the sun. Like many of Donee's poems, this one begins abruptly, with a sharp, surprising colloquial exclamation: 'Busy old fool, unruly Sun.' The poet expresses his contempt for the sun by addressing it as "saucy pedantiv wretch". The reason for this is that the poet, in his joy at his complete possession of his mistress, feels that he possesses, rules, and controls the whole world, and therefore is superior to the sun itself.

The sun, says the poet, may be a source of fear to schoolboys who get late for school, or apprentices who get late for work, or court-huntsmen who get late in repoting to the king whom they have to accompany on a hunting expedition, or country ants who must get busy in collecting grains. But the sun cannot scare lovers because the lovers are no to be governed by the artificial divisions of time. The lovers are indifferent to the rising of the sun because they can go on making love even after the sun has arisen. The lover, further, claims that he can eclipse and darken the sun merely with a wink. The lover has only to close his eyes, and the sunlight exists no more for him and the beloved's eyes are so bright that their light can dazzle the sun.

I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,

But that I would not lose her sight so long;

Normally we are dazzled by the sun's brightness, but here the situation is reversed. In the second stanza the poet continues his boastful tone. The thought of his present good fortune makes him feel great than the world-dominating sun. while expressing this feeling he also manages to pay exquisite compliments to his mistress. The lover asks the sun to go and find out whether the East Indies and the West Indies are still situated at their original location or they have moved from there to lie with him in his bed.

Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine

Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.

Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,

And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

The idea is that the beloved who lies in the bed is a combination of both the East and the West Indies. The East indies were known for their fragrant spices, and the West Indies for their diamond mines. The beloved is fragrant and sweet-smelling like the spices of the East Indies, and she has the lustre and glitter of the diamonds of the West Indies. The mistress sums up in herself all the riches and perfumes of the East and the West. She is the glory of the whole world. Also, the setting of the scene, only implied in the first stanza, is now made more specific.

In the final stanza, the poet not only exalts his mistress but himself:

'*She's all states, and all princes I*'

In other words, she is the whole world and he the supreme ruler of the world. Here is an extravagant conceit, indeed. His tone in speaking to the sun now softens instead of harsh. Let the sun warm the lovers and it will truly be warming the whole world because the lovers are a microcosm of the world. The poet claims that, with a wink of his eyes, he can eclipse and cloud the sun. The beloved who lies in the bed with him is a combination of both the Indies; of spice and men. She thus represents both the East and the West Indies because of her sweet fragrance and her glitter. As for himself he represents all the kings of the world. The beloved is all the kingdoms of the world, and the poet is all the monarch of the world. If the sun shines on the lover's bed-room only, and does not travel to other places, it will still be warming the whole world because their bed-room is a microcosm of the whole world. These are all far-fetched and fantastic ideas.

The poet and his mistress symbolize the whole world and all its rulers. Those who claim to be the rulers of the world are in fact, merely imitating the lovers. Likewise all honour in the world is a shadow of the true honour which belongs to these lovers. All the wealth in the world is, too, an imitation of the wealth which the lovers represent. In other words, these lovers are the true rulers of the world; they are all the honour, and all the wealth of the world, and they are the whole world too. Nothing else exists.

Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;

This bed thy center is, these walls, thy sphere.

What distinguishes Donne's love-poetry is not merely its seriousness but its single mindedness. Everything except their love for one another is shadowy and unsubstantial; everything else exist for him only in so far as it can be related to this, can be made to illustrate this, to throw light upon this. He does not use this experience as a mere-stating point, as a means for investigating and interpreting other experiences: all other experiences, all other universes of discourse, all his ingenious analogies, all his so-called metaphysics, are valuable to him only in so far as they help him to feel and comprehend more clearly and more intensely the essentialness of this experience.

ACTIVITY

Compare the Sun Rising with Marvells's To His Coy Mistress.

Did You Know

John Donne is known as the father of metaphysical poetry.

3.3 PARADISE LOST

The period of 1625-1660 is generally known as the age of Milton in English Literary history. This period marks the end of the Renaissance. It is remarkable for the growth of Reformation and Puritanism. It was an age of piltical and religious strife and civil war. Mrs. Una Former refers to the age of Milton as an age of uncertainity, misgiving, depression, anxiety, frustration, pessimism and inner gloom, and in all these respects a sharp contract to the glorious and exuberant age of Elizabeth when the nation marched ahead in achievements and zest and confidence. Where on one hand the age of Shakespeare lay stress on materialism and power, knowledge and riches, there on the other hand, the age of Milton blended the Renaissance and reformation periods. London still had eminent men of letters, and the court continued to patronize art and learning. But the stress and the strain caused by the civil ultimately led to a decline in literature and later on in social and moral values.

The entire age of Milton is dominated by the civil war. The early years were marked by quarrel and alarms which led up to actual hostilities in 1642; the middle of the period saw occasional fighting that lasted till the execution of Charles-I in 1649; and the last portion covers the establishment of the commonwealth, the rise and disappearance of Cromwell (1653-58), the confusion following upon his death, and the final restoration of monarchy in 1660.

During this period the decline from the high Elizabethan Standard is apparent in several ways. The output of poetry is much smaller, and the fashion is toward shorter poems, the strikingly dignified poetical intensity of the previous age dies. The new poetry plays with fancy and passion and wisdom, blending thought and passion together, bringing to mind farfetched images, from various ideas. In prose, there is a matured sadness that one is generally associates with advancing years.

The poetry of the period is largely lyrical, and Donne and Ben Jonson are the two most outstanding and orginal lyricists of the age. Milton is in a class by himself. Nevertheless, there is a marked decay in the exulted poetical fervor of the previous age. There is a marked increase in prose activity. Milton attempted epics too, and it is as an epic poet that he is more widely known than anything else.

John Milton was born on December 9, 1608. He was the second child of john and sara. John Milton Sr, was a legal secretary and also a composer of church music which was how Milton developed his lifelong love of music. The family's financial prosperity made it possible for Milton to be taught classical languages, first privately home, and then at St. Paul's School from age twelve, in 1620.

In the spring of 1642, Milton married Mary Powell, who was seventeen years younger to him. Even though it was not a happy marriage, Milton had three children with Mary. In February 1652 milton lost his eyesight and later that year in May he lost his wife as well.

Milton married Katherine Woodcock, but this happiness was short-lived also. Milton's daughter Katherine was born in late 1657, but by early 1658, both mother and daughter had passed away.

In 1663, Milton was married again, to Elizabeth Minshull. It was also the year he finished his life's work, the epic, Paradise Lost. It is considered among the greatest works ever to be written in English, the feat is all the more remarkable as it was written inspite of Milton's blindness- he would compose verse upon verse at night in his head and then dictate them from memory to his aides in the morning.

Milton died peacefully of gout in November, 1674.

3.3.1 Literary and Socio-cultural Background of the poem

It was a period of great social changes. There were two divergent trends- the Puritanical trend and emphasizing purity of conduct, religious earnestness and moral virtues and the royalists who were used to immoral living. The puritans wanted to make men honesr and to make them free. The Royalists and country people were victims of various vices; they wanted a spell of free sex and license, a free display of immortality. Whereas from 1642 to 1649 Puritanism saw its heyday, the Restoration profligacy began and held sway after 1660.

In the broadest sense Puritanism may be regarded as the Renaissance of the moral sense of man. The Greco-Roman Renaissance of te fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were largely Pagan and sensuous. It did not touch the moral nature of man; it did nothing for his religious, political and social emancipation. The puritan movement was the greatest movement for moral and political reform. Its aims were: Religious liberty, i.e., that men should be free to worship according to their conscience.

(i) **They should enjoy full civil liberty**
(ii) **Church reform**

The factors responsible for the rise of Puritanism were political as well as social namely the immortality of the king and the court, internal political dissensions, loss of faith, etc.

Milton's great spic Paradise Lost is the product of the Reformation and Renaissance. Here he employs the art and learning of the Renaissance in the service of those religious and moral truths which had now become the dominant factors in his life. The theme of Paradise Lost is based on the Bible, Milton rejects the subjects of King Arthur and his Round Table as the subject of the Fall of Man as told in the Bible. His aim in writing the epic is to stress on outside influences, and justify the ways of God to Men. The theme of the epic is Biblical and is directly traceable to the puritan elements in Milton. But the treatment of the Biblical theme of Puritanism is thoroughly classical.

3.3.2 Detailed Summary

(a) Conversation between Satan and Beelzebub

Milton begins his great epic with an invocation to the heavenly Muse. In this respect he follows the practice of Homer, the Father of epic poetry who started his epics in this manner. The heavenly muse of Milton may be considered as a personification of divine inspiration. He seeks the help of the Muse because he is going to sing about a great subject dealing with the disobedience of Adam and Eve who ate the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil and were therefore, turn out of paradise, their long tale of suffering until they were restored to their original bliss by the sacrifice of Christ. It was this heavenly Muse which on the mountain of Sinai and Horeb who gave inspiration to Moses, the Shepherd, who was called by God to deliver Israel from the domination of the Egyptians. Under her inspiration, moses taught the Israelites who were God's chosen people how the earth rose out of chaos which prevailed everywhere before the creation of the world. Milton appeals to the same heavenly Muse who, according to some authorities, lives on the Sinai Mountain on which Jerusalem was built, or near the Siloa's stream which flows past the temple of Jerusalem, where the oracle of God was heard.

Milton requests the Muse to bestow on him the power to sing of a great subject which has never been attempted before with unparallel sublimity. Miton's idea is to write his poetry in a far superior manner than was ever attempted by the ancient Greeks. He further appeals to God himself, who gives preference to those men whose hearts are pure and honest, to guide and instruct him in his great undertaking. God had always been present even when the whole earth was flooded, and it was He who sat like a dove on the vast Abyss and from the void produced the vegetable world, the birds and animals, the heavenly bodies, and finally the man. Milton appeals to God to drive away his ignorance and weakness and raise him to magnificent heights, so that he may be able to deal adequately with a great subject and thereby prove the justice of the ways of God on this earth.

Milton seeks to describe the cause of the fall of Adam and Eve from Paradise where they were living so comfortably and happily in the company of Lord. He goes on todescribe the occasion on which they disobeyed the will of God and were punished.

When Satan spoke thus, millions of shining swords were drawn out by the rebel angels confirming their commitment. By the sound of their shields they produced a terrible noise of war by which they sent a challenge towards Heaven.

Nearby there was a hill from the top of which fire and smoke was coming out. The rest of it had a glossy surface which indicated that within it there was metallic ore. Towards this a large number of rebel angels flew with speed like some pioneers, who go ahead to throw down a huge wall with their spades and axes. They were led by Mammon, who, of all those spirits that fell from Heaven, could not stand erect. Even in Heaven his eyes were bent downwards because he admired more the riches and gold on the floor of Heaven rather than to enjoy the heavenly vision. It was he who in course of time taught man to dig into the interior of earth for search of gold. His followers soon made a big hole into the hill and brought out gold from it. No one should admire the gold coming out of Hell because it should have better remained undiscovered as the precious metal has proved to be a curse for mankind. Some feel proud of the achievements of man like the great buildings of Babylon and the Pyramids built by Egyptian kings, which ultimately were destroyed in no time, though they were raised with great difficulty. The work of those rebel angels was far superior to that of men because a second group of them with great skill melted the solid ore in the cells made in ground beneath which flowed liquid fire. They separated gold and removed the scum, which rose on the surface. A third group of them with great haste made in the ground a mould of various patterns into each of which molten gold was carried by a strange method as in an organ one puff of wind is transmitted to the various pipes of the organ. Very soon they raised a huge building like a Greek temple with pillars overlaid with golden sculpture. Such a beautiful piece of architecture has never been found anywhere in the world. It looked very majestic and was very spacious. From its roofs many starry lamps which were hanging there as by magic emitted light as it comes from the sky. The rebel angels entered that building and admired the work of Mammon, the great architect, who had built many beautiful buildings in heaven as well. Mammon has been worshipped in various countries of the world and there are many stories currently about his fall from Heaven and so forth. In fact he along with his followers had been sent earlier to Hell than the rebel angels in order to construct buildings there.

3.3.3 Critical Appreciation of the Poem

(a) Origin and History

Aubrey states that *Paradise Lost* was begun in about 1658. Mason believes that the first two books might have been written before the Restoration. The poem was finished in 1663 or 1665. It was first published in 1661 in ten Books. In the second edition of the poem in 1674, Milton divided Books VII

and X into two each, thereby making it an epic of twelve books in the manner of Virgil's epic, *Aeneid.*

Although Milton started writing this poem when he was nearly fifty, yet the imaginative conception of the intended epic was present in his mind from an early age. In 1640-41, he had about a hundred possible subjects, Biblical and historical. Earlier he also thought favourably of the Arthurian romances, but he abandoned romances in favour of the Biblical subject of Man's fall.

(b) Formative Influences

About the influences which shaped this epic, Verity writes, 'We must indeed recognize *in Paradise Lost,* the meeting point of the Renaissance and Reformation periods and the impress of four great influences : the Bible, the Classics, the Italian poets, and English literature. Milton possessed a knowledge of the Bible, such as only a few have had.' There are hundreds of allusions to it; the words of the Scriptures underlie some part of the text of every page of *Paradise Lost;* and apart from verbal reminiscences there is much of the spirit that pervades that noblest achievement of the English tongue. Scarcely less powerful was the influence of the classics. Milton's allusiveness extends over the whole empire of classical humanity and letters, and to the scholar his work is full of the exquisite charm of endless reference to the noblest things that the ancients have thought and. said. That he was deeply versed in Italian poetry the labours of his early editors have abundantly proved: and their comparative studies are confirmed by the frequent mention of Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, Ariosto and others, in his prose works and correspondence. In English literature I imagine that he had read everything worth reading.'

(c) Theme and Subject Matter

The theme of *Paradise Lost* is Man's fall, his redemption through Christ, and the purpose is to justify the ways of God to Man. The epic opens with an account of the fallen angels - Satan and his followers in Hell. The account of the war in Heaven, which resulted in that fall, is given later on along with the account of the Creation of the world. Satan, though defeated, has not lost hope. He encourages his followers; they collect together in Pandemonium to hold a conference to decide upon their future course of action. After much discussion it is decided that they would have their revenge upon God by corrupting the newly created Man. So Satan undertakes a journey to the new world through Chaos, reaches the Earth and the Garden of Eden. He disguises as a serpent, and tempts Eve to taste the fruit of the forbidden tree. He succeeds in seducing Eve, and Adam, despite the warning of God's angel Raphael, tastes the tree of knowledge. He thus commits the Sin of Disobedience. The result is divine punishment. Consequently, there is the loss of Paradise and the Fall of Man. Suffering becomes the lot of Man as a result of this original sin. Satan too is punished in as much as his followers are transformed into hissing serpents.

Milton summarizes the theme and the story of the epic in the opening lines:

'Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit

Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste

Brought death into the world, and all our woes

With loss of Eden, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful seat'

(d) A Classical Epic

Paradise Lost is a classical epic. It has all the common features of the epics of Homer and Virgil. Though it is based upon Christian theology, its frame work is classical. Its design is like that of Homer's *Illiad* and Virgil's *Aeneid.* It is an unbiased narrative poem having the unity of theme and treatment; it has a historical theme, that is, the history of human race. Its characters are super-human — First Man and Woman,

God, Satan and Angels. It is divided into twelve Books; its subject and manner are lofty and grand. The poem begins with an invocation to the Muse. Its similes are epical. It is full of descriptions of the events like other classical epics. There is in this epic an interest in the supernatural. However, the paucity of human actors, and consequent lack of human interest is the basic weakness of this epic.

(e) Characterization

Broadly speaking there are four groups of characters in *Paradise Lost*:

(i) God His Son and His Angels, including Raphael, Michael, Gabriel and Abidel

(ii) Fallen Angels, Satan and his followers, including Beelzebub, Moloch, Belial, Chemon, etc.

(iii) Allegorical or abstract personages, Sin and Death

(iv) Human characters, Adam and Eve

Milton seems to adopt the view of some tragic poets that even the Gods are subject to the decree of Destiny. Satan in his pride exalts himself and the other angels to the rank of God. Although the epic lacks human interest (as Dr. Johnson says), yet Milton has tried to make his God too human. 'The Glory of God', said Solomon, 'is to conceal a thing', 'but the glory of Milton's God is to explain a thing' (Raleigh). God in *Paradise Lost* is too garrulous; he is the tyrant of Heaven whose laws are arbitrary and occasional. The Son of God, Christ of Messiah, as Tillyard points out, represents 'heroic energy', which is devoted to good ends and controlled by reason. While all the other angels keep quiet when God asks them to atone for the sin of Adam, it is the Son who takes it upon himself to suffer for Man and thus redeem him. He is the very embodiment of mercy, reason and energy. The angels are human with additional powers. The fallen angels can contract or expand at will. All of them are imperishable, immortal, and have greater powers of a sixth sense.

As pointed out by Raleigh, 'the epic value *of Paradise Lost* is centered in the character and achievements of Satan. 'Just as the *Iliad* exists for Achilles, and the *Odyssey* for Odysseus, *Paradise Lost* exists for Satan (Abercrombie).' Milton did partly ally himself with Satan.' (Tillyard). Milton's Satan has unending courage and heroism. He never wants to submit. He believes, it is better to rule in hell than to serve in Heaven. He is a lover of liberty. He has the true qualities of leadership. He dominates Books I and U, but after that there is progressive degradation in his character. By his own will he becomes a serpent. Having been defeated, he takes his revenge

upon human beings who have done him no harm, only to annoy the enemy whom he cannot directly attack. This brings him as a spy into the universe. 'From hero to General, General to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bedroom or bathroom windows, and thence to a toad, and finally to a snake—such is the progress of Satan'.

Sin and Death are personified abstractions or allegorical personages. Sin is the daughter of Satan; she comes out of his head fully formed. The lower part of her body is partly serpentine. Satan falls in love with Sin, and Death is the Child of this monstrous marriage. Death, in his own turn, commits rape on his mother Sin and the result is a brood of innumerable dogs. These dogs tear the entails of their mother. None can escape the fatal dart of Death. That is why during the fight between father and son, Satan and Death, Sin intervenes to prevent the fight. Both Sin and Death are guardians of the gates of Hell. None can enter or leave Hell without their permission.

Adam and Eve, the grandparents of Man, are the only human figures in the epic. Adam has a heroic build and such majesty and grandeur that even Satan is afraid of approaching him. They have absolute freedom of action, except the one restraint, and yet they transgress, hi the case ofEvethe fall results from her 'frivolity of mind', in her inability to foresee the consequencesof her action, her vanity, pride, and susceptibility to flattery. In the case of Adam, the fall results from his instinct of gregariousness; he cannot live alone without the company of Eve's and so commits the folly of yielding to Eve's persuasions, though he knows fully well the enormity of her, and his own, transgression. After the fall, they are swayed by passion. They quarrel with each other and grow greedy and sensual. At one time, Adam exclaims:

'If such pleasure be

In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,

For this one Tree had been forbidden ten.'

(f) Cosmology

In portraying the physical action of *Paradise Lost* against the background of Heaven, Hell and Earth, Milton had to visualize the structure of the universe. For imaginative purposes he had to choose one of the several astronomical systems which were its current in his own day. He inevitably adopted the Ptolemaic, with the Earth fixed at the centre and the heavenly bodies revolving about it, because it was firmly established in poetic and theological tradition and was better adapted to imaginative representation. He presents Hell and Heaven purely on the lines of the Bible. Heaven is placed on top and higher than this is the Holy Mount where God, the Father, and God the Son live under the wings of the Holy Ghost guarded and attended to by Cherubim and Seraphim. The universe and heavens are joined by the golden ladder, yet separated by the river of Hades. In the universe is situated Paradise. Below the universe is Hell, surrounded by chaos. The gates of Hell are guarded by Sin and Death.

Eden is a district of Mesopotamia, and the garden, called Paradise, is situated in the east of Eden. It is a raised table-land, surrounded on all sides by high ride of hill, thickly wooded and impenetrable. Its single gate, hewn out of rock of alabaster, faces eastward, and is accessible only by a pass leading up from the plains with craggy cliffs jutting out. Through Eden runs a river which passes by a tunnel under Paradise, and, rising through the porous earth, waters the Garden with springs. It was through this underground passage that Satan entered the Garden of Eden.

(g) Language and Style

The language *of Paradise Lost* is Latinized. It's characterized by frequent images and antique names. His language is known for its to the point shortness. His sentences are full of substance and weight. He uses old English words or words in their original Latin sense. Thus the quaint expression 'sounding alchemy' is used for 'trumpets of brass', 'landscape', 'highth' for 'height', and 'strucken' for 'striken'. Inhis sentences, says Raleigh, 'You cannot guess the adjective from the substantive, nor the end of the phrase from its beginning. He is much given to inverting the natural English order of epithet and noun, that he may gain a greater emphasis for the epithet.'

Mark Pattison has rightly remarked that an enjoyment of Milton's poetry is the ultimate reward of consummate scholarship. Milton was a very learned poet, and his learning is strewn all over *Paradise Lost.* Allusions to classical literature and mythology,

to Biblical mythology, and to the contemporary literatures of Europe, more especially of Italy, are abundant and beautify stumbling blocks in the way of the readers. Latin constructions, use of words in their original Latin sense, and *epigrammatic* terseness are other sources of difficulty. That is why the real beauty and grandeur of the epic can be enjoyed only after a number of readings. The Homeric or epic similes are more frequent in *Paradise Lost* than even in Homer and Virgil; they uplift and develop the imagination, thrill the senses with their range and variety and are a source of great aesthetic pleasure. Coupled with the sublimity and grandeur of diction, there is sonorous verbal music in the work of Milton. Its music is the resounding music of the mighty organ of a Cathedral:

(h) Versification

'The meter of*Paradise Lost* is blank verse, of five accents. This meter was first used by Surrey in his translation of Virgil with nothing to vary it. This meter, in a long poem such as *Paradise Lost,* would become intolerably monotonous. As variations, Milton uses:

(i) Weak endings, i.e. an additional syllable at the end of a line.

(ii) The trochee instead of the regular iambus. Milton never could tolerate the way of making the end of each sentence coincide with the end of a line. He took care that in his poem, 'the sense should be variously drawn out from one verse to another.' But he carries this principle to excess, and thus it is impossible sometimes, in hearing the poem read, to determine where some of his lines begin or end. In all verses, there is naturally a pause at the end of line. This pause, therefore, (1) ought not to fall in middle of a word; (2) should not separate a qualifying word from the word it qualifies; (3) accent an otherwise unaccented syllable.

Into these faculties, though rarely, Milton falls in his too vehement desire for variety. His caesura (the line pause), however, he manages with consummate skill. As a rule, it falls at the end of the third foot. Its range through the ten syllables of a line gives great beauty, variety and force to Milton's verse. Milton demanded for 'true musical delight,' not only that the sense should be variously drawn out from one verse to another, but also, 'apt numbers and fit quantities of syllables' (Macmillan). 'Perhaps no man ever paid the same attention to the quality of his rhythm as Milton.' (Dr. Guest). What other poets failed, Milton succeeded by the aid of science and art. He studied the aptness of his numbers, and diligently tutored

an ear which nature had gifted with the most delicate, sensibility. 'In the flow of his rhythm, in the quality of letter sounds, in the disposition of his pauses, his verse almost ever fits the subject and so insensibly does poetry lend with this—the last beauty of exquisite versification—that the reader may sometimes doubt whether it be the thought itself, or merely the happiness of its expression, which is the source of a gratification so deeply felt' (Dr. Guest).

(i) Defects and Beauties of the Poem

Why has *Paradise Lost* lived so long? It is not the story, nobly though that illustrates the eternal antagonism of righteousness and wrong, and the overthrow of evil; nor the construction, though this is sufficiently architectonic; nor the learning, though that is vast; nor the characterization, for which there is little scope, but the incomparable

elevation of the style, 'the shaping spirit of Imagination,, and 'the sheer majesty of the music'. *'Paradise Lost* is in several ways one of the most wonderful of the works of men.'

As regards defects Milton has been charged of freely employing not only the usages of Pagan writers (such as the invocations of the Muse) but also the fiction of Pagan mythology, thus blending the unreal with the real, and so destroying credibility. Both the Ptolemaic and the Copernican systems find place in the poem. Milton's geography of the world is as bad as Herodotus. The notes of time are not appropriate. The son is spoken of in a way which is neither, the orthodox behef of the Athanasian Creed, nor the heterodox teaching of Arian. There is a constant confusion of material and spiritual in the acts ascribed to the Angels.

3.3.4 Important Passages for Explanation

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit

Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast

Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,

With loss of Eden, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat, [5]

Sing Heav 'nly Muse, that on the secret top

OfOreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire

That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,

In the Beginning how the Heav 'ns and Earth

Rose out of Chaos: Or ifSion Hill [10]

Delight thee more, and Siloa 's Brook that flow'd

Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,

That with no middle flight intends to soar

Above th 'Aonian Mount, while it pursues [15]

Things unattemptedyet in Prose or Rhime.

And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer

Before all Temples th 'upright heart and pure,

Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first

Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread [20 J

Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss

And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark

Illumin, what is low raise and support;

That to the highth of this great Argument

I may assert Eternal Providence, [25]

Andjustifie the wayes of God to men.

Say first, for Heav 'n hides nothing from thy view

Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause

Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,

Favour 'd ofHeav'n so highly, to fall off [30 J

From thir Creator, and transgress his Will

For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?

Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile

Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv 'd [35]

The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride

Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host

Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring

To set himself in Glory above his Peers,

He trusted to have equal 'd the most High, [40]

If he oppos 'd; and with ambitious aim

Against the Throne and Monarchy of God

Rais 'd impious War in Heav 'n and Battel proud

With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power

Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie f 45 J

With hideous ruine and combustion down

To bottomless perdition, there to dwell

In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,

Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.

Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night [50]

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew

Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe

Confounded though immortal: But his doom

Reserv 'd him to more wrath; for now the thought

Both of lost happiness and lasting pain f 55 J

Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes

That witness 'd huge affliction and dismay

Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:

At once as far as Angels kenn he views

The dismal Situation waste and wilde, [60]

A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round

As one great Furnace flam 'd, yet from those flames

No light, but rather darkness visible

Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe,

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace [65] And rest can never dwell, hope never comes

That comes to all; but torture without end

Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed

With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum 'd:

Such place Eternal Justice had prepar 'd [70]

For those rebellious, here Mr Prison ordain 'd

In utter darkness, and thir portion set

As far remov'dfrom God and light ofHeav'n

As from the Center thrice to th'utmost Pole.

O how unlike the place from whence they fell! [75]

There the companions of his fall, o'rewhelm'd

With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

He soon discerns, and weltring by his side

One next himself in power, and next in crime,

Long after known in Palestine, and nam 'd [80 J

Beelzebub. To whom th 'Arch-Enemy,

And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words

Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd

From him, who in the happy Realms of Light [85 J

Cloth 'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine

Myriads though bright: If he Whom mutual league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,

Joynd with me once, now misery hathjoynd [90]

In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest

From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd

He with his Thunder: and till then who knew

The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those,

Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage [95 J

Can else inflict, do I repent or change,

Though chang'd in outward lustre; thatfixt mind

And high disdain, from sence of injur 'd merit,

That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,

And to the fierce contention brought along [100 J

Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd

That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd

In dubious Battel on the Plains ofHeav 'n,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost? [105]

All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield:

And what is else not to be overcome?

That Glory never shall his wrath or might [110]

Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace

With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,

Who from the terrour of this Arm so late

Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,

That were an ignominy and shame beneath [115]

This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods

And this Empyreal substance cannot fail,

Since through experience of this great event

In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc 't,

We may with more successful hope resolve [120]

To wage by force or guile eternal Warr

Irreconcileable, to our grand Foe,

Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy

Sole reigning holds the Tyranny ofHeav 'n.

So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain, [125]

Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:

And him thus answer 'd soon his bold Compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,

That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr

Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds [130]

Fearless, endanger 'd Heav'ns perpetual King;

And put to proof his high Supremacy, Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,

Too well I see and rue the dire event,

That with sad overthrow and foul defeat [135 J

Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host

In horrible destruction laid thus low,

As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences

Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains

Invincible, and vigour soon returns, [140]

Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state

Here swallow'd up in endless misery.

But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now

Of force believe Almighty, since no less

Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours) [145 J

Have left us this our spirit and strength intire

Strongly to suffer and support our pains,

That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,

Or do him mightier service as his thralls

By right of Warr, what e 're his business be [150 J

Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,

Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;

What can it then avail though yet we feel

Strength undiminisht, or eternal being

To undergo eternal punishment? [155]

Whereto with speedy words th'Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable

Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,

To do ought good never will be our task,

But ever to do ill our sole delight, [160]

As being the contrary to his high will

Whom we resist. If then his Providence

Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,

Our labour must be to pervert that end,

And out of good still to find means of evil; [165]

Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps

Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb

His inmost counsels from thir destind aim.

But see the angry Victor hath recall 'd

His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit [170]

Back to the Gates ofHeav'n: The Sulphurous Hail

Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid

The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice

OfHeav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,

Wing 'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage, [175]

Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now

To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.

Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,

Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.

Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde, [180]

The seat of desolation, voyd of light,

Save what the glimmering of these livid flames

Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend

From off the tossing of these fiery waves,

There rest, if any rest can harbour there, [185]

And reassembling our afflicted Powers,

Consult how we may henceforth most offend

Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,

How overcome this dire Calamity,

What reinforcement we may gain from Hope, [190]

If not what resolution from despare.

Thus Satan talking to his neerest Mate

With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes

That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides

Prone on the Flood, extended long and large [195]

Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge

As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,

Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr 'd on Jove,

Briareos or Typhon, whom the Den

By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast [200]

Leviathan, which God of all his works

Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:

Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam

The Pilot of some small night-founder 'd Skiff,

Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell, [205]

With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind

Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night

Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delayes:

So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay

Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence f 210 J

Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will

And high permission of all-ruling Heaven

Left him at large to his own dark designs,

That with reiterated crimes he might

Heap on himself damnation, while he sought [215]

Evil to others, and enrag'd might see

How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth

Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn

On Man by him seduc % but on himself

Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour 'd. [220 J

Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool

His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames

Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld

In billows, leave i'th 'midst a horrid Vale.

Then with expanded wings he stears his flight [225]

Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air

That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land

He lights, if it were Land that ever burn 'd

With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;

And such appear 'd in hue, as when the force [230 J

Of subterranean wind transports a Hill

Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side

Of thundring JEtna, whose combustible

And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,

Sublim 'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,[235 J

And leave a singed bottom all involv'd

With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,

Both glorying to have scap't the Stygian flood

As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength, [240]

Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the Region? this the Soil, the Clime,

Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat

That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he [245]

Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid

What shall be right: fardest from him is best

Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream

Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields

Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrours, hail [250]

Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell

Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings

A mind not to be chang'd by Place or lime.

The mind is its own place, and in it self

Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell ofHeav'n. [255]

What matter where, if I be still the same,

And what I should be, all but less then he

Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least

We shall be free; th 'Almighty hath not built

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: [260]

Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce

To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:

Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.

But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,

Th' associates and copartners of our loss [265]

Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,

And call them not to share with us their part

In this unhappy Mansion, or once more

With rallied Arms to try what may be yet

Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell? [270]

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub

Thus answer 'd. Leader of those Armies bright,

Which but th' Omnipotent none could havefoyld,

If once they hear that voyce, thir liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft [275]

In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge

Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults

Thir surest signal, they will soon resume

New courage and revive, though now they lye

Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire, [280]

As we erewhile, astounded and amaz 'd,

No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas 't when the superiour Fiend

Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield

Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, [285]

Behind him cast; the broad circumference

Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb

Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views

At Ev 'ningfrom the top ofFesole,

Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands, [290]

Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.

His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast

Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,

He walkt with to support uneasie steps [295]

Over the burning Marie, not like those steps

On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime

Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;

Nathless he so endur 'd, till on the Beach

Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd [300 J

His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans 't

Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks

In Vallombrosa, where th'Etrurian shades

High overarch't imbowr; or scatterd sedge

Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd [305]

Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew

Busiris and his Memphian Chivalry,

While with perfidious hatred they pursu 'd

The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld

From the safe shore thir floating Carkases [310]

And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown

Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,

Under amazement of thir hideous change.

He call 'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep

Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates, [315 J

Worriers, the Flowr ofHeav 'n, once yours, now lost,

If such astonishment as this can sieze

Eternal spirits; or have ye chos 'n this place

After the toyl of Battel to repose

Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find [320 J

To slumber here, as in the Vales ofHeav'n?

Or in this abject posture have ye sworn

To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds

Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood

With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon [325]

His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern

Th' advantage, and descending tread us down

Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts

Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.

Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n. [330]

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung

Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch

On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,

Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.

Nor did they not perceave the evil plight [335]

In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;

Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd

Innumerable. As when the potent Rod

OfAmrams Son in Egypts evill day

Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud [340]

Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern Wind,

That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh hung

Like Night, and darken 'd all the Land of Nile:

So numberless were those bad Angels seen

Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell [345]

'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;

Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear

Of thir great Sultan waving to direct

Thir course, in even ballance down they light

On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain; [350]

A multitude, like which the populous North

Pour 'd never from her frozen loyns, to pass

Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous Sons

Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread

Beneath Gibralter to the Lybian sands. [355]

Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band

The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood

Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms

Excelling human, Princely Dignities,

And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones; [360]

Though of thir Names in heav'nly Records now

Be no memorial blotted out and ras 'd

By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.

Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve

Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth, [365]

Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man,

By falsities and lyes the greatest part

Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake

God thir Creator, and th' invisible

Glory of him that made them, to transform [370]

Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn 'd

With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,

And Devils to adore for Deities:

Then were they known to men by various Names,

And various Idols through the Heathen World. [375 J

Say, Muse, thir Names then known, who first, who last,

Rous 'dfrom the slumber, on that fiery Couch,

At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth

Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,

While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof? [380]

The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell

Roaming to seek thir prey on earth, durst fix

Thir Seats long after next the Seat of God,

Thir Altars by his Altar, Gods ador 'd

Among the Nations round, and durst abide [385 J

Jehovah thundring out of Sion, thron'd

Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac 'd

Within his Sanctuary it self thir Shrines,

Abominations; and with cursed things

His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan 'd, [390]

And with thir darkness durst affront his light.

First Moloch, horrid King besmear 'd with blood

Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,

Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud

Thir childrens cries unheard, that past through fire [395]

To his grim Idol. Him the Ammonite

Worshipt in Rabba and her watry Plain,

In Argob and in Basan, to the stream

Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such

Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart [400]

Of Solomon he led by fraud to build

His Temple right against the Temple of God

On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove

The pleasant Vally ofHinnom, Tophet thence

And black Gehenna call'd, the Type of Hell, f 405 J

Next Chemos, th' obscene dread ofMoabs Sons,

From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild

OfSouthmost Abarim; in Hesebon

And Horonaim, Seons Realm, beyond

Theflowry Dale ofSibma clad with Vines, [410 J

And Eleale to th' Asphaltick Pool.

Peor his other Name, when he entic 'd

Israel in Sittim on thir march from Nile

To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.

Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd f 415 J

Even to that Hill of scandal, by the Grove

Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;

Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.

With these came they, who from the bordring flood

Of old Euphrates to the Brook that parts [420]

Egypt from Syrian ground, had general Names

Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,

These Feminine. For Spirits when they please

Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft

And uncompounded is thir Essence pure, [425]

Not ti'd or manacl'd withjoynt or limb,

Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,

Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose

Dilated or condens % bright or obscure,

Can execute thir aerie purposes, [430]

And works of love or enmity fulfill.

For those the Race of Israel oft forsook

Thir living strength, and unfrequented left

His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down

To bestial Gods; for which thir heads as low [435]

Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear

Of despicable foes. With these in troop

Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd

Astarte, Queen ofHeav'n, with crescent Horns;

To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon [440]

Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs,

In Sion also not unsung, where stood

Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built

By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,

Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell [445]

To Idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,

Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur 'd

The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate

In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,

While smooth Adonis from his native Rock [450]

Ran purple to the Sea, suppos 'd with blood

Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the Love-tale

Infected Sions daughters with like heat,

Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch

Ezekiel saw, when by the Vision led [455]

His eye survay 'd the dark Idolatries

Of alienated Judah. Next came one

Who mourn 'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark

Maim 'd his brute Image, head and hands lopt off

In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge, [460]

Where he fell flat, and sham 'd his Worshipers:

Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man

And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high

Rear 'd in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast

Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon [465]

And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.

Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful Seat

Was fair Damascus, on the fertil Banks

OfAbbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.

He also against the house of God was bold: [470]

A Leper once he lost and gain 'd a

King, Ahaz his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew

Gods Altar to disparage and displace

For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn

His odious off'rings, and adore the Gods f 475 J

Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear 'd

A crew who under Names of old Renown,

Osiris, Isis, Orus and their Train

With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus 'd

Fanatic Egypt and her Priests, to seek [480]

Thir wandring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms

Rather then human. Nor did Israel scape

Th' infection when thir borrow'd Gold compos 'd

The Calf in Oreb: and the Rebel King

Doubl 'd that sin in Bethel and in Dan, [485]

Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox,

Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass 'd

From Egypt marching, equal 'd with one stroke

Both her first born and all her bleating Gods.

Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd [490]

Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love

Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood

Or Altar smoak'd; yet who more oft then hee

In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest

Turns Atheist, as did Ely's Sons, who fill'd [495]

With lust and violence the house of God.

In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns

And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse

Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,

And injury and outrage: And when Night [500 J

Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons

Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.

Witness the Streets of Sodom, and that night

In Gibeah, when the hospitable door

Expos 'd a Matron to avoid worse rape. [505]

These were the prime in order and in might;

The rest were long to tell, though far renown 'd,

Th' Ionian Gods, ofJavans Issue held

Gods, yet confest later then Heav'n and Earth

Thir boasted Parents; Titan Heav'ns first born [510]

With his enormous brood, and birthright seis 'd

By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove

His own and Rhea's Son like measure found;

So Jove usurping reign 'd: these first in Creet

And Ida known, thence on the Snowy top [515]

Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle Air

Thir highest Heav 'n; or on the Delphian Cliff,

Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds

Of Doric Land; or who with Saturn old

Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian Fields, [520]

And ore the Celtic roam 'd the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks

Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear 'd

Obscure some glimps of joy, to have found thir chief

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost [525]

In loss it self; which on his count'nance cast

Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride

Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd

Thir fainting courage, and dispel'd thir fears. [530]

Then strait commands that at the warlike sound

Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard

His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim 'd

Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall:

Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld [535]

Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't

Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind

With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,

Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while

Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds: [540]

At which the universal Host upsent

A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond

Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night.

All in a moment through the gloom were seen

Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air [545]

With Orient Colours waving: with them rose

A Forest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms

Appear 'd, and serried shields in thick array

Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move

In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood [550]

Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais 'd

To hight of noblest temper Hero's old

Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage

Deliberate valour breath 'd, firm and unmov 'd

With dread of death to flight or foul retreat, f 555 J

Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts,-and chase Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain

From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they

Breathing united force with fixed thought [560 J

Mov 'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm 'd

Thir painful steps o 're the burnt soyle; and now

Advanc 't in view, they stand, a horrid Front

Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise

Of Warriers old with order 'd Spear and Shield, [565]

Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief

Had to impose: He through the armed Files

Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse

The whole Battalion views, thir order due,

Thir visages and stature as of Gods, [570]

Thir number last he summs. And now his heart

Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength

Glories: For never since created man,

Met such imbodied force, as nam 'd with these

Could merit more then that small infantry [575 J

Warr 'd on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood

OfPhlegra with th'Heroic Race werejoyn'd

That fought at Theb 's and Ilium, on each side

Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds

In Fable or Romance ofUthers Son [580]

Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;

And all who since, Baptiz 'd or Infidel

Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,

Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,

Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore [585]

When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell

By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond

Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ 'd

Thir dread commander: he above the rest

In shape and gesture proudly eminent [590]

Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost

All her Original brightness, nor appear 'd

Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess

Of Glory obscur 'd: As when the Sun new ris 'n

Looks through the Horizontal misty Air [595]

Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon

In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds

On half the Nations, and with fear of change

Perplexes Monarchs. Dark'n 'd so, yet shon

Above them all th 'Arch Angel: but his face [600]

Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care

Sat on his-faded cheek, but under

Browes Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride

Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast

Signs of remorse and passion to behold [ʳ 605 J

The fellows of his crime, the followers rather

(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd

For ever now to have thir lot in pain,

Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't

OfHeav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung f 610 J

For his revolt, yetfaithfull how they stood,

Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire

Hath scath 'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines,

With singed top thir stately growth though bare

Stands on the blasted Heath. He nowprepar 'd [615]

To speak; whereat thir doubl'd Ranks they bend

From wing to wing, and half enclose him round

With all his Peers: attention held them mute.

Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spight of scorn,

Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last [620 J Words interwove with sighs found out thir way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers

Matchless, but with th 'Almighty, and that strife

Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,

As this place testifies, and this dire change [625]

Hateful to utter: but what power of mind

Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth

Of knowledge past or present, could have fear 'd,

How such united force of Gods, how such

As stood like these, could ever know repulse? [630 J

For who can yet beleeve, though after loss,

That all these puissant Legions, whose exile

Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend

Self-rais 'd, and repossess thir native seat?

For mee be witness all the Host ofHeav 'n, [635]

If counsels different, or danger shun'd

By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns

Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure

Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,

Consent or custome, and his Regal State [640]

Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,

Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.

Henceforth his might we know, and know our own

So as not either to provoke, or dread

New warr, provok't; our better part remains [645 J

To work in close design, by fraud or guile

What force effected not: that he no less

At length from us may find, who overcomes

By force, hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife f 650 J

There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long

Intended to create, and therein plant

A generation, whom his choice regard

Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:

Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps

Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere: [655]

For this Infernal Pit shall never hold

Ccelestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyss

Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts

Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird, [660 J

For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr

Open or understood must be resolv 'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew

Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs

Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze [665]

Far round illumin 'd hell: highly they rag'd

Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms

Clash 'd on thir sounding Shields the din of war,

Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a Hill not far whose griesly top [670]

Belch 'dfire and rowling smoak; the rest entire

Shon with a glossie scurjf, undoubted sign

That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,

The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed

A numerous Brigad hasten 'd. As when Bands [675]

OfPioners with Spade and Pickax arm 'd

Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,

Or cast a Rampart. Mammon led them on,

Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell

From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts f 680 J

Were always downward bent, admiring more

The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod 'n Gold,

Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd

In vision beatific: by him first

Men also, and by his suggestion taught, [685]

Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands

Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth

For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew

Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound

And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire [690]

That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best

Deserve the precious bane. And here let those

Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell

Of Babel, and the works ofMemphian Kings

Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame, [695]

And Strength and Art are easily out-done

By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour

What in an age they with incessant toyle

And hands innumerable scarce perform.

Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd, [700]

That underneath had veins of liquid fire

Slue 'dfrom the Lake, a second multitude

With wondrous Art found out the massie Ore,

Severing each kind, and scum 'd the Bullion dross:

A third as soon had form 'd within the ground [705]

A various mould, and from the boyling cells

By strange conveyance fill 'd each hollow nook,

As in an Organ from one blast of wind

To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths.

Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge [710]

Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound

Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,

Built like a Temple, where Pilasters round

Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid

With Golden Architrave; nor did there want [715]

Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav 'n,

The Roof was fretted Gold. Not Babilon,

Nor great Alcairo such magnificence

Equal 'd in all thir glories, to inshrine

Belus or Serapis thir Gods, or seat [720]

Thir Kings, when Mgypt with Assyria strove

In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile

Stood fixt her stately highth] and strait the dores

Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide

Within, her ample spaces, o 're the smooth [725]

And level pavement: from the arched roof

Pendant by suttle Magic many a row

Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed

With Naphtha and Asphaltus yeilded light

As from a sky. The hasty multitude [730 J

Admiring enter 'd, and the work some praise

And some the Architect: his hand was known

In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,

Where Scepter 'd Angels held thir residence,

And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King [735 J

Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,

Each in his Hierarchie, the Orders bright.

Nor was his name unheard or unador 'd

In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land

Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell [740]

From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove

Sheer o 're the Chrystal Battlements: from Morn

To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,

A Summers day; and with the setting Sun

Droptfrom the Zenith like a falling Star, [745]

On Lemnos th 'Aegean He: thus they relate,

Erring; for he with this rebellious rout

Fell long before; nor aught avail 'd him now

To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he scape

By all his Engins, but was headlong sent [750 J

With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Mean while the winged Harolds by command

Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony

And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim

A solemn Councel forthwith to be held [755]

At Pandemonium, the high Capital Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd

From every Band and squared Regiment

By place or choice the worthiest; they anon

With hunderds and with thousands trooping came [760]

Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates

And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall

(Though like a cover 'd field, where Champions bold

Wont ride in arm 'd, and at the Soldans chair

Defi 'd the best ofPaynim chivalry [765]

To mortal combat or carreer with Lance)

Thick swarm 'd, both on the ground and in the air,

Brusht with the hiss ofrussling wings. As Bees

In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,

Pour forth thir populous youth about the Hive [770 J

In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers

Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,

The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,

New rub 'd with Baum, expatiate and confer

Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd [775]

Swarm 'd and were straitn 'd; till the Signal giv'n.

Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd

In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons

Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room

Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race [780]

Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faerie Elves,

Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side

Or Fountain some belated Peasant sees,

Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon

Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth [785]

Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth and dance

Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;

At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.

Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms

Reduc 'd thir shapes immense, and were at large, [790]

Though without number still amidst the Hall

Of that infernal Court. But far within

And in thir own dimensions like themselves

The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim

In close recess and secret conclave sat [795]

A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seats,

Frequent and full. After short silence then

And summons read, the great consult began.

Explanation

(i) *"Thou from.....and support.'*

These lines are a part of the 'invocation' at the opening of Book I of*Paradise Lost.* Having invoked the aid of the heavenly Muse, Milton now addresses the Divine Spirit, a power

higher than the Muse. He seeks instruction from this Spirit which was present in the universe from the very beginning. This Spirit,

with its massive, outspread wings sat, like a dove, meditating upon (or moving upon), the vast Chaos which it quickened with life. He calls upon this spirit to illuminate what is dark in him, and to elevate and strengthen what is low in him.

(ii) *'Whatthough ..... fromme.''*

These lines are a part of Satan's first speech in Book I *of Paradise Lost.* Speaking to Beelzebub, Satan briefly dwells upon the revolt of angels against God and the defeat they have suffered. Here he makes light of what has happened. It does not matter if he and his followers have lost the battle, the war had yet to be fought. They shall have their invincible determination, their decision to pursue their revenge, their undying hatred for their enemy (i.e. God), and the courage never to surrender. As they have all these, it means that they have not been defeated. No matter how wrathful or powerful their energy might be, they will never allow him to win the glory of achieving a triumph over them.

(hi) *''Fall 'n Cherub, ... Whom we resist.*'

Satan here tries to allay Beelzebub's fears. Beelzebub has expressed the apprehension that fallen angels may have to stay on in Hell forever to satisfy God's revengeful fury ('vengefulre'). Satan points out that to have a feeling of weakness means feeling miserable, whether they have to work as God's slaves or they have merely to undergo torture (without having to do God's errands). One thing is sure that they will never do any good work and their only pleasure will always be to commit evil and thus oppose the high will of Him whom they have to resist. Satan thus declares his resolve to do 'ill' in order to thwart God's purposes.

(iv) *'Be it so, ... above his equals.*'

After surveying the mournful gloom of the infernal regions, Satan speaking to Beelzebub reconciles himself to the change from Heaven to Hell. God, he says, is now supreme since God has won the battle. God is in a position to dole out and to command, what He (God) thinks to be right The fallen angels have no choice but to accept what has been dealt out to them. It will now be the best course for them to stay at the farthest possible distance from God. Satan claims that he and his comrades are the equals of God in respect of the faculty of reason. God is now supreme but He has won this supremacy over His equals and His victory is due to superior force, not due to any other kind of superiority.

(v) *'But wherefore ..... lost in Hell?'*

This passage is the concluding portion of the famous speech that Satan makes after surveying the infernal regions in the company of Beelzebub in Book I of *Paradise Lost.* He has declared his resolve to live in Hell where he and his comrades will at least be free from God's tyranny. Here, addressing Beelzebub, he proposes that his faithful friends, the companions and co-sharers of the defeat and the misfortune they have suffered, should not continue to he stunned on the lake which has made them quite forgetful of their condition. Satan says that he and Beelzebub should call them all to share their lot with their leaders in this unhappy abode. Satan also visualizes the possibility of his mobilizing the fallen angels once again in order to regain whatever they can in Heaven. If the

worst happens, they will lose something more of what is still left with 'them here inHell'.

(vi) *A multitude, ...to the Lybionjarufe.'*

This refers to the march of the fallen spirits roused from their stupefaction. It is described in these memorable lines. The barbarian incursions from the North of Europe from the first century A D. until, in the sixth, they overran even the Empire of Rome and a Teutonic chieftain was crowned King of Rome. So numerous were the Teuton hordes that they not only over-ran the whole of South Europe but also overflowed into North Africa, through the Straits of Gibraltar. In this simile Milton gives us a page of European history and the havoc wrought upon the more civilized Rookie by the fierce warrior tribes from the Baltic regions—the ancestors of modern Germans. Note the unfamiliar forms of the rivers named the Rhine and the Danube as Milton uses the terms 'Rhene' and 'Danaw' for more musical effect. The report that Teutonic tribes went into the Libyan sands has reference to legendary accounts of isolated Germanic rulers having established their way in North Africa. Poet Robert Southey deals with the adventures of some of them in one of his epics.

(vii) *'But in ..... enmity fulfill'*

Milton describes here the elements of which the bodies of angels are made. Angelic bodies are not like ours. They are composed of one 'pure essence'; our bodies are composed of so many base elements. Consequently angels possess a perfect control over their bodies. Angels can expand themselves or reduce their size at will. They can assume any form they please. They can make their bodies shining; or if they so like, they can make themselves dimly visible and even invisible. Thus they can work out their own will easily. If they love anybody they can do him infinite good and if they hate anybody, they can cause unlimited harm.

(viii) *A Leper once ..... he had vanquished.'*

Milton here refers to Rimmon, one of the chiefs of Satan's rebel angels. Later on, Rimmon was worshipped as a god by the Syrians in Damascus. There was a general, Naaman by name. He was a leper and worshipper of Rimmon but, being cured of his leprosy by God's grace, Naaman gave up worshipping Rimmon and so the latter lost a leper. Rimmon got a King for his worshipper. This king was Ahaz who was a great conqueror. He conquered the heathens and so should have known that the heathen's gods were too weak to save their worshippers. But the foolish Ahaz took to the worship of these false heathen gods whom he himself had defeated. He further insulted the true God by making impure His altar in Jerusalem. He changed God's holy altar in Jerusalem into one of Syrian pattern, after the style of Dagon's altar.

(ix) *'To him no..... the house of God?'*

Last among the fallen angels, who took a name later in the universe of man, and was worshipped in preference to God, the Almighty, was Belial. No temples were erected to him, but he made use of the temples of other gods, 'just as the immortal cuckoo makes use of the nests of other birds.' Being the patron of ^theism, liberty and disorderliness, his cult was

most often professed by those who were greedy and rapacious, and completely destroyed the piety and the holiness that belonged to the church. Thus Eli's sons were the adherents of this

spirit, when they filled the houses of God in Jerusalem with 'lust and violence'

(x) *'For never since ..... all the Giant brood''*

When the fallen angels had assembled in a military array before their lord and chief, Satan, Milton digresses for a while to convey to the reader an adequate impression of their appearance by means of certain similes. They are introduced by summing up the effect in a vivid manner, as in these lines. Never since the creation of man, as compared with these fallen angels, could any army be regarded as more than pygmies who were attacked by Cranes.

(xi) *'Darken 'dso, ... Waiting revenge*'

In these lines, Milton gives a fine description of Satan. He had lost his original splendour and yet he appeared brighter than any of the fallen angels. His face showed the wounds caused by God's thunder. His cheeks had lost all colour and he appeared to be worried on account of the defeat and the adverse circumstances. His brows showed signs of fearless courage. His pride had not been affected, though he was waiting for an opportunity to take revenge on God for his defeat.

(xii) *'Buthewho ..... wrought our fall.'*[1]

In these lines, Satan tries to convince the fallen angels that the war against God was worth-while, though it led to very disastrous consequences His argument is that nobody knew of the latent power of God till it was put to test. He wants to avoid the blame for the defeat. He, like the other fallen angels, has suffered and gone through all the tortures of Hell. Satan's argument is that God is the supreme sovereign and He rules by convention. They were, therefore, tempted to challenge the power of God. They had not taken into account the concealed strength of God, which He did use in order to defeat the angels.

(xiii) *'War then, ... vault of Heav'n.'*

In these lines, Milton describes the reaction of the fallen angels to the proposal of Satan who proposes another war against Heaven, The fallen angels drew their flashing swords from their sides which glittered brightly in the darkness of Hell. They did so in order to express their determination and agreement with the proposal of Satan. The angels shouted against God and clasped their swords in their hands and struck them on their shield. This produced a clanging noise as if of war and appeared to be an open challenge thrown to Heaven. In these lines, the fallen angels express their unity and display their strength which appears ridiculous in view of their defeat by God and his angels. We also find here the towering personality of Satan, who wins the confidence of the fallen angels. They have become so to worship their hero and here they express their loyalty to him through their words and behaviour.

(xix) *'But far ..... consult began.*'

In these lines, Milton describes the meeting of the fallen angels in Pandemonium. The leaders of the fallen angels look their seats according to their own dimensions. The angels, lords, the Seraphs and Cherubs and thousand demi gods sat on the golden thrones within the Hall. The small fallen angels, however, assumed tiny shapes and sat close together in the Hall. The meeting was held to decide the future course of action of the fallen angels.

Milton distinguishes the leader and the followers among the angels. The leaders

sat in all their glory and in their original forms while the followers assumed the smaller shape in order to accommodate themselves within the limited space available in the hall. Milton shows that angels can reduce or increase their size and shape according to the requirements of the occasion.

3.3.5 Main Characters

Satan

The Miltonic Satan in undoubtedly one of the most stupendous and awful creations of poetry—one of its grandest studies ' Reed (English Literature).

Satan is a classic creation of Milton. From the artistic point of view, he is much more remembered than the heroes of Shakespeare. Although not so grand and great in morality as heroes of the classical epics, he stands to challenge even Ulysses and Hercules. Satan is the poetic representation of Milton's own pride, invincible temper, love of liberty, defiance of authority and heroic energy. He is the most active and energetic character in the poem. There are two aspects of Satan's character. In the first two Books he is different from what he is in the later Books.

In the broad outlines of Satan's character, there is Biblical warrant, though we shall not find it, as we find the story of Adam and Eve, in any one passage. In Cruden's Concordance, it is observed:

> By collecting the passages where Satan or the Devil is mentioned, it may be observed that he fell from Heaven, with all his company; that God cast him down from thence for the punishment of his pride; that by his envy and malice, sin and death, and all other evils, came into the world; that by the permission of God he exercises a sort of government in the world over his subordinates, over apostate angels like himself; that God makes use of him to improve good men,
>
> and chastise bad ones..... That his power and malice are restrained within
>
> certain limits, and controlled by the will of God. In a word, he is an enemy to God and man, uses his utmost endeavours to rob God of his glory, and men of their souls.

This is all true of Milton's Satan. He fully stands by his etymological meaning. The word' Satan' in Hebrew means ' an adversary, a plotter'. Like other villain-heroes he is also ambitious revengeful, boastful, deceitful, cunning, melancholic, and witty. We are terrified and horrified as well as fascinated by this evil character like Richard IE, Iago, or Tamburlaine. So does Satan bring out a response or reaction from us. He is huge in size:

'His other Parts besides

Prone on the Flood, extended long and large

Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge

As whome the Fables name of monstrous size .....

His shield is as big as the largest round object imaginable:

'the broad circumference

Hung on his shoulders like the Moon....'

And compared with his spear, the mast in the biggest ship of fleet would seem like ampere wand. Elsewhere in Book I, Satan is described as being like a Tower and like the

Sun. He appears less than the Arch-Angel ruined, and the excess of glory obscured. He is still like the sun, but like the sun seen through the morning mist' Shorn of his Beams'. After Book n, the deterioration of Satan is shown through a progressive diminution of the images by which he is described. In the beginning of Book II he is described as under:

'High on a Throne of Royal State, which far

Outshone the wealth ofOrmus and oflnd,

Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand

Showers on her Kings Barbaric Pearl and Gold,

Satan exalted .....sat.'

In Books I and II Satan is in his own element. Early in Book HI, we see him through God's eyes, and in this diminishing perspective he is almost pathetic: 'ready now/To stoop with wearied wings' (72). A little later we see him as a vulture (HI, 431), as a wolf (IV, 183), as a cormorant (IV .800). Finally, not through comparison or his own intended deceit, but in actual fact imposed by God, we see him as a serpent (X, 514). In Book VI, we find Satan 'Squat like a Toad, close at the ears of Eve'.

He, however, has the 'courage never to submit or yield and what is else not to be overcome.' He is ready to welcome Hell.

3.3.6 As a Classical Epic

Paradise Lost i& an epic par excellence. In the English language, besides Sri Aurobindo's Savitri, there is not any other epic that can be compared with it. An epic is a very ancient form of poetry, originating in an age before writing, when long narratives dealing with the mighty deeds of the military aristocracy were recited to an assembled company, on long winter evenings or after a feasting. The narrative

consisted of a series of loosely linked and easily detachable episodes to enable the overall length to be varied as circumstances demanded and centred on the exploits of some national hero who was something more than human if slightly less than divine. To provide some rest for the narrator and some relief for the listeners, stock passages came, to be included in the epic; the hero's ancestry; the description and history of his weapons; a council or debate, usually in heaven; and so on. These epics are called Primary Epics because their characteristics naturally reflect the society that gave them birth, and the most famous examples are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* supposedly composed by the blind poet Homer, whose authorship and even existence are uncertain.

Whereas Homer's epics are the Primary Epic, the Roman poet Virgil (70-19 B.C.) wrote the Secondary Epic which became Milton's model. Virgil's *Aeneid* was intended to be read by an individual in solitude, not recited to an assembly of listeners. In the Renaissance period romantic epics were written by Ariosto, Tasso, and Boiardo which became models for Spenser's *Faerie Queen.* Milton, being the child of both the Renaissance and the Reformation, preferred scriptural literature over the classical, not only in subject but in style. He knew both languages and both literatures thoroughly. Eventually, Milton rejected the choice of a national hero, King Arthur, and a national subject, in favour of the universal subject of the Fall of Man. He did for English what Virgil had done for Latin.

However, in many respects, Milton consciously follows the classical epic pattern. The structure of Paradise Lost, its division into several Books (XII), is on the classical pattern. Not merely are supernatural characters introduced, all the characters in Book I and II are superhuman. The Muse's aid is invoked, since human endeavour alone cannot support so weighty a subject, the weapons of the heroes are described (Satan's shield and spear, (1.284-96) and some of the fallen Angels pass the time, while Satan is away on reconnaissance, by indulging in heroic games and chariot races, (II. 528-3 8 R) The whole epic is written in one meter throughout, i.e. Blank Verse. The Fall of Man is the theme which is single and compact. The battle of Angels, the creation of the world, Satan's fight with Sin and Death are episodes and are subordinated to the main action. The action *oi Paradise Lost* satisfies Aristotle's condition that an epic should consist of a beginning, middle and an end. It has a lofty motif and is written in a grand style.

Epic similes abound in the whole of the epic, more particularly in the first two books. The epic or Homeric simile is much longer than an ordinary poetic comparison; it is a complete picture in itself, a *vignette.* In *Paradise Lost,* the epic similes serve a special purpose by bringing the superhuman subject within the compass of human experience. Milton uses his vast learning to show his readers what it was like to live in a world they could never know, and the measure of his success is that most Englishmen would describe hell and the fall in Miltonic terms - the Book of Genesis in the Bible makes no mention of Satan in the Garden of Eden, only the serpent is there.

3.3.7 Autobiographical Elements

Shakespeare's poetry is characterless, that is, it does not reflect the individual Shakespeare; but John Milton himself is in every line of the *Paradise Lost.Bis* Satan, his Adam, his Raphael, almost his Eve, are all John Milton; and it is a sense of this egotism that gives me the greatest pleasure in reading Milton's works. The egotism of such a man is a revelation of spirit.

Milton's poetry is a mirror of himself. His work reflects his character, his likes and dislikes. It was imperatively necessary, he thought, that the poet should prepare himself for his high calling by hard study, a pure life, and 'devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge and sends out His seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases.' Milton had conscientiously set himself to satisfy the intellectual and moral tests laid down by him. All the best works of Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and contemporary writers had been carefully studied by him, and he could proudly declare, like Matthew Arnold's Mycerninus, that,

'Rapt in reverential awe,

He sat obedient in the fiery prime

of youth self-governed at the foot of law,'

transformation from the objective to the subjective *in Paradise Lost.* Milton made the objective art of the epic subjective in tone and temper. To quote Legouis, 'Milton is in truth the only living being who exists in his own work.' He has given expression to his religious, moral and philosophical beliefs and ideas in his epic. At the same time he has identified himself with his characters. As mentioned by Legouis and Cazamian in their *History of English Literature.* 'He projects himself, his feelings, knowledge, and aspirations into the characters of his epic, both the primitive human creatures and the superhuman beings, whether they were celestial or infernal.'

Kenneth Muir has gone to the extent of saying that Milton's dominant intention in writing *Paradise Lost* was personal. Milton was not only justifying God's way to men, but he was also justifying his ways to Englishmen between 1640 and 1660. He was telling them why they had failed to establish the good society; when they had welcomed back the monarchy. They had failed through their own weakness; their own lack of faith, their own passions and creed, their own sin. God was not to blame. Milton's *Physical and Intellectual State* reflected the following lines simply refer to the physical and intellectual state of Milton:

'Standing on Earth, not rapt above the Pole,

More safe I sing, with mortal voice unchanged

To hoarse or mute, though fall 'n on evil dayes,

On evil dayes though fall'n, and evil tongues;

In darkness; and with dangers compost round

And solitude : yet not along, while thon

Visit's my slumbers Nightly, or when Mom.

Purples the East; still govern thou my song,

Urania, and fit audience finds, though few,'

—Book, VII (Opening lines)

Besides his intellectual and spiritual ideas; his political ideas are also expressed from time to time in *Paradise Lost.* For example, in the Twelfth Book when Michael tells Adam that true liberty is lost because of his fall, Milton seems to be blaming the failure of the Commonwealth to the original sin. And 'the debate in Hell would have been lacking in power and verisimilitude if the poet had not lived through the period of the long parliament.' Furthermore, the following lines of Book II also reflect Milton's own personality:

'For who would lose,

Though full of pain, this intellectual being,

Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,

To perish rather, swallowed up and lost

In the wise womb of uncreated night,

Devoid of sense and motion ?'

In these lines, as mentioned by Bailey, it is no longer Belial who is speaking. It is the voice of a highly cultivated and intellectual human being with all Greek thoughts behind him; it is, in short, Milton himself.

3.3.8 Concept of Hell

In *Paradise Lost,* Milton gives a vivid and effective picture of Hell. Hell is a place of torment, evoking the quality of sinister wilderness. It is a 'dismal situation waste and wild' as Satan realizes on surveying the place to which he has fallen. It is the 'infernal world' of horrors. The place resembles a dungeon burning like a furnace. 'But the flames give no light, or only just enough light to emphasize the darkness - to make 'darkness visible'. The light brings to Satan's sight the misery, and sorrowful places where 'rest can never dwell' and hope, which comes to all beings, is totally absent. There is only never-ending torture, since there is no release from here for the fallen

angels. They have fallen into a 'fiery gulf, a 'fiery deluge' fed with 'ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.' The ocean of fire spreads over an indefinite space. The place is constantly afflicted with 'floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire.' The place is compared to a volcano;

'Whose grisly top

Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire

Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign

That in his womb was hid metalic ore.

The work of sulphur.'

The 'torrid clime vaulted with fire' naturally produced intense heat. The dry land is solid fire just as the lake is of liquid fire. Milton compares the fiery land with the bottom of the burning

Pelorus or Aetna which is torn from its base by a violent underground wind and, on catching fire, converts solid minerals into vapour and blown off rocks. What is left is a burnt surface at the bottom, all wrapped up in smoke and foul smell.

Milton in his description of Hell in Lines 59-75 makes use of the medieval notion —that Hell, being a place where the damned are deprived of the sight of God (who is light), is a place of sorrowful darkness. The Old Testament's description of the land of the dead is also recalled 'where the light is as darkness.' Hell is a place far removed from the Ught of Heaven, and the difference between the two places is clearly suggested:

'Oh how unlike the place whence they fell!'

The greatest punishment is to be deprived of the beatific vision, and to be immersed in eternal despair.

Milton presents the abstract as concrete. He uses striking images drawn from different sources to focus our attention on fire. Terms such as 'dry land', 'burning lake', 'gate', etc., contribute to the technique of making the abstract into concrete.

Milton's Hell is described partly as the reader might see it, and partly through Satan's eyes. The objective and subjective torments of Hell are thus mingled. We view Hell and also experience it from the point of view of Satan who is to dwell in it for ever. That Hell is a place of confusion and contradiction is brought out by the description - it is a place where fire exists without light and darkness is almost tangible and this darkness itself reveals the sights of misery.

The hopelessness of Hell is an important feature to note. Man can bear suffering and pain partly because of the hope that it will end sometime. What is more important, complete hopelessness indicates an inner disintegration. But the fallen angels have brought Hell upon themselves. 'The devils, like fallen men, are caught in a recalcitrant and dangerous world of their own making: having tried to burst Heaven, they find themselves domiciled in a volcano.' And they have to face it for eternity.

Milton, however, does not make Hell formless, even though he does not indicate its size or degree of heat. Sea and land exist and from its soil the precious metals are refined which go into the construction of Pandemonium. It gives the atmosphere of busy planning,' of life as nearly as lively as ever, of energies unquenched' says Waldock.

Satan contemplates the fiery wilderness but rises valiantly to try and overcome despair. He hails the 'Infernal world' and declares that the 'Mind is its own place' Andean in itself make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven'. He declares:

'Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,

To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell, Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.'

3.3.9 Satan's Speech

Satan makes his first speech to Beelzebub, his closest comrade. Here Satan admits that God proved stronger than his opponents, because of his thunder and that God's true strength became known only in the course of the battle, which Satan and his followers fought against God, 'and till then who knew the force of those dire arms?' He asserts that he is not repentant of his rebellion against

Heaven's ruler, that his mind is 'fixed' (steadfast), that he feels a great contempt for the heavenly ruler because of his 'sense of injured merit.' He claims that a battle only, not the war, has been lost, and that there remains in him an integrated personality still by virtue of the unifying power of the unconquerable will, the pursuit of revenge, and undying hate, to which he adds the courage never to submit or yield. He will never beg for reconciliation with his victor. He proposes endless war with that power. Satan's supreme self-confidence, bis determination to continue the war against God and his declaration not 'to bow and sue for grace with suppliant knee' are generally regarded as heroic qualities worthy of admiration. But this speech also makes Satan's evil intentions quite clear. He is prompted by undying hatred for God and a desire for revenge: 'And study of revenge, immortal hate.' He is prepared to wage the war 'by force or guile'. These are certainly not heroic aspects ofhis character. These do but lower him in our estimation by neutralizing, to a great extent, his heroic characteristics, Besides, his assertion that nobody knew beforehand the precise strength of God's 'dire arms'is sheer hypocrisy because, dwelling in Heaven, he could not have been unaware of the extent of God's power. His claim to superiority over God in respect of what he calls' foresight' is sheer arrogance. How, then, can we admire, or sympathize with, Satan?

Satan's second speech is also addressed to Beelzebub. He begins in the heroic vein by saying that 'to be weak is miserable, doing or suffering!'. But the evil in him emerges immediately when he says that 'to do aught good never will be our task, but ever to do ill our sole delight' If God seeks 'to bring forth good' out of the evil ofhis enemies (Satan and his followers), they must strive to prevent that end and 'out of good still to find means of evil'. Only a perverse reader or critics can sympathize with Satan when Satan talks thus. Satan then goes on to speak of the opportunity that offers itself for the mobilization of the fallen angles. Here is an implicit admission by Satan of God's superior strength because the opportunity lies in God's having 'recalled his ministers of vengeance and pursuit back to the gates of Heaven.' He now proposes the reassembling of the rebellious angels in order to decide how to overcome this 'dire calamity' and what support to get from hope or what strength from despair. It cannot be denied that, in respect of the intensity of determination and courage, quite apart from any moral consideration, Satan does attain a heroic stature even by this speech, as he did by his first. But moral considerations can never be ignored.

Satan's third speech is also made with Beelzebub as his audience. This is one of his most celebrated speeches, and some lines from here became so famous that they are often quoted by anyone who knows anything of English poetry. Most readers find this speech to be highly inspiring and are therefore quickly won over to Satan's side. To the

heroic qualities that he has previously revealed, Satan now adds a love of freedom and a hatred of slavery. He calls himself the 'new possessor' of Hell and claims to be 'one who brings a mind not to be changed by place or time.' 'The Mind is its own place, and in itself can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven' These are certainly noble lines. 'Here at least we shall be free,' he goes on. 'To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell it is better to reign in Hell; than to serve in Heaven.' Such statements are bound to stir a certain degree of response in every reader. But the contradictions and absurdities of this speech leave no doubt in pur minds about Milton's intentions. Oil one hand, Satan is shocked to see the region, the soil, the clime which he has got in exchange for Heaven. On the other, he speaks as if he had come to possess a grand treasure; 'Here at least we

shall be free.....Here we may reign secure.' He finds himself in a place of 'mournful

gloom' and total misery, and yet he declares that the mind in its own place and so on, He talks of being' still the same', implying that he is equal in every respect to God except that God has a store of thunder at his disposal. If Hell is a place of total misery, how is it better to reign there than to serve in Heaven? In short, it is only the surface glitter of Satan's speech and its high sounding phrases that impress the reader. It is the language and the formal speech which holds the reader spellbound. The true substance of this speech and its true reality, amount to very little.

Satan's next speech is addressed to the fallen angels as they lie stunned on the fiery lake, This speech certainly shows the qualities of leadership in Satan, as is clear from its effect on the listeners. The speech is a combination of sarcasm and threat. But we should not forget the fact that he wrongly addresses the fallen angels as' Princes, Potentates, and Warriors,', speaking as if they were still in possession of their thrones and dignities in Heaven. He warns them that, if they remain disinterested, God's swift pursuers will transfix them to the bottom of Hell. This threat at least, is quite realistic. By means of it Satan is able to make his listeners feel ashamed of themselves for their inaction; On the whole, this is the speech of a great and effective leader who Wins our respect and, to some extent, our sympathy.

Satan's next and last speech in Book I is also a stirring address to the fallen angels. He begins this speech with a bit of flattery by describing the fallen angels as 'Powers matchless, but with the Almighty'. The battle they have fought against God was 'not inglorious', though the result proved disastrous. But how could anyone, on the basis of knowledge, past or present, have anticipated that such a united force of angels could ever be defeated? Having thus restored their confidence in themselves, Satan holds out to them the hope of their being able to regain' Heaven. These 'puss ant legions' whose exile hath 'emptied' Heaven, he boastfully says, cannot fail to repossess their heavenly abode. He tries to explain away the defeat by saying that God's true strength had always been kept concealed by him, and it was this fact which tempted them to revolt against God.

UNIT 5 Eighteenth Century Poetry

3.4 THOMAS GRAY

Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, London. He was the only son of Philip and Dorothy to survive infancy. He began living with his mother following her being separated from her husband. He was sent to Eton College where his uncle was a teacher. Reminiscing his wonderful days at Eton College, he later wrote *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.* Gray was a delicate and intelligent child who loved reading literature. During this time, he made three close friends- Horace Walpole, Thomas Ashton, and Richard West.

Gray moved to Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1734. He did not like the curriculum, teachers and his classmates at Peterhouse. He found the curriculum boring, teachers 'mad with Pride'and his classmates 'sleepy, drunken, dull, illiterate Things'. Thoughhe took admission as a law student, yet he spent most of his time reading classical and contemporary literature.

It was in 1742 that he took poetry writing seriously after losing his close friend Stacy James Ruffer. He went to Cambridge and began a self-imposed programme of literary study. He turned out to be one of the most learned men of this period, though he called himself lazy. He became a Fellow of Peterhouse and later of Pembroke College, Cambridge. He spent most of his life as a scholar in Cambridge. Interestingly, he is considered a leading poet of the mid eighteenth century even though his published work during his lifetime amounts to less than 1,000 lines. He was offered the post of Poet Laureate in 1757 which he declined.

He was also known to be extremely self-critical and afraid of failures so much so that he published only thirteen poems throughout his lifetime. It is believed that the poet started writing his most popular poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* in 1742 soon after the death of his close friend. However, he completed the poem in

1751 anditwas soon published. The poem immediatelyturned out to be a literary sensation and is still considered one of the most popular poems of English language. Some of the popular phrases used in this poem are 'the paths of glory', 'celestial fire', 'kindred spirit', 'the unlettered muse', 'far from the madding crowd' and 'some mute inglorious Milton'. His poems exhibit his sharp observation and mischievous sense of humor. He passed away on 30 July 1771 in Cambridge.

Some of his popular poems are:

- *The Progress of Poesy*
- *The Bard*
- *Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat*
- *Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes*
- *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*
- *Sonnet on the Death of Richard West*
- *Elegy*
- *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

3.4.1 *Elegy written in the Country Churchyard*

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

The lowing herd winds slowly o 'er the lea,

The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,

And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,

And all the air a solemn stillness holds,

Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,

And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower

The moping owl does to the moon complain

Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,

Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,

Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,

Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,

The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,

The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,

The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,

No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,

Or busy housewife ply her evening care:

No children run to lisp their sire's return,

Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share,

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield, Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke; How jocund did they drive their team afield! How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,

Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;

Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile

The short and simple annals of the Poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,

And all that beauty, all that wealth e 'er gave,

Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:-

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault

If Memory o 'er their tomb no trophies raise,

Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault

The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust

Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?

Can Honour s voice provoke the silent dust,

Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid

Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;

Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,

Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,

Rich with the spoils of time, did ne 'er unroll;

Chill Penury repress 'd their noble rage,

And froze the genial current of the soul.

An elegy is a form of a poem which is usually written to mourn the dead or renowned people. It does not tell a story but expresses feelings of sorrow. It admires the deceased person and describes the implications of his death on his loved ones. However, in *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,* Gray mourns the death of common people. It puts common people on pedestal and applauds them. The poet believes that death does not differentiate between renowned and common people. He wonders if there are any ordinary people buried in the churchyard whose talents could not be discovered by anyone. This thought encourages the poet to appreciate common people who have lived simple and honest lives.

The poem has the characteristics of Augustan as well as Romantic poetry since it was written towards the end of Augustan age, a period which marked the beginning of Romantic period. The poem exhibits balanced phrasing of Augustan age and emotionalism of Romantic era.

It is believed that Gray began writing this elegy in 1742 in the graveyard of a church in Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire and completed it in 1751. The poem was first published in 1751 and its improved versions were published in 1753, 1758 and 1768. The poem is written in iambic pentameter and heroic quatrains. It is considered to be one of the masterpieces by Thomas Gray.

In the opening lines of the poem, the poet observes signs which depict that a country day is coming to a close. Some of these signs are a curfew bell knelling, cattle across the field and a farmer

going back home. After sometime, the poet feels lonely and thinks about the isolated rural landscape. 'Knell' is a sound of a bell, especially when it is rung solemnly to announce a death or funeral. Thus, the poet uses this word in the first line of the poem deliberately to remind the readers about the mortaUty of human life.

The sober tone is maintained by the poet even in the second stanza. However, it is important to note that the poet seems to be meditative and not sad at this point. He describes the quiet atmosphere around him after the day has come to a close by using phrases like 'fades the glimmering landscape', 'air a solemn stillness' and 'drowsy tinklings'. Then, an owl's sound breaks the silence of the atmosphere. The owl is sad and complains to the moon. In the first three stanzas, the poet does not make any direct reference to funeral and death but indirectly prepares the atmosphere for funeral by describing some doleful sounds.

In the fourth stanza, the poet draws our attention to the graves in the country churchyard. The poet describes the load of earth and brings out the fact that even the earth has to be disrupted for digging a grave. The poet inverts the sentence from 'Where heaves the turf' to 'Where the turf heaves' in order to depict that the earth has already been disrupted. However, this disruption does not affect 'rude Forefathers' buried beneath the earth. They seem to be unmoved and at peace. The poet tells us that they are in 'cells'. Here the word 'cells' connotes quietness of the graveyard and that they are in deep'sleep'.

Here the poet reminds us that the forefathers would not rise from their 'lowly beds' even after hearing 'cock's shrill clarion'. The phrase 'lowly beds' connotes humble graves and humble lives that they have lived. The poet also reminds us that they would not be able to hear the satisfying sounds of country life and would not be able to enjoy the joy that family life brings, such as the joy which a father feels when his children 'climb his knees'.

In addition to this, the poet also states that forefathers lying in the graves would not be able to enjoy the pleasures of working in the fields. A poem that deals with practical aspects of agriculture and rural affairs is called georgic verse. This stanza brings out the element of georgic verse in the poem, a verse that was quite popular in the eighteenth century. This relation of a farmer with soil also brings out the link of a man with nature. The element of nature was one of the major characteristics of Romantic poetry.

Further, the poet warns the rich and powerful people not to scorn the ordinary people just because they are not popular and do not have annals written on their graves. Here he reminds the rich people that they would also die one day irrespective of the fact that they are wealthy and have a respectable position in the society.

He also tells the rich that they should not look down upon the modest graves of the ordinary people. He also implies that even though the powerful people have ek. jorate graves with profuse memorials and inspiring honours but these do not help in bringing them back to life. Their merits in life would not save them from death. He uses the phrase 'Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust, Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?'. In these lines, Gray personifies flattery and death as if death has a will which cannot be changed even with the help of flattery.

Gray then wonders about the hidden talents and intellectual abilities of the common people. He states that they might have become powerful people or great poets but there was no one to patronize them. Their lack of resources forced them to resort to rustic life and froze all their ambitions.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene

The dark unfathom 'd caves of ocean bear:

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,

And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast

The little tyrant of his fields withstood,

Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,

Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause oflist'ning senates to command,

The threats of pain and ruin to despise,

To scatter plenty o 'er a smiling land,

And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone

Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;

Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,

And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,

To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,

Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride

With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,

Their sober wishes never learn 'd to stray;

Along the cool sequester'd vale of life

They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect

Some frail memorial still erected nigh,

With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,

Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter 'd Muse,

The place of fame and elegy supply:

And many a holy text around she strews,

That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,

This pleasing anxious being e 'er resign 'd,

Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,

Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,

Some pious drops the closing eye requires;

E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,

E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour 'd dead,

Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;

If chance, by lonely contemplation led,

Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate, —

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,

Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn

Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,

To meet the sun upon the upl

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech

That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high.

His listless length at noontide would he stretch,

And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,

Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;

Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,

Or crazed with care, or cross 'd in hopeless love.

'One morn I miss 'd him on the custom 'd hill,

Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;

Another came; nor yet beside the rill,

Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array

Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,-

Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay

Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

The Epitaph

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth

A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.

Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,

And Melacholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere, Heaven did a recompense as largely send:

He gave to Misery all he had, a tear, He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wish 'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,

Or draw his frailties from their dreaabode

(There they alike in trembling hope repose),

The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thepoet compares common people to pearls and gems that lay deep down in the oceansandare unseen. He also compares them to flowers in jungles which fadeaway unnoticed.

In the past, these graveyards gave shelter to Hampden when he faced Charles I. Thus, these graveyards may help such heroes even in the future. He again reminds us of the talents of these common people. He believes that among these graves lay people whose talents might be

equivalent to those of Milton and Cromwell. Some of them perhaps deserved to be great legislators and were capable of bringing prosperity to their country. But he is also of the opinion that though their poverty stopped them from prospering but it also helped them by stopping them from committing crimes like killing their own brothers for the throne.

Some ambitious people tried to gain patronage by flattering their patrons. People who did not do such things and died unknown were at least saved from 'killing their conscience' to get patronage. The poet is happy about the fact that villagers are away from the hustle and bustle of city life where people cherish high ambitions and spend their lives hankering for prosperity, power and fame. He is happy that villagers are able to spend a peaceful life.

Though the graves of these people are not elaborately ornamented and are not full of rhymes of praise like the graves of the rich people yet some records of their lives and few sayings from the Bible are written on their graves. These sayings might have been written by some educated people of the village so that other people can praise these deceased people. The Bible inscriptions perhaps help these people embrace death cheerfully.

After this, Gray explains the reasons for raising memorials. He tells us that memorials are raised because people spend their lives struggling therefore they wish to be remembered after death. According to the poet, even parting souls wish their loved ones to cry for them and want praises to be written on their tombs.

Now, the poet wonders about his own death. He wonders what would happen if his loved ones inquire about him from the villagers after he dies. The poet imagines that if this happens then some peasant might tell them that he was usually found walking around this area. He also visualizes that some peasant might tell them that he could not be seen around the hills, trees and lawn, where he was usually found, for two consecutive days and the next day his corpse with lamentation was carried to the church.

Then the peasant might say that he is now in the lap of the earth. He might praise the poet that he was not fortunate enough to get fame and wealth during his lifetime but he was a knowledgeable person in spite of the fact that he was born in a modest family. The peasant might feel sad about the fact that the poet was devoid of happiness during his lifetime. But he might praise him as a sincere soul who was charitable and liberal in approach and helped poor people with his limited resources.

He then says that no one might then even ask about his merits and faults because God is the one who would reward him for his good deeds and punish him for his bad deeds on the Judgment Day. Thus, the elegy ends on a note of contentment.

3.5 ALEXANDER POPE

Alexander Pope was the son of Alexander Pope Senior. He was born in London. His father was a Roman Catholic linen-merchant. Pope spent his childhood at Binfield at the edge of Windsor Forest. He always recalled this period as a golden age in his later life.

' *Thy forests, Windsor, and thy green retreats,*

At once the monarch's and the Muse's seats,

Invite my lays

Be present, sylvan maids!

Unlock your springs,

and open all your shades.

Tales from the life of Pope were thought to be worthy of being collected. According to Joseph Spence, a critic, minor poet and Pope's biographer, Pope was a child of a particularly sweet temper and had a great deal of sweetness in his look when he was a boy'. He was given the nickname of the Uttle nightingale because of his melodious voice.

Pope's father-the son of an Anglican vicar, converted to Catholicism. It led to a lot of problems in the family. During those times, Catholics suffered repressive legislation and prejudices. They did not get entry to any universities nor were they given any kind of public employment. So, Pope had an irregular education that was frequently interrupted. He was expelled from Twyford School as he wrote a satire on one of the teachers. So, his aunt taught him at home how to read. He learned Latin and Greek from a local priest and acquired the knowledge of French and ItaUan poetry later. He even attended clandestine CathoUc schools.

Most of his time was spent reading books from his father's library. According to his half-sister, at times, he did nothing but write and read. While he was in school, Pope wrote a play that was based on speeches from the *Iliad.* Samuel Johnson describes that Pope's first epic poem, *Alcander,* was burned at the suggestion of Francis Atterbury, who was later exiled for treason as he supported the deposed Stuart monarchy.

In 1700, when his family shifted to Binfield in Windsor Forest, Pope got infected with tuberculosis because of infected milk. It is said that it was possibly Pott's disease, which is a tubercular infection of the bones. He even suffered from asthma and constant headaches and his humpback was a regular target for critics to ridicule him in literary battles. Pope was known as 'hunchbacked toad'. In his middle age, he was only 4ft 6in tall and wore a stiffened canvas bodice for supporting his spine.

After he shifted to London, Pope published his first major work, which was *An Essay on Criticism.* This essay was based on neo-classical doctrines and it derived standards of taste from the order of nature.

Good nature and good sense must ever join;

To err is human, to forgive divine.

Before he became one of the members of Scriblerus Club, Pope was associated with anti-Catholic Whig friends, but by 1713 he was inclined towards the Tories. Some of his Tory friends were Jonathan Swift, Gray, Congreve and Robert Harley, the first Earl of Oxford. In 1712, Pope published an early version *of The Rape of the Lock.* It was an elegant satire regarding the battle between the sexes and follies of a young woman with her puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux. The work got expanded in 1714. Its first version had two cantos (1712) and the final version five cantos.

3.5.1 *Rape of the Lock*

Canto I

What dire Offence from am 'rous Causes springs, What mighty
Contests rise from trivial Things,

I sing—This Verse to C ------ ,Muselisdue;

This, ev 'n Belinda may vouchfafe to view:

Slight is the Subject, but not so the Praise,

If She inspire, and He approve my Lays.

Say what strange Motive, Goddess! cou 'd compel

A well-bred Lord t'assault a gentle Belle?

Oh say what stranger Cause, yet unexplor 'd,

Cou 'd make a gentle Belle reject a Lord? [1.10]

And dwells such Rage in softest Bosoms then?

An'/d lodge such daring Souls in Little Men?

Soljhro' white Curtains shot a tim 'rous Ray,

And op 'd those Eyes that must eclipse the Day;

Now Lapdogs give themselves the rowzing Shake,

And sleepless Lovers, just at Twelve, awake:

Thrice rung the Bell, the Slipper knock'd the Ground,

And the press 'd Watch jeturn 'd a silver Sound.

Belinda still her downy Pillow prest,

Her Guardian Sylph prolong'd the balmy Rest. [1.20]

'Twas he had summon 'd to her silent Bed

The Morning-Dream that hover 'd o 'er her Head.

A Youth more glitt'ring than a Birth-night Beau,

(That ev'n in Slumber caus 'd her Cheek to glow)

Seem 'd to her Ear his winning Lips to lay,

And thus in Whispers said, or seem 'd to say.

Fairest of Mortals, thou distinguish 'd Care

Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!

If e'er one Vision touch'd thy infant Thought,

Of all the Nurse and all the Priest have taught, [1.30]

Of airy Elves by Moonlight Shadows seen,

The silver Token, and the circled Green,

Or Virgins visited by Angel-Pow'rs,

With Golden Crowns and Wreaths ofheav'nly Flowers,

Hear and believe! thy own Importance know,

Nor bound thy narrow Hews to Things below.

Some secret Truths from Learned Pride conceal'd,

To Maids alone and Children are reveal'd:

What tho'no Credit doubting Wits may give?

The Fair and Innocent shall still believe. [1.40]

Know then, unnumbered Spirits round thee fly,

The light Militia of the lower Sky;

These, tho' unseen, are ever on the Wing,

Hang o 'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.

Think what an Equipage thou hast in Air,

And view with scorn Two Pages and a Chair.

As now your own, our Beings were of old,

And once inclos 'd in Woman's beauteous Mold;

Thence, by a soft Transition, we repair

From earthly Vehicles to these of Air. [1.50]

Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,

That all her Vanities at once are dead:

Succeeding Vanities she still regards,

And tho'she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.

Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,

And Love of Ombre, after Death survive.

For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,

To their first Elements the Souls retire:

The Sprighis of fiery Termagants in Flame

Mount up, and take a Salamander's Name. [1.60]

Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,

And sip with Nymphs, their Elemental Tea.

The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome,

In search of Mischief still on Earth to roam.

The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,

And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air.

Know farther yet; Whoever fair and chaste

Rejects Mankind, is by some Sylph embrac'd:

For Spirits, freed from mortal Laws, with ease

Assume what Sexes and what Shapes they please. [1.70]

What guards the Purity of melting Maids,

In Courtly Balls, and Midnight Masquerades,

Safe from the treach'rous Friend, and daring Spark,

The Glance by Day, the Whisper in the Dark;

When kind Occasion prompts their warm Desires,

When Musick softens, and when Dancing fires?

"lis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,

Tho'Honour is the Word with Men below.

Some Nymphs there are, too conscious of their Face,

For Life predestin 'd to the Gnomes Embrace. [1.80]

These swell their Prospects and exalt their Pride,

When Offers are disdain 'd, and Love deny 'd.

Then gay Ideas crowd the vacant Brain;

While Peers and Dukes, and all their sweeping Train,

And Garters, Stars, and Coronetsappear,

And in soft Sounds, Your Grace salutes their Ear.

"lis these that early taint the Female Soul,

Instruct the Eyes of young Coquettes to roll,

Teach Infants Cheeks a bidden Blush to know,

And Utile Hearts to flutter at a Beau. [1.90]

Oft when the World imagine Women stray,

The Sylphs thro' mystick Mazes guide their Way,

Thro' all the giddy Circle they pursue,

And old Impertinence expel by new.

What tender Maid but must a Victim fall

To one Man's Treat, but for another's Ball?

When Florio speaks, what Virgin could withstand,

If gentle Damon did not squeeze her Hand?

With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,

They shift the moving Toyshopof their Heart; [1.100]

Where Wigs with Wigs, with Sword-knots Sword-knots strive,

Beaus banish Beaus, and Coaches Coaches drive.

This erring Mortals Levity may call,

Oh blind to Truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.

Of these am I, who thy Protection claim,

A watchful Sprite, and Ariel is my Name.

Late, as I rang'd the Crystal Wilds of Air,

In the clear Mirror of thy ruling Star

I saw, alas! some dread Event impend,

E're to the Main this Morning Sun descend. [1.110]

But Heav 'n reveals not what, or how, or where:

Warn 'd by thy Sylph, oh Pious Maid beware!

This to disclose is all thy Guardian can.

Beware of all, but most beware of Man!

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,

Leapt up, and wak'd his Mistress with his Tongue.

'Twas then Belinda, if Report say true,

Thy Eyes first open 'd on a Billet-doux.

Wounds, Charms, and Ardors, were no sooner read,

But all the Vision vanish'dfrom thy Head. [1.120]

And now, unveil 'd, the Toilet stands display'd,

Each Silver Vase in mystic Order laid.

First, rob 'd in White, the Nymph intent adores

With Head uncover'd, the cosmetic Pow'rs.

A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears,

To that she bends, to that her Eyes she rears;

Th' inferior Priestess, at her Altar's side,

Trembling, begins the sacred Rites of Pride.

Unnumber 'd Treasures ope at once, and here

The various Off rings of the World appear; [1.130]

From each she nicely culls with curious Toil,

And decks the Goddess with the glitt'ring Spoil.

This Casket India's glowing Gems unlocks,

And all Arabia breathes from yonder Box.

The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,

Transform 'd to Combs, the speckled and the white.

Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,

Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux.

Now awful Beauty puts on all its Arms;

The Fair each moment rises in her Charms, [1.140]

Repairs her Smiles, awakens ev'ry Grace,

And calls forth all the Wonders of her Face;

Sees by Degrees a purer Blush arise,

And keener Lightnings quicken in her Eyes.

The busy Sylphs surround their darling Care;

These set the Head, and those divide the Hair,

Some fold the Sleeve, while others plait the Gown;

And Betty's prais 'dfor Labours not her own.

Canto I

The Rape of the Lock begins with a passage that describes the subject of the poem. It invokes the blessing of the muse. The sun ('Sol') appears to begin the lazy morning routines of a rich household. The lapdogs shake themselves awake, bells starts to ring and even though it is already noon, Belinda is still asleep. She has been dreaming, and you come to know that the dream has been sent by 'her guardian Sylph,'Ariel. In the dream she sees a handsome youth who tells her that she was protected by 'unnumber' d spirits'. These spirits are an army of supernatural beings who once lived on earth in the form of human women. The youth also explains that these spirits are the invisible guardians of a woman's chastity, even though the credit is generally given to 'Honour' instead of to their divine stewardship. Among these spirits, a particular group—the Sylphs, dwell in the air. They act as Belinda's personal guardians. These sylphs are devoted, almost lover-like, towards any woman who has 'rejects mankind.' These sylphs understand and reward the vanities of an elegant and frivolous lady such as Belinda. Ariel, who is the chief of all Belinda's puckish protectors, gives her

warning in the dream that a dreadful event is going to befall her that day, although he can tell her nothing more specific than that that she must be 'beware of Man!' Then Belinda awakes, to the licking tongue of her pet lapdog, Shock. Upon the delivery of a billet-doux, or love-letter, she forgets all about the dream. She then goes towards her dressing table and goes through an elaborate ritual of dressing, in which her image in the mirror looks as a 'heavenly image,' or a 'goddess.' The Sylphs, though unseen, assist their charge as she gets ready for the day's activities.

The opening of the poem describes its mock-heroic style. Pope in the beginning itself introduces the epic subjects of love and war. He invokes his muse and writes a dedication to the man (the historical John Caryll) who commissioned him to write the poem.

The second line of the poem confirms in clear terms what the first line already hints at: the 'am'rous causes' the poem talks about cannot be compared to the grand love of Greek heroes but they rather represent a basic version of that emotion. The 'contest' that Pope alludes to proves to be 'mighty' only in an ironic sense. They are just small card-games and flirtatious tussles and not the great battles of epic tradition. Belinda is not, like Helen of Troy, 'the face that launched a thousand ships' but she has a face that although also beautiful leads to a lot of foppish nonsense. The initial two verse-paragraphs describe the comic inappropriateness of the epic style (and corresponding mind-set) towards the subject at hand. Pope gets this discrepancy at the level of the line and half-line; the reader has to dwell on the incompatibility among the two sides of his parallel formulations. So, in this world, it is 'little men' who in 'tasks so bold... engage'; and 'soft bosoms' are the dwelling-place for 'mighty rage'. In this startling juxtaposition of the petty and the grand, the former exists while the latter is ironic. In mock-epic, the high heroic style works not just to dignify the subject but instead to expose and ridicule it. So, the basic irony of the style supports the substance of the poem's satire. It attacks the misguided values of a society, which takes small matters for serious ones while failing to attend to issues of basic importance.

By Belinda's dream, Pope introduces the 'machinery' of the poem-the supernatural powers, which affect the action from behind the scenes. Here, the sprites which guard Belinda are depicted to represent the gods of the Greek and Roman traditions. These gods are at times benevolent and sometimes malicious, but they are always intimately involved in the earthly events. The scheme also makes use of other ancient hierarchies and systems of order. Ariel describes that women's spirits, when they die, return 'to their first elements'. Each female personality type gets converted in a particular kind of sprite. They are gnomes, sylphs, salamanders and nymphs. They in turn, are associated with the four elements of earth, air, fire and water. The ones who were light coquettes in their lives became airy sylphs. These airy sylphs have a particular concern for Belinda as she is their type, and it becomes the characteristic of feminine nature with which the poem is most concerned.

Pope begins to sketch the character of the coquettes in the initial canto. He draws the portrait indirectly, by characteristics of the sylphs instead of Belinda herself. Their priorities describe that the basic concerns of womanhood, particularly for women of Belinda's class, are social ones. Woman's 'joy in gilded Chariots' display an obsession with pomp and superficial splendour, while 'love of Ombre', a fashionable card game, and hints at frivolity. The erotic charge of this social world in turn indicates towards another central concern, i.e., the protection of chastity. These are those women who above all value the prospect of marrying to advantage, and they havelearned at an early age how to promote themselves and manipulate their suitors without making any

compromises. The sylphs become an allegory for the mannered conventions, which govern female social behaviour. Basic principles like honour and chastity have become a part of conventional interaction. Pope clearly says that these women are not conducting themselves on the basis of abstract moral principles, but rather they are governed by an elaborate social mechanism- of which the sylphs cut a fitting caricature. While Pope's technique of employing supernatural machinery permits him to ridicule

this situation, it also assists to keep the satire light and to exonerate individual women from too severe a judgment. If Belinda has all the typical female foibles, Pope wants us to identify that it is basically because she has been trained and educated to act in this manner. On the whole, the society is as much to blame as she is. Men are also not exempt from this judgment. The competition among the young lords for the attention of beautiful ladies is described as a battle of vanity, as 'wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive'. Pope's phrases here display a strange attention towards pride and ostentation.

Pope's description of Belinda at her dressing table describes mock-heroic motifs, which will run through the poem. The scene of her toilette is talked about as a religious sacrament, in which Belinda is the priestess and her image in the looking glass is the Goddess that she serves. This parody of the religious rites before a battle then leads to another mock-epic scene, which is of the ritualized arming of the hero. The place of weapons is taken by combs, pins and cosmetics as 'the awful Beauty puts on all its arms'.

Canto n

Not with more Glories, in th'Etherial Plain,

The Sun first rises o'er the purpled Main,

Than issuing forth, the Rival ofhis Beams

Lanch 'd on the Bosom of the Silver Thames.

Fair Nymphs, and well-drest Youths around her shone,

But ev 'ry Eye was fix 'd on her alone.

On her white Breast a sparkling Cross she wore,

Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.

Her lively Looks a sprightly Mind disclose,

QuickasherEyes, andas unfix 'das those: [2.10]

Favours to none, to all she Smiles extends,

Oft she rejects, but never once offends.

Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,

And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.

Yet graceful Ease, and Sweetness void of Pride,

Might hide her Faults, if Belles had faults to hide:

If to her share some Female Errors fall,

Look on her Face, and you '11 forget 'em all.

This Nymph, to the Destruction of Mankind,

Nourish 'd two Locks, which graceful hung behind [2.20]

In equal Curls, and well conspir 'd to deck

With shining Ringlets her smooth Iv'ry Neck.

Love in these Labyrinths his Slaves detains,

And mighty Hearts are held in slender Chains.

With hairy Sprindges we the Birds betray,

Slight Lines of Hair surprize the Finny Prey,

Fair Tresses Man's Imperial Race insnare,

And Beauty draws us with a single Hair.

Th' Adventrous Baron the bright Locks admir 'd,

He saw, he wish'd, and to the Prize aspir'd: [2.30]

Resolv 'd to win, he meditates the way,

By Force to ravish, or by Fraud betray;

For when Success a Lover's Toil attends,

Few ask, if Fraud or Force attain 'd his Ends.

For this, e 're Phoebus rose, he had implor 'd

Propitious Heav'n, and ev'ry Pow'r ador'd,

But chiefly Love — to Love an Altar built,

Of twelve vast French Romances, neatly gilt.

There lay three Garters, half a Pair of Gloves;

And all the Trophies of his former Loves. [2.40]

With tender Billet-doux he lights the Pyre,

And breathes three am 'rous Sighs to raise the Fire.

Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent Eyes

Soon to obtain, and long possess the Prize:

The Pow'rs gave Ear, and granted half his Pray'r,

The rest, the Winds dispers 'd in empty Air.

But now secure the painted Vessel glides,

The Sun-beams trembling on the floating Tydes,

While melting Musick steals upon the Sky,

And soften 'd Sounds along the Waters die. [2.50]

Smooth flow the Waves, the Zephyrs gently play,

Belinda smil'd, and all the World was gay.

All but the Sylph — With careful Thoughts opprest,

Th' impending Woe sate heavy on his Breast.

He summons strait his Denizens of Air;

The lucid Squadrons round the Sails repair:

Soft o 'er the Shrouds Aerial Whispers breathe,

That seem 'd but Zephyrs to the Train beneath.

Some to the Sun their Insect-Wings unfold,

Waft on the Breeze, or sink in Clouds of Gold. [2.60]

Transparent Forms, too fine for mortal Sight,

Their fluid Bodies half dissolv'd in Light.

Loose to the Wind their airy Garments flew,

Thin glitt'ring Textures of the filmy Dew;

Dipt in the richest Tincture of the Skies,

Where Light disports in ever-mingling Dies,

While ev'ry Beam new transient Colours flings,

Colours that change whene 'er they wave their Wings.

Amid the Circle, on the gilded Mast,

Superior by the Head, was Ariel plac'd; [2.70]

His Purple Pinions opening to the Sun,

He rais 'd his Azure Wand, and thus begun.

Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your Chief give Ear,

Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Daemons hear!

Ye know the Spheres and various Tasks assign 'd,

By Laws Eternal, to th' Aerial Kind.

Some in the Fields of purest 'ther play,

And bask and whiten in the Blaze of Day.

Some guide the Course ofwandring Orbs on high,

Or roll the Planets thro'the boundless Sky. [2.80]

Some less refin 'd, beneath the Moon's pale Light

Hover, and catch the shooting stars by Night;

Or suck the Mists in grosser Air below,

Or dip their Pinions in the painted Bow,

Or brew fierce Tempests on the wintry Main,

Or o 'er the Glebe distill the kindly Rain.

Others on Earth o 'er human Race preside,

Watch all their Ways, and all their Actions guide:

Of these the Chief the Care of Nations own,

And guard with Arms Divine the British Throne. [2.90]

Our humbler Province is to tend the Fair,

Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious Care.

To save the Powder from too rude a Gale,

Nor let th' imprison 'd Essences exhale,

To draw fresh Colours from the vernal Flow'rs,

To steal from Rainbows ere they drop in Show'rs

A brighter Wash; to curl their waving Hairs,

Assist their Blushes, and inspire their Airs;

Nay oft, in Dreams, Invention we bestow,

To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelo. [2.100]

This Day, black Omens threat the brightestFair

That e'er deserv'd a watchful Spirit's Care;

Some dire Disaster, or by Force, or Slight,

But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in Night.

Whether the Nymph shall break Diana's Law,

Or some frail China Jar receive a Flaw,

Or stain her Honour, or her new Brocade,

Forget her Pray'rs, or miss a Masquerade,

Or lose her Heart, or Necklace, at a Ball;

Or whether Heav 'n has doom 'd that Shock must fall. [2.110]

Haste then ye Spirits! to your Charge repair;

The flutt'ring Fan be Zephyretta 's Care;

The Drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;

And Momentilla, let the Watch be thine;

Do thou, Crispissa, tend her fav'rite Lock;

Ariel himself shall be the Guard of Shock.

To Fifty chosen Sylphs, of special Note,

We trust th'important Charge, the Petticoat.

Oft have we known that sev'nfold Fence to fail;

Tho' stiff with Hoops, and arm 'd with Ribs of Whale. [2.120]

Form a strong Line about the Silver Bound,

And guard the wide Circumference around.

Whatever spirit, careless of his Charge,

His Post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,

Shall feel sharp Vengeance soon o 'ertake his Sins,

Be siopt in Vials, or transfixt with Pins.

Or plung'd in Lakes of bitter Washes lie,

Or wedg 'd whole Ages in a Bodkin's Eye:

Gums and Pomatums shall his Flight restrain,

While clog'd he beats his silken Wings in vain; [2.130]

Or Alom-Stypticks with contracting Power

Shrink his thin Essence like a rivell'd Flower.

Or as Ixion fix'd, the Wretch shall feel

The giddy Motion of the whirling Mill,

In Fumes of burning Chocolate shall glow,

And tremble at the Sea thatfroaths below!

He spoke; the Spirits from the Sails descend;

Some, Orb in Orb, around the Nymph extend,

Some thrid the mazy Ringlets of her Hair,

Some hang upon the Pendants of her Ear; [2.140]

With- beating Hearts the dire Event they wait,

Anxious, and trembling for the Birth of Fate.

Canto II

In that boat was Baron, a young man who cannot help admiring Belinda's locks. He is so attracted to them that he wishes to possess them and is willing to steal them.

He takes this mission up as a serious one and focusses his energies on it. He rises early that morning and constructs an altar at which he prays for the success of the mission. He wishes to succeed in this test of love. He sacrifices everything else that he possesses as tokens of his past love and relationships including gloves, garters and love letters. He builds a pyre with these 'past love tokens' and prostrates before it. He then sets fire to the pyre which he fans with his sighs, heavy with love. Although the gods listen to his prayers, they opt to grant him only half of his wishes.

As the boat continues its journey, all the passengers are happy and without cares except Ariel. His thoughts keep going back to the fact that some bad event is predicted for the day. He gathers an army of sylphs around him and reminds them in a ceremonious manner of their duties and responsibilities. He tells them that other than focussing on the regulation of the weather and celestial bodies and guarding the British Monarch, it is their duty to 'tend the Fair', that is, to watch over fair maidens and ladies. They should be attending to their clothing, curls, perfumes and assisting 'their blushes' and inspiring 'their airs. He tells them that there is some harm waiting to happen to Belinda that her life is under threat. He assigns an army of bodyguards to watch over Belinda.

He orders Brillante to watch over her earrings, Momentiall to guard her watch and Crispissa to watch over her locks. He took it upon himself to watch over the lapdog, Shock. An army of fifty sylphs were told to guard the petticoat. Ariel also announces that anyone who fails to fulfil his duties or responsibilities will receive severe punishment. They all take up their positions and wait.

Pope, from the very start, considers Belinda's beauty to be divine. It is an assessment which Belinda further proves and strengthens by creating an altar to her own image in a metaphorical sense.

This praise is ironical in a way because it reflects negatively on a system of public values where external characteristics are held in high esteem and ranked higher than characteristics pertaining to moral values or the intellect. Pope also reveres the physical charms of his heroine and admits that her charms are capable enough to make an individual forget the errors attributed to the gender.

It is said that Pope tried to flatter Arabella Fermor, the lady on whom the character of Belinda is based. He was determined to achieve the desired effect with his poetry by not offending.

Pope praises the ways in which physical attributes of beauty are seen as art. He is in awe of the beauty of Belinda's locks that to him seem to have a natural and spontaneous fall but are actually made to appear so. Here, all that can be achieved at a lady's dressing table or al the mysteries associated with it are similar to Pope's own literary art. He himself describes it as 'nature to advantage dress'd'.

Although he sort of approves of secretly admiring feminine beauty, he also feels that readily worshipping beauty in such a manner will tantamount to sacrilege.

The cross that Belinda wears as a necklace is more an ornamental piece of jewellery than a religious symbol. Therefore, it may receive equal appreciation from the Christians as well as the 'Jews' and 'Infidels'.

It is unclear whether the admirers appreciate the cross itself or the fair bosom on which it rests or the felicitous effect of the whole. The Baron, of course, is the most significant of those who worship at Belinda's beauty altar. He performs a daily ritual sacrifice in the pre-dawn hours. This ritual is yet another mock-heroic element of the poem. It mimics the epic tradition of sacrificing to the gods before any battle or journey, and drapes his project with an absurdly grand import, which actually only exposes its triviality. The basic fact that he discards all his other love tokens in these preparations shows his capriciousness as a lover. Earnest prayer, in this scene gets replaced by the self-indulgent sighs of the lover. When the gods grant only half of what the Baron asks, Pope alludes towards the epic convention by which the favour of the gods is just a mixed blessing for winning the sponsorship of one god. In this poem, the effects of a prayer 'half granted are negligible instead of being tragic. It just means that he would be able to steal just a lock instead of both of them.

In the first canto, the religious imagery around Belinda's grooming rituals led to a militaristic conceit. Here also, the same pattern holds. Her curls are described as traps that are perfectly calibrated for ensnaring the enemy. Yet the quality of female coyness is so that it seeks simultaneously to attract as well as repel, so that the counterpart of the enticing ringlets is a formidable petticoat. This undergarment is described as a defensive armament, which is comparable to the shield of Achilles. Its basic function is to protect the maiden's chastity by the invisible might of fifty sylphs. The sylphs, Belinda's protectors, have the duty to protect her not from failure but from being too great a success in attracting men. This paradoxical situation dramatizes the contradictory values and motives that were implied in the era's sexual conventions.

In this canto, the sexual allegory of the poem starts to come in fuller view. The name of the poem already associates the cutting of Belinda's hair with a more explicit sexual conquest, and Pope cultivates that suggestion here. He enhances his sexually metaphorical language for the incident, by adding words like 'ravish' and 'betray' to the 'rape' of the title. He also slips in some comments about the implications of his society's sexual mores, as when he remarks that 'when success a Lover's toil attends, / few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends.' When Ariel speculates about the possible forms the 'dire disaster' might take, he includes a breach of chastity ('Diana's law'), the breaking of china (another allusion to the loss of virginity) and the staining of honour or a gown (the two incommensurate events could happen equally easily and accidentally). He also describes some pettier social 'disasters' against which the Sylphs are equally prepared to fight, like missing a ball (here, as grave as missing prayers) or losing the lapdog. In the Sylphs' defensive efforts, Belinda's petticoat is the battlefield, which needs the most extensive fortifications. This fact hints at the idea that the rape

of the lock stands in for a literal rape or at least represents a threat to her chastity more serious than just a mere theft of a curl.

Canto III

Close by those Meads for ever crown 'd with Flow 'rs, Where Thames
with Pride surveys his rising Tow'rs,

There stands a Structure ofMajestick Frame,

Which from the neighb 'ring Hampton takes its Name.

Here Britain's Statesmen oft the Fall foredoom

Of Foreign Tyrants, and of Nymphs at home;

Here Thou, great Anna! whom three Realms obey,

Dost sometimes Counsel take — and sometimes Tea.

Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,

To taste awhile the Pleasures of a Court; [3.10]

In various Talk th 'instructive hours they past,

Who gave the Ball, or paid the Visit last:

One speaks the Glory of the British Queen,

And one describes a charming Indian Screen.

A third interprets Motions, Looks, and Eyes;

Atev'ry Word a Reputation dies.

Snuff, or the Fan, supply each Pause of Chat,

With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

Mean while declining from the Noon of Day,

The Sun obliquely shoots his burning Ray; [3.20]

The hungry Judges soon the Sentence sign,

And Wretches hang that Jury-men may Dine;

The Merchant from th' exchange returns in Peace,

And the long Labours of the Toilette cease—

Belinda now, whom Thirst of Fame invites,

Burns to encounter two adventrous Knights,

At Ombre singly to decide their Doom;

And swells her Breast with Conquests yet to come.

Strait the three Bands prepare in Arms to join,

Each Band the number of the Sacred Nine. [3.30]

Soon as she spreads her Hand, th 'Aerial Guard

Descend, and sit on each important Card,

First Ariel perch 'd upon a Matadore,

Then each, according to the Rank they bore;

For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient Race,

Are, as when Women, wondrous fond of place.

Behold, four Kings in Majesty rever 'd,

With hoary Whiskers and aforky Beard;

And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a Flow 'r,

Th' expressive Emblem of their softer Pow'r; [3.40]

Four Knaves in Garbs succinct, a trusty Band,

Caps on their heads, and Halberds in their hand;

And Particolour 'd Troops, a shining Train,

Draw forth to Combat on the Velvet Plain.

The skilful Nymph reviews her Force withCare;

Let Spades be Trumps, she said, and Trumps they were.

Now move to War her Sable Matadores,

In Show like Leaders of the swarthy Moors.

Spadillio first, unconquerable Lord!

Led off two captive Trumps, and swept the Board. [3.50]

As many more Manillioforc 'd to yield,

And march 'd a Victor from the verdant Field.

Him Basto follow'd, but his Fate more hard

Gain 'd but one Trump and one Plebeian Card.

With his broad Sabre next, a Chief in Years,

The hoary Majesty of Spades appears;

Puts forth one manly Leg, to sight reveal 'd;

The rest his many-colour 'd Robe conceal 'd.

The Rebel-Knave, who dares his Prince engage,

Proves the just Victim of his Royal Rage. [3.60]

Ev 'n mighty Pom that Kings and Queens o 'erthrow,

And mow'd down Armies in the Fights ofLu,

Sad Chance of War! now, destitute of Aid,

Falls undistinguish 'd by the Victor Spade.

Thus far both Armies to Belinda yield;

Now to the Baron Fate inclines the Field.

His warlike Amazon her Host invades,

Th' Imperial Consort of the Crown of Spades.

The Club s black Tyrant first her Victim dy 'd,

Spite of his haughty Mien, and barb'rous Pride: [3.70]

What boots the Regal Circle on his Head,

His Giant Limbs in State unwieldy spread?

That long behind he trails his pompous Robe,

And of all Monarchs only grasps the Globe?

The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;

Th' embroider 'd King who shows but half his Face,

And his refulgent Queen, with Pow'rs combin 'd,

Of broken Troops an easie$_c$ Conquest find.

Clubs, Diamonds', Hearts, in wild Disorder seen,

With Throngs promiscuous strow the level Green. [3.80]

Thus when dispers 'd a routed Army runs,

Of Asia's Troops, and Africk's Sable Sons,

With like Confusion different Nations fly,

In various habits and of various Dye,

The pierc 'd Battalions dis-united fall,

In Heaps on Heaps; one Fate o 'erwhelms them all.

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily Arts,

And wins (oh shameful Chance!) the Queen of Hearts.

At this, the Blood the Virgin's Cheek forsook,

A livid Paleness spreads o 'er all her Look; [3.90]

She sees, and trembles at th' approaching Ill,

Just in the Jaws of Ruin, and Codille.

And now, (as oft in some distemper 'd State)

On one nice Trick depends the gen 'ral Fate.

An Ace of Hearts steps forth: The King unseen

Lurk'd in her Hand, and mourn 'd his captive Queen.

He springs to Vengeance with an eager pace,

And falls like Thunder on the prostrate Ace.

The Nymph exulting fills with Shouts the Sky,

The Walls, the Woods, and long Canals reply. [3.100]

Oh thoughtless Mortals! ever blind to Fate,

Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!

Sudden these Honours shall be snatch 'd away,

And curs 'dfor ever this Victorious Day.

For lo! the Board with Cups and Spoons is crown 'd,

The Berries crackle, and the Mill turns round.

On shining Altars of Japan they raise

The silver Lamp; the fiery Spirits blaze.

From silver Spouts the grateful Liquors glide,

And China's Earth receives the smoking Tyde. [3.110]

At once they gratify their Scent and Taste,

While frequent Cups prolong the rich Repast.

Strait hover round the Fair her Airy Band;

Some, as she sip'd, the fuming Liquor fann 'd,

Some o 'er her Lap their careful Plumes display 'd,

Trembling, and conscious of the rich Brocade.

Coffee, (which makes the Politician wise,

And see thro' all things with his half shut Eyes)

Sent up in Vapours to the Baron's Brain

New Stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain. [3.120]

Ah cease rash Youth! desist e'er 'tis too late,

Fear the just Gods, and think ofScylla's Fate!

Chang'd to a Bird, and sent to flit in Air,

She dearly pays for Nisus' injur 'd Hair!

But when to Mischief Mortals bend their Will,

How soon they find fit Instruments of Ill!

Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting Grace

A two-edg'd Weapon from her shining Case;

So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,

Present the Spear, and arm him for the Fight. [3.130]

He takes the Gift with rev'rence, and extends

The little Engine on his Finger's Ends:

This just behind Belinda's Neck he spread,

As o 'er the fragrant Steams she bends her Head:

Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprights repair,

A thousand Wings, by turns, blow back the Hair,

And thrice they twitch 'd the Diamond in her Ear,

Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the Foe drew near.

Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought

The close Recesses of the Virgin's Thought; [3.140]

As on the Nosegay in her Breast reclin 'd,

He watch 'd th' Ideas rising in her Mind,

Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her Art,

An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart.

Amaz'd, confus'd, he found his Pow'r expir'd,

Resign 'd to Fate, and with a Sigh retir 'd.

The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring Forfex wide,

T'inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.

Ev'n then, before the fatal Engine clos'd,

A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd; [3.150]

Fate urg'd the Sheers, and cut the Sylph in twain,

(But Airy Substance soon unites again)

The meeting Points that sacred Hair dissever

From the fair Head, for ever and for ever!

Then flash 'd the living Lightnings from her Eyes,

And Screams of Horror rend th' affrighted Skies.

Not louder Shrieks to pitying Heav'n are cast,

When Husbands or when Lap-dogs breath their last,

Or when rich China Vessels, fal'n from high,

In glittring Dust and painted Fragments lie! [3.160]

Let Wreaths of Triumph now my Temples twine,

(The Victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!

While Fish in Streams, or Birds delight in Air,

Or in a Coach and Six the British Fair,

As long as Atalantis shall be read,

Or the small Pillow grace a Lady's Bed,

While Visits shall be paid on solemn Days,

When numerous Wax-lights in bright Order blaze,

While Nymphs take Treats, or Assignations give,

So long my Honour, Name, and Praise shall live! [3.170]

What Time wou 'd spare, from Steel receives its date,

And Monuments, like Men, submit to Fate!

Steel cou 'd the Labour of the Gods destroy,

And strike to Dust th 'Imperial Tow'rs of Troy.

Steel cou 'd the Works of mortal Pride confound,

And hew Triumphal Arches to the Ground.

What Wonder then, fair Nymph! thy Hairs shou 'dfeel

The conqu'ring Force of unresisted Steel?

When the boat arrives at Hampton Court Palace, the ladies and gentlemen get iown for enjoying their courtly entertainments. Belinda sits down with two men to play a game of cards once she finishes a pleasant round of chatting and gossip. All of them play ombre, a three-handed game of tricks and trumps, just like bridge, and it is explained in words of a heroic battle: the cards are called troops that combat on the 'velvet plain' of the card-table. Under Sylphs' watchful care, Belinda starts favourably. Sure about her success, Belinda claims spades as trumps and leads with her highest cards. Quickly, though, the hand takes a turn for the worse when 'to the Baron fate inclines the field': he gets hold of her king of clubs with his queen and then, with his nigh diamonds, leads back. Belinda, who is in danger of losing the game, recovers in her last trick in order to just barely get back the amount she bid.

The next custom of entertainment is the serving of coffee. The Baron is reminded of his intention to attempt Belinda's lock by the curling vapours of the steaming coffee.

Not Tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,

Not Cynthia when her Manteau 's pinn 'd awry,

E'er felt such Rage, Resentment and Despair,

As Thou, sad Virgin! for thy ravish'd Hair. [4.10]

For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,

And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,

Umbriel, a dusky melancholy Spright,

As ever sully 'd the fair face of Light,

Down to the Central Earth, his proper Scene,

Repairs to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.

Swift on his sooty Pinions flitts the Gnome,

And in a Vapour reach 'd the dismal Dome.

No cheerful Breeze this sullen Region knows,

The dreaded East is all the Wind that blows. [4.20]

Here, in a Grotto, sheltred close from Air,

And screen'd in Shades from Day's detested Glare,

She sighs for ever on her pensive Bed,

Pain at her side, and Megrim at her Head.

Two Handmaids wait the Throne: Alike in Place,

But diff'ring far in Figure and in Face.

Here stood Ill-nature like an ancient Maid,

Her wrinkled Form in Black and White array 'd;

With store of Pray'rs, for Mornings, Nights, and Noons,

Her Hand is fill'd; her Bosom with Lampoons. [4.30]

There Affectation with a sickly Mien

Shows in her Cheek the Roses of Eighteen,

Practis 'd'to Lisp, and hang the Head aside,

Faints into Airs, and languishes with Pride;

On the rich Quilt sinks with becoming Woe,

Wrapt in a Gown, for Sickness, and for Show.

The Fair ones feel such Maladies as these,

When each new Night-Dress gives a new Disease.

A constant Vapour o 'er the Palace flies;

Strange Phantoms rising as the Mists arise; [4.40]

Dreadful, as Hermit's Dreams in haunted Shades,

Or bright as Visions of expiring Maids.

Now glaring Fiends, and Snakes on rolling Spires,

Pale Spectres, gaping Tombs, and Purple Fires:

Now Lakes of liquid Gold, Elysiqn Scenes,

And Crystal Domes, and Angels in Machines.

Unnumber 'd Throngs on ev'ry side are seen

Of Bodies chang'd to various Forms by Spleen.

Here living Teapots stand, one Arm held out,

One bent; the Handle this, and that the Spout: [4.50]

A Pipkin there like Homer's Tripod walks;

Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose Pie talks;

Men prove with Child, as pow'rful Fancy works,

And Maids turn 'd Bottels, call aloud for Corks.

Safe past the Gnome thro' this fantastick Band,

A Branch of healing Spleenwort in his hand.

Then thus addrest the Pow'r — Hail wayward Queen!

Who rule the Sex to Fifty from Fifteen,

Parent of Vapors and of Female Wit,

Who give th' Hysteric or Poetic Fit, [4.60]

On various Tempers act by various ways,

Make some take Physick, others scribble Plays;

Who cause the Proud their Visits to delay,

And send the Godly in a Pett, to pray.

A Nymph there is, that all thy Pow'r disdains,

And thousands more in equal Mirth maintains.

But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a Grace,

Or raise a Pimple on a beauteous Face,

Like Citron-Waters Matron's Cheeks inflame,

Or change Complexions at a losing Game; [4.70]

Ife 'er with airy Horns I planted Heads,

Or rumpled Petticoats, or tumbled Beds,

Or caus 'd Suspicion when no Soul was rude,

Or discompos'd the Head-dress of a Prude,

Or e 'er to costive Lap-Dog gave Disease,

Which not the Tears of brightest Eyes could ease:

Hear me, and touch Belinda with Chagrin;

That single Act gives half the World the Spleen.

The Goddess with a discontented Air

Seems to reject him, tho'she grants his Pray'r. [4.80]

A wondrous Bag with both her Hands she binds,

Like that where once Ulysses held the Winds;

For his use, Clarissa draws out her scissors, as she arms him, Baron, the knight, during a romance/Getting hold of the scissors, he attempts three times to clip the lock from behind so that Belinda does not see it. The Sylphs endeavours with a great speed in order to intervene, blowing the hair put of harm's way and tweaking her diamond earring to make her turn around. In a last-minute attempt, Ariel successfully accesses her brain, although he is surprised to discover' an earthly lover lurking at her heart.' Due to this, he does not try to protect her then, as the possible result is that she wants to get violated secretively. In the end, the shears close on the curl. Abrave sylph jumps in between the blades and is divided in two pieces; however, because it is a supernatural creature, he is rapidly restored. The deed is completed, and the Baron feels happy over it though screams of Belinda fill the air.

The classic instances of Pope's masterful use of the heroic couplet are plentiful in this canto. While giving an introduction to Hampton Court Palace, he explains it as the place where Queen Anne' dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea'. This line uses a zeugma, which is a rhetorical device in which a word or phrase changes two other words or phrases in a parallel construction, however changes each in a different way or according to a variable sense. Here, the changing term is 'take'; it applies to the paralleled words 'counsel' and 'tea'. However, nobody 'take'(s) tea in the same manner as one takes counsel, and the impact of the zeugma is to indicate the royal palace as a place that houses both intellectual issues of state and frivolous social occasions. The reader is asked to think that paradox and to reflect on the comparative value and significance of these two variable registers of activity. (For yet another instance of this rhetorical method, see lines 157-8: 'Not louder shrieks to pitying heaven are cast, / when husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last'.) A same point is emphasized, in a less small and strong phrasing, in the second and third verse-paragraphs of this canto. Here, in opposition to the gossip and chatter of the young ladies and lords, Pope starts a conversation on more serious matters that are occurring 'meanwhile' and elsewhere, such as criminal trials and executions and economic exchange.

The rendering of the card game as a battle comprises an amusing and deft narrative feat. By parodying the battle scenes pf the great epic poems, Pope suggests that the energy and passion that was once applied to brave and serious purposes is now wasted on such insignificant trials like games and gambling. These games often become a mere fronffor flirtation. The structure of 'the three attempts' in which the lock is cut is a convention of heroic challenges, specifically in the romance genre. The romance is then invoked in the image of Clarissa arming the Baron—not with a real weapon, but with a pair of sewing scissors. Belinda is not a real adversary, or course, and Pope makes it plain that her resistance—and, by imphcation, her subsequent distress-—is to a certain degree an affectation. The melodrama of her screams is complemented by the ironic comparison of the Baron's feat to the conquest of nations.

Canto IV

But anxious Cares the pensive Nymph oppress,

And secret Passions labour 'd in her Breast.

Not youthful Kings in Battel seiz'd alive,

Not scornful Virgins who their Charms survive,

Not ardent Lovers robb 'd of all their Bliss,

Not ancient Ladies when refus 'd a Kiss,

There she collects the Force of Female Lungs,

Sighs, Sobs, and Passions, and the War of Tongues.

A Vial next she fills with fainting Fears,

Soft Sorrows, melting Griefs, and flowing Tears.

The Gnome rejoicing bears her Gift away,

Spreads his black Wings, and slowly mounts to Day.

Sunk in Thalestris' Arms the Nymph he found,

Her Eyes dejected and her Hair unbound. [4.90]

Full o 'er their Heads the swelling Bag he rent,

And all the Furies issued at the Vent.

Belinda burns with more than mortal Ire,

And fierce Thalestris fans the rising Fire.

O wretched Maid! she spread her hands, and cry'd,

(While Hampton's Ecchos, wretched Maid reply'd)

Was it for this you took such constant Care

The Bodkin, Comb, and Essence to prepare;

For this your Locks in Paper-Durance bound,

For this with tort'ring Irons wreath 'd around? [4.100]

For this with Fillets strain 'd your tender Head,

And bravely bore the double Loads of Lead?

Gods! shall the Ravisher display your Hair,

While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!

Honour forbid! at whose unrival'd Shrine

Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, All, our Sex resign.

Methinks already I your Tears survey,

Already hear the horrid things they say,

Already see you a degraded Toast,

And all your Honour in a Whisper lost! [4.110]

How shall I, then, your helpless Fame defend?

'Twill then be Infamy to seem your Friend!

And shall this Prize, th' inestimable Prize,

Expos 'd thro' Crystal to the gazing Eyes,

And heighten 'd by the Diamond's circling Rays,

On that Rapacious Hand for ever blaze?

Sooner shall Grass in Hide Park Circus grow,

And Wits take Lodgings in the Sound of Bow;

Sooner let Earth, Air, Sea, to Chaos fall,

Men, Monkies, Lap-dogs, Parrots, perish all! [4.120]

She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,

And bids her Beau demand the precious Hairs:

(Sir Plume, of Amber Snuff-box justly vain,

And the nice Conduct of a clouded Cane)

With earnest Eyes, and round unthinking Face,

He first the Snuff-box open'd, then the Case,

And thus broke out — "My Lord, why, what the Devil?

"Z—ds! damn the Lock! fore Gad, you must be civil!

"Plague on't! 'tis past a Jest — nay prithee, Pox!

"Give her the Hair — he spoke, and rapp 'd his Box. [4.130]

It grieves me much (reply 'd the Peer again)

Who speaks so well shou 'd ever speak in vain.

But by this Lock, this sacred Lock I swear,

(Which never more shall join its parted Hair,

Which never more its Honours shall renew,

Cliptfrom the lovely Head where late it grew)

That while my Nostrils draw the vital Air,

This Hand, which won it, shall for ever wear.

He spoke, and speaking, in proud Triumph spread

The long-contended Honours of her Head. [4.140]

But Umbriel, hateful Gnome! forbears not so;

He breaks the Vial whence the Sorrows flow.

Then see! the Nymph in beauteous Grief appears,

Her Eyes half languishing, half drown 'd in Tears;

On her heav 'd Bosom hung her drooping Head,

Which, with a Sigh, she rais 'd; and thus she said.

For ever curs 'd be this detested Day,

Which snatch 'd my best, myfav'rite Curl away!

Happy! ah ten times happy, had I been,

If Hampton-Court these Eyes had never seen! [4.150]

Yet am not I the first mistaken Maid,

By Love of Courts to num 'rous Ills betray 'd.

Oh had I rather un-admir 'd remain 'd

In some lone Isle, or distant Northern Land;

Where the gilt Chariot never marks the way,

Where none learn Ombre, none e 'er taste Bohea!

There kept my Charms conceal 'd from mortal Eye,

Like Roses that in Desarts bloom and die.

What mov 'd my Mind with youthful Lords to rome?

O had I stay 'd, and said my Pray 'rs at home! [4.160]

'Twas this, the Morning Omens seem 'd to tell;

Thrice from my trembling hand the Patch-box fell;

The tott 'ring China shook without a Wind,

Nay, Poll sate mute, and Shock was most Unkind!

A Sylph too warn 'd me of the Threats of Fate,

In mystic Visions, now believ'd too late!

See the poor Remnants of these slighted Hairs!

My hands shall rend what ev'n thy Rapine spares:

These, in two sable Ringlets taught to break,

Once gave new Beauties to the snowie Neck. [4.170]

The Sister-Lock now sits uncouth, alone,

And in its Fellow's Fate foresees its own;

Uncurl 'd it hangs, the fatal Sheers demands;

And tempts once more thy sacrilegious Hands.

Oh hadst thou, Cruel! been content to seize

Hairs less in sight, or any Hairs but these!

Canto IV

After the loss of her lock, 'anxious cares' and 'secret passions' of Belinda are just like the emotions of those individuals who have undergone through 'rage, resentment and despair'. An earthy gnome named Umbriel flies down to the 'Cave of Spleen' once the disappointed Sylphs moves away from it. (The spleen, which is actually an organ that drains out disease-causing agents present in the bloodstream, was conventionally linked to the passions, especially malaise; 'spleen' and 'ill-temper' are synonyms.) While he was leaving, he passes through the bedroom of Belinda. Here, she lies on the ground and facing downwards due headache and discomfiture. 'Two handmaidens'—-Ill-Nature and Affectation are attending her. While holding a sprig of 'spleenwort' before him as a charm Umbriel roams, without being lost or harmed, through this melancholy chamber. He calls upon the 'Goddess of Spleen', and comes back with a bag full of'sighs, sobs, and passions' and a small glass container (especially for medicine or perfume) of sorrow, tears and grief. He suddenly takes Belinda under the influence of the first bag and thus adds fire to her emotions of ire and despair.

Thalestris, Belinda's friend is there to sympathy to her in her times of disappointment. (According to the Greek mythology, Thalestris is the name of one of the Amazons; it is a race of warrior women who did not include men in their society.) Thalestris delivers such a speech, which make Belinda feel more anger than before and increases her indignation; she also forcefully suggests Belinda to take revenge. After that she approaches Sir Plume, 'her beau,' and asks him to demand so that the Baron returns the hair. In return, Sir Plume delivers a weak speech which is full of slang. The speech does not have any effect of the Baron and he disdainfully refuses to accept the request. Exactly at this moment, Umbriel sets free the contents of the remaining vial, due to which Belinda goes through a fit of sorrow and self-pity. With 'beauteous

Say, why are Beauties prais 'd and honour 'd most,

The wise Man's Passion, and the vain Man's Toast? [5.10]

Why deck'd with all that Land and Sea afford,

Why Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd?

Why round our Coaches crowd the white-glov'd Beaus,

Why bows the Side-box from its inmost Rows?

How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains,

Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains:

That Men may say, when we the Front-box grace,

Behold the first in Virtue, as in Face!

Oh! if to dance all Night, and dress all Day,

Charm 'd the Small-pox, or chas 'd old Age away; [5.20]

Who would not scorn what Huswife's Cares produce,

Or who would learn one earthly Thing of Use?

To patch, nay ogle, might become a Saint,

Nor could it sure be such a Sin to paint.

But since, alas! frail Beauty must decay,

Curl'd or uncurl 'd, since Locks will turn to grey,

Since paint'd, or not paint'd, all shall fade,

And she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid;

What then remains, but well our Pow'r to use,

And keep good Humour still whate'er we lose? [5.30]

And trust me, Dear! good Humour can prevail,

When Airs, and Flights, and Screams, and Scolding fail.

Beauties in vain their pretty Eyes may roll;

Charms strike the Sight, but Merit wins the Soul.

So spake the Dame, but no Applause ensu 'd;

Belinda frown'd, Thalestris call'd her Prude.

To Arms, to Arms! the fierce Virago cries,

And swift as Lightning to the Combate flies.

All side in Parties, and begin th' Attack;

Fans clap, Silks russle, and tough Whalebones crack; [5.40]

Heroes and Heroins Shouts confus 'dly rise,

And base, and treble Voices strike the Skies.

No common Weapons in their Hands are found,

Like Gods they fight, nor dread a mortal Wound.

So when bold Homer makes the Gods engage,

And heav'nly Breasts with human Passions rage;

'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;

And all Olympus rings with loud Alarms.

Jove's Thunder roars, Heav'n trembles all around;

Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing Deeps resound; [5.50]

Earth shakes her nodding Tow'rs, the Ground gives way;

And the pale Ghosts start at the Flash of Day!

Triumphant Umbriel on a Sconce's Height

Clapt his glad Wings, and sate to view the Fight,

Propt on their Bodkin Spears, the Sprights survey

The growing Combat, or assist the Fray.

While thro'the Press enrag'd Thalestris flies,

And scatters Deaths around from both her Eyes,

A Beau and Witling perish'd in the Throng,

One dy'd in Metaphor, and one in Song. [5.60]

O cruel Nymph! a living Death I bear,

Cry 'd Dapperwit, and sunk beside his Chair.

A mournful Glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,

Those Eyes are made so killing — was his last:

Thus on Meander's flow'ry Margin lies

Th' expiring Swan, and as he sings he dies.

When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,

Chloe stept in, and kill'd him with a Frown;

She smil'd to see the doughty Hero slain,

But at her Smile, the Beau reviv 'd again. [5.70]

Now Jove suspends his golden Scales in Air,

Weighs the Mens Wits against the Lady's Hair;

The doubtful Beam long nods from side to side;

At length the Wits mount up, the Hairs subside.

See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,

With more than usual Lightning in her Eyes;

Nor fear 'd the Chief th' unequal Fight to try,

Who sought no more than on his Foe to die.

But this bold Lord, with manly Strength indu 'd,

She with one Finger and a Thumb subdu'd, [5.80]

Just where the Breath of Life his Nostrils drew,

A Charge of Snuff the wily Virgin threw;

The Gnomes direct, to ev'ry Atome just,

The pungent Grains of titillating Dust.

Sudden, with starting Tears each Eye o 'erflows,

And the high Dome re-ecchoes to his Nose.

Now meet thy Fate, incens 'd Belinda cry 'd,

And drew a deadly Bodkin from her Side.

(The same, his ancient Personage to deck,

Her great great Grandsire wore about his Neck [5.90]

In three Seal-Rings which after, melted down,

Form 'd a vast Buckle for his Widow's Gown:

Her infant Grandame s Whistle next it grew,

The Bells she gingled, and the Whistle blew;

Then in a Bodkin grac 'd her Mother's Hairs,

Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

Boast not my Fall (he cry'd) insulting Foe!

Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.

Nor think, to die dejects my lofty Mind;

All that I dread, is leaving you behind! [5.100]

Rather than so, ah let me still survive,

And burn in Cupid's Flames, — but burn alive.

Restore the Lock! she cries; and all around

Restore the Lock! the vaulted Roofs rebound.

Not fierce Othello in so loud a Strain

Roar 'd for the Handkerchief that caus'd his Pain.

But see how oft Ambitious Aims are cross 'd,

And Chiefs contend 'till all the Prize is lost!

The Lock, obtain 'd with Guilt, and kept with Pain,

In ev'ry place is sought, but sought in vain: [5.110]

With such a Prize no Mortal must be blest,

So Heav'n decrees! with Heav'n who can contest?

Some thought it mounted to the Lunar Sphere,

Since all things lost on Earth, are treasur 'd there.

There Heroe 's Wits are kept in pondrous Vases,

And Beau's in Snuff-boxes and Tweezer-Cases.

There broken Vows, and Death-bed Alms are found,

And Lovers Hearts with Ends of Riband bound;

The Courtiers Promises, and Sick Man's Pray'rs,

The Smiles of Harlots, and the Tears of Heirs, [5.120]

Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea;

Dry'd Butterflies, and Tomes of Casuistry.

But trust the Muse — she saw it upward rise,

Tho' mark'd by none but quick Poetic Eyes:

(So Rome's great Founder to the Heav'ns withdrew,

To Proculus alone confess 'd in view.)

A sudden Star, it shot thro' liquid Air,

And drew behind a radiant Trail of Hair,

Not Berenice's Locks first rose so bright,

The heav'ns bespangling with dishevel'd light. [5.1 SO]

The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,

And pleas'd pursue its Progress thro'the Skies.

This the Beau-monde shall from the Mall survey,

And hail with Musick its propitious Ray.

This, the blest Lover shall for Venus take,

And send up Vows from Rosamonda 's Lake.

This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless Skies,

When next he looks thro' Galilceo 's Eyes;

And hence th 'Egregious Wizard shall foredoom

The Fate of Louis, and the Fall of Rome. [5.140]

Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn the ravish 'd Hair

Which adds new Glory to the shining Sphere!

Not all the Tresses that fair Head can boast

Shall draw such Envy as the Lock you lost.

For, after all the Murders of your Eye,

When, after Millions slain, your self shall die;

When those fair Suns shall sett, as sett they must,

And all those Tresses shall be laid in Dust; This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame, And mid 'st the Stars inscribe Belinda's Name!

Canto V

The Baron remains unmoved despite being surrounded by the tears and angry reproaches of the ladies. Clarissa delivers a passionate speech in which she asks why does the society that so looks up to beauty in women does not also accord any importance to 'good sense' and 'good humour'. She claims that women are frequently referred to as angels, but no reference is given to the moral qualities of these 'angels'. Even when beauty is considered so transient, we fail to fall back on something more ever-lasting and tangible. Sadly, this speech that is both lofty in thought as well as shows immense good sense fails to gather any attention and Belinda, Thalestris and the others ignore her and continue to set forth an all-out attack on the annoying Baron. This leads to a confused struggle which is presided over by the gnome Umbriel in a stance of smug self-congratulation. According to the smiles and frowns of the ladies, the gentlemen are

either revived or slain. Belinda and the Baron are engaged in a combat from which she emerges victorious after she thrown snuff on him. She also takes her ornamental hairpin (bodkin) and holds it to the Baron^s throat. Although, she demands her lock back from the Baron, but it has been lost in the fight and cannot be found. Here, Pope declares that the lock has risen to heaven where it becomes a shining star for people to gaze at it for eternity. In this way, Pope reasons that it will attract more envious attention than it ever could on earth. .

Clarissa's passionate plea has oftetf%een interpreted by readers as the voice of the poet who is expressing the moral of the story. Indeed, the theslsrof the speech matches with Pope's responsibility of giving a reasonable perspective to the dispute between the two families -Arabella Fermor and Lord Petre. But his position becomes more complex than the speech purports. This is because the poem is used as a social critique to address issues such as the idleness and vanity of the upper classes to the hypocrisy in expressing women's sexuality. Although Clarissa takes the moral high stand in her speech but it is a sham in the wake of the fact that it was she who had given the scissors to the Baron. Since Clarissa is not able to reconcile with the Baron, the quarrel proves to be yet another enjoyable game of flirtation played by all parties. Thus, Clarissa cannot claim to be morally superior to the others engaged in this 'game'.

Other postures in this poem also assume sexual connotation. The 'battle' between the Baron and Clarissa has been shown to have a distinct erotic quality with the ladies and gentlemen engaged in mock agony. Sir Plume ' draw[s] Clarissa down' in a sexual way, and Belinda 'flies' on her foe with flashing eyes and an erotic ardour. Also, when Pope says that the Baron perseveres in his fight unafraid because all he strives for is the death of his foe, this means that his only goal is sexual consummation.

Thefinal battle brings to an end the long series of mock heroic actions. Pope invokes the Roman gods of warfare. He refers to the *Aeneid,* a Latin epic poem that tells the legendary story of Aeneas, a Trojan who travelled to Italy, where he became the ancestor aTthe Romans. He compares the apparently indifferent and unaffected Baron to Aeneas, who had to leave his lady love and went on to found Rome.

When Belinda tosses the snuff up the Baron's nose, this moment makes for a perfect turning point which is perfectly suitable to the scale of this mock battle. The snuff makes the Baron sneeze, which is a decidedly comic, unbecoming and unheroic thing to do for a hero. The bodkin, here interpreted as a decorative hairpin and not an ancient weapon, too serves nicely. But Pope presents this pin with an elaborate history in accordance with the conventions of a true epic story.

The poem ends on a mock heroic note and is written such that it pays a compliment to the lady alluded to - Arabella Fermor. It also gives due credit to the poet for being the instrument of her immortality. The ending effectively stokes the vanity of the heroine, despite the fact that it is meant to be a social critique on the vanities of the people of that era. The ending indicates that no real moral development has taken place. Belinda is asked to reconcile with her Joss through a type of bribe/ distraction that proves that her basic nature is indeed frivolous. But even when Pope is at his mocking best, he uses a gentle tone to show his basic sympathy with the social world despite its quirks and idiosyncrasies. However, his later works contained searing critiques and were much more stringent and less forgiving.

3.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- John Donne was bom in the Elizabethan England. He was bom into a religious Catholic family in 1572. He was an extremely devout man who was persecuted as he was a Christian.
- Though Donne is reputed for his sonnets and love song, he had, in his early life, written religious poetry as well.
- *The Good Morrow* is a metaphysical poem consisting of twenty-one lines, divided into three stanzas.
- Michael Hall says that *The Good Morrow* is a chronological and spatial poem. It is with the aid of this poem that the orator exposes his increasing maturity and awareness of his love as a reply to his thrilling passion.
- *The Sun Rising* is a witty and amusing poem. It is light verse, but it is also extremely serious. It is, in fact, a good example of the fact that seriousness is different from solemnity and maybe accompanied with a good deal of frivolity.

- The poet treats the sun familiarly, colloquially, and irreverently. It is one of the paradoxes of the poem that the poet uses the adjective 'unruly' for the sun when the sun is really the standard of order, regulation, and law.
- The poet and his mistress symbolize the whole world and all its rulers. Those who claim to be the rulers of the world are in fact, merely imitating the lovers. Likewise all honour in the world is a shadow of the true honour which belongs to these lovers.
- The period of 1625 to 1660 is generally known as the age of Milton in English literary history. This period marks the end of the Renaissance.
- John Milton was bom on December 9, 1608, in London. He was the second child of John and Sara. John Milton Sr, was a legal secretary and also a composer of church music which was how Milton developed his lifelong love of music.
- Milton begins his great epic with an invocation to the heavenly *Muse.* In this respect he follows the practice of Homer, the Father of epic poetry who started his epics in this manner.
- Milton seeks to describe the cause of the fall of Adam and Eve from Paradise where they were living so comfortably and happily in the company of God.
- Aubrey states that *Paradise Lost* was begun in about 1658. Mason believes that the first two books might have been written before the Restoration.
- *Paradise Lost* is a classical epic. It has all the common features of the epics of Homer and Virgil. Though it is based upon Christian theology, its frame work is classical.
- Milton seems to adopt the view of some tragic poets that even the Gods are subject to the decree of Destiny.
- In portraying the physical action of *Paradise Lost* against the background of Heaven, Hell and Earth, Milton had to visualize the structure of the universe.
- The language of *Paradise Lost* is Latinized. It's characterized by frequent images and antique names. His language is known for its to the point shortness.

'The meter of *Paradise Lost* is blank verse, of five accents. This meter was first used by Surrey in his translation of Virgil with nothing to vary it.

Satan is a classic creation of Milton. From the artistic point of view, he is much more remembered than the heroes of Shakespeare.

Paradise Lost is an epic par excellence. In the English language, besides Sri Aurobindo's Savitri, there is not any other epic that can be compared with it.

Shakespeare's poetry is characterless, mat is, it does not reflect the individual Shakespeare; but John Milton himself is in every line of the *Paradise Lost.*

In *Paradise Lost,* Milton gives a vivid and effective picture of Hell. Hell is a place of torment, evoking the quality of sinister wilderness.

Satan makes his first speech to Beelzebub, his closest comrade. Here Satan admits that God proved stronger than his opponents, because of his thunder and that God's true strength became known only in the course of the battle, which Satan and his followers fought against God, 'and till then who knew the force of those dire arms?'

- Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, London. He was the only son of Philip and Dorothy to survive infancy.

- It is believed that the poet started writing his most popular poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* in 1742 soon after the death of his close friend. However, he completed the poem in 1751 and it was soon published.
- An elegy is a form of a poem which is usually written to mourn the dead of renowned people. It does not tell a story but expresses feelings of sorrow. It admires the deceased person and describes the implications of his death on his loved ones.
- Gray then wonders about the hidden talents and intellectual abilities of the common people. He states that they might have become powerful people or great poets but there was no one to patronize them.
- Alexander Pope was the son of Alexander Pope Senior. He was born in London. His father was a Roman Catholic linen-merchant.
- In 1712, Pope published an early version of *The Rape of the Lock.*
- *The Rape of the Lock* begins with a passage that describes the subject of the poem. It invokes the blessing of the muse. The sun ('Sol') appears to begin the lazy morning routines of a rich household.
- The opening of the poem describes its mock-heroic style. Pope in the beginning itself introduces the epic subjects of love and war. He invokes his muse and writes a dedication to the man (the historical John Caryll) who commissioned him to write the poem.
- Pope's description of Belinda at her dressing table describes mock-heroic motifs, which will run through the poem.
- After the loss of her lock, 'anxious cares' and 'secret passions' of Belinda are just like the emotions of those individuals who have undergone through 'rage, resentment and despair'.
- The Baron remains unmoved despite being surrounded by the tears and angry reproaches of the ladies.

view Hell and also experience it from the point of view of Satan who is to dwell in it for ever. That Hell is a place of confusion and contradiction is brought out by the description - it is a place where fire exists without light and darkness is almost tangible and this darkness itself reveals the sights of misery.

17. Thomas Gray completed writing the poem Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard in 1751.
18. An elegy is a form of a poem which is usually written to mourn the dead of renowned people. It does not tell a story but expresses feelings of sorrow. It admires the deceased person and describes the implications of his death on his loved ones.
19. Alexander Pope was expelled from his school, Twyford School, because he wrote a satire on one of the teachers.
20. *The Rape of the Lock* is a satire regarding the battle between the sexes and follies of a young woman who spend most of their times in toiletries and parties.
21. The classic instances of Pope's masterful use of the heroic couplet are plentiful in this canto. While giving an introduction to Hampton Court Palace, he explains it as the place where Queen Anne 'dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea'.
22. The poem ends on a mock heroic note and is written such that it pays a compliment to the lady alluded to - Arabella Fermor.

3.9 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. When and why did Thomas Gray write *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyaral*
2. Write a short note on Alexander Pope.
3. How does Satan reach Paradise? What does he do on finding Adam and Eve there?
4. What is an elegy? Whom does Gray mourn in *Elegy Written in a Country, Churchyard?*

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the structure of the poem *The Good Morrow.*
2. Discuss the meaning of John Donne's poem *The Good Morrow.*
3. Explain the following passage from John Donne's *The Good Morrow?*

I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I

Did, till we loved? Were we not weaned till then,

But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?

Or snorted we in the seven sleepers' den?

'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be.

If ever any beauty I did see,

Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

4. Critically discuss the writing style of John Milton with reference to *Paradise Lost.*
5. Elucidate the major characters in *Paradise Lost.*
6. Discuss the speech given by Beelzebub — one of the important characters in *Paradise Lost.*
7. Describe the major duty of the sylphs in *The Rape of the Lock.*

3.10 FURTHER READING

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