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CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

Special English
Discipline Specific Elective
Semester V (Paper VIII) (DSE - E12) &
Semester VI (Paper XIII) (DSE - E137)

English Poetry

(Academic Year 2021-22 onwards)

For

B. A. Part III

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Students,

This textbook is prepared keeping in mind that you are distant learners. This course book is organized in such a way to help you study it on your own.

We hope that this book containing the Self-Instructional Material on Semester V and VI is basically learner-centered and will surely meet the needs of our dear students offering English as their special subject at B. A. Part-III. The material is designed and presented in such a way that it will encourage the students to read and enjoy the units independently. The Module writers have tried their best to present the relevant material in a simple manner, expressed in lucid, clear and easy but dignified language. You will find this book innovative in its approach, method and technique.

The course book offers the students opportunities for remediation, consolidation and extension of the language already learnt.

Each module is divided into sub-sections and at the end of each section, there are small tasks. You are expected to write answers on your own. Though at the end of every module, answers are given, do not look at them until you have written your own answers.

You are expected to read each sub-sections, answer the questions given in the tasks, check your answers and then go ahead. If you do this sincerely and honestly, it is hoped you will enjoy bright success.

We wish you great success.

– **Editors**

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CONTENTS

English Poetry

Semester V

Module I	Topics for Background Readings	1
Module II	Selections from Elizabethan Poetry	27
Module III	Selections from Metaphysical Poetry	47
Module IV	Selections from Romantic Poetry	70

Semester VI

Module V	Topics for Background Readings - Victorian Poetry	125
Module VI	Selections from Victorian Poetry	172
Module VII	Selection from Modern English Poetry	200
Module VIII	Selection from Modern Indian English Poetry	223

Each Unit begins with the section Objectives -

Objectives are directive and indicative of :

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

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

Module I

General Topics

Contents:

1.0 Course Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- 1.1 Understand Elizabethan Poetry and its characteristics.
- 1.2 know the term Metaphysical Poetry and poets
- 1.3 about the Romantic poetry and its features.

1.1 Elizabethan Poetry

- 1.1.1 Introduction (Elizabethan Poetry)
- 1.1.2 Types of Elizabethan Poetry
- 1.1.3 Features of Elizabethan Poetry
- 1.1.4 Major Elizabethan Poets
- 1.1.5 Summary
- 1.1.6 Glossary and Notes
- 1.1.7 Check Your Progress
- 1.1.8 Exercises

1.2 Metaphysical Poetry

- 1.2.1 Introduction
- 1.2.2 Definition and Background
- 1.2.3 Characteristics of Metaphysical Poetry
- 1.2.4 Metaphysical Poets
- 1.2.5 Summary

- 1.2.6 Glossary and Notes
- 1.2.7 Check your progress
- 1.2.8 Key to your progress
- 1.2.9 Exercise

1.2 Romantic Poetry

- 1.1.1 Introduction
- 1.1.2 Characteristics of Romantic Poetry
- 1.1.3 Major Romantic Poets
- 1.1.4 Summary
- 1.1.5 Glossary and Notes
- 1.1.6 Check your progress
- 1.1.7 Key to your progress
- 1.1.8 Exercise

1.1 Elizabethan Poetry

1.1.1 Introduction

Elizabethan age was a great age of English literature. Often it was considered as “golden age” in English history. During this time the writing of poetry was the part of education among the educated people. That is why many books of poetry by different writers appeared during this age. The Elizabethan era, often hailed as a golden age for English literature, spanned Queen Elizabeth’s long reign from 1558 to 1603. The proper Elizabethan literary age began in 1579 with the publication of Spenser’s *Shepherd Calendar*. This period saw many poetic luminaries rise to prominence, including Christopher Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Edmund Spenser, Sir Philip Sidney, William Shakespeare and Elizabeth herself. Elizabethan poetry is notable for many features, including the sonnet form, blank verse, the use of classical material, and double entendres. The proper Elizabethan literary age began in 1579, but before that year, Sir Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey made their poetic contributions. Sir Wyatt brought the sonnet form Italy and made it popular in England. He followed the tradition of the Petrarchan sonnet with octave and sestet. That was later changed into

English sonnet style by Shakespeare, who divided the sonnet into three quatrains summed up by a couplet. The Earl of Surrey wrote the first blank verse in English. The Elizabethan age produced many beautiful lyrics. The sonnet form was almost used for love poetry at the time. The ideal for any poet was to write a sonnet sequence, a series of interconnecting poems. William Shakespeare wrote a sequence of 154 sonnets. Many of them refer to a young man of a good family, and may be addressed to William Herbert of the Earl of Southampton. Spenser wrote 88 sonnets which were published in 1595 with Epithalamion, under the title, *Amoretti*. Sir Philip Sidney was a true Elizabethan gentleman of many activities- courtier, statesman, poet and soldier. His book of sonnets, *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) is the great expression of thoughts and feelings of the time. Spenser and Sidney adopted the Petrarchan form of sonnet.

1.1.2. Types of Elizabethan Poetry

It was an era of peace and of general prosperity of the country. An intense patriotism became the outstanding characteristic of the age. It is the greatest and golden period of literature in English which developed all genres of literature. The poetry of Elizabethan era mirrors the spirit of the Age. It reflects the spirit of conquest and self-glorification, humanism and vigorous imagination, emotional depth and passionate intensity. Sublimity was considered to be the essential quality of poetry. Spenser, Shakespeare and Marlowe had the immense power to exalt and sublimate the lovers of poetry. The poetry of this era was remarkable. It refuses to follow the rules of poetic composition. This leads to the development of a new poetic devices and new linguistic modes. All varieties of poetic forms like lyric, elegy, ode, sonnet etc were successfully attempted.

Elizabethan Lyric:

The Elizabethan lyrical poetry is the glory of the age. It produced many beautiful lyrics. Sweet songs were written and published during this period. So, the age is called 'The Nest of Singing Birds'. The chief lyricist of the age was Sir Philip Sidney. His famous book of sonnets is *Astrophel and Stella*. His lyrics have the themes like love, loss, beauty and time.

Elizabethan Sonnet:

The Elizabethan sonnet made the Elizabethan poetry rich and vivid. The sonnet was born in Italy. Petrarch introduced sonnets in Italy. Wyatt and Surrey brought it to England. They introduced sonnets to English literature. The famous poet Thomas

Watson made some experiments in the sonnet form. Most of the sonneteers followed Italian or Petrarchan method separating lines into two groups i.e. Octave (8 lines) and Sestet (6 lines). But Shakespeare divided it into three groups i.e. four lines in each group and a final couplet (2 lines).

Elizabethan Song:

A song became very popular in the Elizabethan Age. The court of the Elizabeth is called 'a nest of singing birds'. Even Shakespeare wrote many beautiful songs for his plays. The Elizabethan Age witnessed many kinds of songs such as love songs, religious songs, patriotic songs, war songs and philosophical songs. They carried every mood such as grave, romance, sentimental, mocking etc. Love is the main theme of Elizabethan songs. The other themes of song are joy, sorrow, praise of wine, childhood and fancy.

Pastoral Poetry:

This is one more form of elegy. It is known as pastoral elegy. It is very famous form of the elegy. In this type of elegy, the poet is expected to speak as a shepherd. He weeps over the death of his fellow shepherd. The setting of this elegy is rustic life and the poets used images like sheep, shepherds and rural life. Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* is a famous pastoral poem.

Satire:

Satire grew and flourished in the Elizabethan era. Spenser's *Mother's Hubbard's Tale* is the best example of satirical poem. But John Donne is the most important poet of satire. He wrote the satire of classical type. His satires are serious and they are criticism of life. *Of the Progress of the Soul* is an example of memorable satire. Joseph Hall and Joseph Marston are also important satirical poets of the Elizabethan age.

1.1.3 Characteristics of Elizabethan Poetry:

The Elizabethan Age was the nest of singing birds. The sonnet, the lyric and the satire were the three main types of poetry practised by the major poets in this period.

England felt the complete effect of the Renaissance during the Elizabethan period. Among Elizabethan poetry's main characteristics of this period were such as a revival of the old and classical literature of Greece and Rome, and its manifestation in the poetry of the age. An extreme spirit of adventure, aestheticism and materialism characterized the period. Many poets displayed their skill in versification during this time and England came to be called 'The Nest of Singing Birds'. The period has the

great variety of unlimited creative force which includes works of many kinds in both verse and prose. It ranges in spirit from the loftiest Platonic idealism or the most delightful, romance to the level of very repulsive realism. It is dominated by the spirit of romance, full of the spirit of dramatic action. In style, it often exhibits romantic luxuriance, which sometimes takes the form of elaborate affectations of which the favourite's conceit is only the most apparent. In part it was a period of experimentation, (ex: translations or interpretations of sonnet form, poetical treatment of theological or scientific thought and the geography of all England). It was influenced by the literature of Italy, and to a less degree by those of France and Spain. The authors were men (not yet women) of almost every class. They rise from distinguished courtiers, like Raleigh and Sidney, to the company of poor hack writers. Lyric poetry inaugurated at Court by Wyatt and Surrey seems to have largely subsided, but revived later with the taste for other imaginative forms of literature, in the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign. It revived not only among the courtiers but among all classes. Almost every writer of the period (except for prose) seems to have been gifted with the lyric power. The qualities which especially distinguish the Elizabethan lyrics are fluency, sweetness, melody, and an enthusiastic joy in life, all spontaneous, direct, and exquisite. Poetry unites the genuineness of the popular ballad with the finer sense of conscious artistic poetry. In subject they display the usual lyric variety.

England felt the complete effect of the Renaissance during the Elizabethan period. Among Elizabethan poetry's main characteristics of this period we can mention the following:

- A revival of the old and classical literature of Greece and Rome and this was manifested in the poetry of the age.
- An extreme spirit of adventure, aestheticism and materialism characterized the period.
- Many poets displayed their skill in versification during this time and England came to be called 'The Nest of Singing Birds.'
- The period has great variety of unlimited creative force; variety of poetical forms like sonnets, lyrics, songs, pastoral poetry and satire etc.
- It ranges in spirit from the loftiest Platonic idealism or the most delightful, romance to the level of very repulsive realism.
- It is dominated by the spirit of romance, full of the spirit of dramatic action.

- In style, it often exhibits romantic luxuriance, which sometimes takes the form of elaborate affectations of which the favourite 'conceit' is only the most apparent.
- In part it was a period of experimentation, (ex: translations or interpretations of sonnet form, poetical treatment of theological or scientific thought and the geography of all England).
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- It revived not only among the courtiers but among all classes. Almost every writer of the period (except for prose) seems to have been gifted with the lyric power.
- The qualities which especially distinguish the Elizabethan lyrics are fluency, sweetness, melody, and an enthusiastic joy in life, all spontaneous, direct, and exquisite.
- Poetry unites the genuineness of the popular ballad with the finer sense of conscious artistic poetry. Sonnet sequences were very popular.
- The lyric of the periods is accompanied to music.
- Most of the dramatists were good poets.
- Songs and lyrics were inserted in the plays.

1.1.4 Major Elizabethan Poets

Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)

Edmund Spenser is addressed as “the poet’s poet”. His main poetical works are *The Shepherds Calendar*, *Amoretti* and *The Faerie Queen*. He is known for good

poetic style and diction. He is also famous for picturesque description. He is widely praised for his smoothness, melody, richness of language and diction.

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

Sir Philip Sidney was the most respected literary figure before Shakespeare and Spenser. He has written prose, critical essay and poetry. His *Apology for Poetry* is a collection of critical writings. His collection of sonnets *Astrophel and Stella* is very famous. This collection consists of 108 sonnets. These are love sonnets. He wrote sonnets in Petrarchan style. Sir Philip Sidney wrote many songs. They express passion, beauty, romance and fancy. They have loftiness and superb musical quality.

John Donne (1572-1631)

He was a prolific writer and his verse admits of three divisions: the amorous, the religious, and the satirical. In all three, he gave a new turn to English poetry. His satires are five in number, published with the bulk of his other verse posthumously. None can be said to be on one particular subject. Each lists a number of abuses at a time. All together assail the snobbish courtier, the superstitious puritan, the dandy, the shameless plagiarist, the lustful lover, the evil-doer. But they lack humour and are written in unpolished heroic couplets. They are the least characteristic part of Donne's work.

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

He began his career as a dramatist with the satiric comedy *Every Man in His Humour*. For many years, he wrote plays both for the court and for the public stage. His plays fall into three groups. His court masques, his historical tragedies such as *Sejanus and Catelin*, which are very learned, very laborious, and very dull; and his many comedies, of which the best are *The Alchemist*, *Volpone or the Fox*, and *Epicoene or the Silent Woman*. Jonson did a good deal of work outside the drama, including many translations and a large number of miscellaneous poems. He produced three volumes of poems such as *Epigrams*, *The Forest and Underwoods*, comprising on the whole 250 poems. He was made poet-laureate.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Shakespeare is widely recognised as the greatest English poet the world has ever known. Not only were his plays mainly written in verse, but he also penned 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems and a few other minor poems. Today he has become a symbol of poetry and writing internationally. He was regarded as the foremost dramatist of his time; evidence indicates that both he and his

contemporaries looked to poetry, not playwriting, for enduring fame. Shakespeare's sonnets were composed between 1593 and 1601, though not published until 1609. That edition, *The Sonnets of Shakespeare*, consists of 154 sonnets, all written in the form of three quatrains and a couplet that is now recognized as Shakespearean. The sonnets fall into two groups: sonnets 1-126, addressed to a beloved friend, a handsome and noble young man, and sonnets 127-152, to a malignant but fascinating "Dark Lady," whom the poet loves in spite of himself. Nearly all of Shakespeare's sonnets examine the inevitable decay of time and the immortalization of beauty and love in poetry.

Shakespeare wrote more than thirty plays. These are usually divided into four categories: histories, comedies, tragedies, and romances. His earliest plays were primarily comedies and histories such as *Henry VI* and *The Comedy of Errors*, but in 1596, Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, his second tragedy, and over the next dozen years he would return to the form, writing the plays for which he is now best known: *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. In his final years, Shakespeare turned to the romantic with *Cymbeline*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*.

1.1.5 Summary

The Elizabethan Age was the nest of singing birds. The sonnet, the lyric and the satire were the three main types of poetry practised by the major poets in this period. So, the Elizabethan poetry was mainly lyrical poetry and several lyrical types were composed by the poets. Although several kinds of verse forms were attempted in this age- the epic romance, the pastoral, the verse-tale, the elegy, the sonnet, the lyric, the satire, it is largely an age of the last three. It is rich, however, in all. Following close upon the heels of Renaissance, it availed itself of all that the Greek and Latin classics had to offer but the form is largely its own. It was rather attracted by its matter. This is important to bear in mind because in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the writers would be more attracted by its form than by its matter.

Shakespeare created a new kind of sonnet, the Shakespearean sonnet (English sonnet). This was different than the more widespread form, the Petrarchan sonnet (brought from Italy by Thomas Wyatt, etc.). Elizabethan sonnets have an iambic pentameter and consist of 14 lines with a rhyme scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. These are called three quatrains and a couplet. In Petrarchan form, there are 14 lines of iambic pentameter divided into the "octave" or the first 8 lines and the "sestet" (the next six). There is a turn or "volta," between the octave and sestet. Here the poet gives a different perspective or argument and it occurs between the octave and the

sestet. Sometimes the turn is reserved for the final couplet like William Shakespeare's sonnet 130. Edmund Spenser also called as the father of poetic diction (English), wrote the famous poems *The Fairie Queen* which introduced the Spenserian stanza consisting of 8 iambic pentameter lines followed by an alexandrine (iambic hexameter) with ABABBCBCC rhyme scheme.

1.1.6 Glossary and Notes

Luminary: one who is an inspiration to others

Petrarchan: relating Francesco Petrarch, a renowned Renaissance Italian humanist.

Patriotism: love of one's country

Lyric: a type of poetry that expresses subjective thoughts and feelings.

Elegy: a mournful poem, funeral song, a poem of lamentation

Ode: a short poetical composition proper to be set to music or song.

Sonnet: a fixed verse form of Italian origin consisting of 14 lines.

Conceit: something conceived in the mind; an idea, a thought.

Ballad: a kind of narrative poem, adapted for recitation or singing.

Pastoral poetry: relating to rural life, pertaining to shepherd's life.

Satire: a way of talking or writing about something; a way of criticising a person or an idea

1.1.7 Check your progress

a) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence.

1. Who brought the sonnet form to England?
2. Which are the two types of sonnet forms?
3. Who wrote the book of sonnets, "*Astrophel and Stella*"?
4. Mention one of the chief poets of Elizabethan age?
5. Who is called as the father of poetic diction?

b) Fill in the blanks

1. The proper Elizabethan literary age began in with the publication of Spenser's *Shepherd Calendar*
2. Sonnets have an iambic pentameter and consist of 14 lines with a rhyme scheme of ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.
3. Spenser wrote sonnets which were published in 1595 with Epithalamion, under the title, *Amoretti*.
4. wrote a sequence of 154 sonnets.
5. Spenser's is the famous pastoral poem.

1.1.8 Key to your progress

- a)
1. Sir Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey
 2. Petrarchan and Elizabethan
 3. Sir Philip Sidney
 4. William Shakespeare
 5. Edmund Spenser
- b)
1. 1579
 2. Elizabethan
 3. 88
 4. William Shakespeare
 5. Shepherd's Calendar

1.1.9 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions

1. What are the features of Elizabethan poetry?
2. Discuss William Shakespeare as the major poet of the Elizabethan period.

B) Write a short note on the following

1. Elizabethan sonnet

2. Pastoral poetry
3. Sonnet as a form
4. Elizabethan sonnet

1.2 Metaphysical Poetry (1592 to 1678)

1.2.1 Introduction

In the eighteenth century, the term “Metaphysical poets” was coined to refer to certain writers, primarily of religious verse, of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries who shared similar characteristics. Although scholars have suggested many alternative names (Louis Martz called their works the poetry of meditation, and Mario Di Cesare’s anthology spoke simply of seventeenth century religious poets), the term “Metaphysical poets” remained useful to literary historians for more than two hundred years. The metaphysical poets were a group of 17th century poets who concerned themselves with the experience of man and the nature of being on the world. What is our place within the world and how to define that place? Taking up the philosophy of metaphysics, first set forth by Aristotle, the metaphysical poets wrote of experience including love, romance, beauty, imagination and man’s relationship with God. They were less concerned with expressing feeling than with analysing it. Metaphysical poetry is marked by bold and ingenious conceits, metaphor, drawing something forced parallels between apparently dissimilar ideas or things complex and subtle thought, frequent use of paradox and a dramatic directness of language. The term ‘metaphysical’ applied to poetry was first used by Dr. Johnson. He borrowed the term from Dryden. Once Dryden remarked that ‘he (Donne) affects the metaphysics.’ The metaphysical poetry covers a long period of time i.e. from 1592 to 1678. John Donne started writing about 1592 and Marvell died in 1678.

Poets associated with metaphysical poetry include John Donne, George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, and Henry Vaughan. Donne is often said to be first metaphysical poet and his genius for original, intellectually complex poetry certainly helped to set the trend for the poetry that followed him. (Donne began writing at the end of the sixteenth century, but the high moment of metaphysical poetry would be in the century that followed.) Key characteristics of metaphysical poetry include such as complicated mental and emotional experience; unusual and sometimes deliberately contrived metaphors and similes; and the idea that the physical and spiritual universes are connected.

The term 'metaphysical' came from metaphysics, the branch of philosophy dealing with, among other things, the relationship between mind and matter, or between the physical world and human consciousness. (Curiously, the word 'metaphysical' comes from the Greek meaning 'after physics')

1.2.2. Definition and Background

“Highly intellectualized poetry marked by bold and ingenious conceits, incongruous imagery, complexity and subtlety of thought, frequent use of paradox, and often by deliberate harshness or rigidity of expression.”

Metaphysical poetry is a genre of poetry that deals with deep and profound subjects like spirituality, religion, etc. It is highly intellectual form of poetry and presents the world to its readers in a different way. It asks questions that science cannot answer. Metaphysical poetry prompts the readers to question their reality and existence. It takes one beyond the physical world and gives new perspectives through its imagery, wit and paradox.

1.2.3 Characteristics of Metaphysical Poetry

John Donne as the father of metaphysical poetry is highly read and referred when it comes to the use of metaphysical characteristics. The metaphysical poets are said to be witty and intellectual because of the typicality's present in their writings especially in the use of wit and intellect, examples of ratiocination and conceit. Some of the characteristics are:

- Ratiocination (Methodical way of reasoning): It is a motion of ideas in such a way that an air of logic is maintained in order to persuade. For example: This flea is you and I, and this our marriage bed, and marriage temple is.
- Thoughts and feelings: In the process of the intellectual ratiocination of metaphysical poetry, feelings have an appropriate place. Thoughts and feelings fuse into a peculiar union in metaphysical poetry. The fusion is what T.S. Eliot called “The Unified Sensibility.” This kind of union lends flexibility and lightness to a piece.
- Conceit: It is the comparison between two things which are unlike but likeness can be taken out from it. There are two types of conceit: 1) A short conceit-comparison in a short conceit can only be applied in a given context. For Example- Motion in a mill is busy standing still. 2) Extended conceit- The comparison in an extended conceit is an elaborate attempt to prove the likeness between the two things. We may start from a comparison which is far from

obvious but is gradually made clear. For example- "*A Valediction of Weeping*" by John Donne.

- Colloquial style: The metaphysical poets are, apart from the use of wit and intellect; make use of colloquial style so that informality can be added to the style of writing. For example- "*The Collar*" by George Herbert wherein he says, "I struck the board and say no more."
- The abrupt opening: As the style majorly is colloquial or conversational, abrupt opening also adds to the informal manner of the poem. For example- "*The Sunne Rising*" by John Donne. As he says, "Busy old fool unruly sun."
- Stream of knowledge: The metaphysical poets were very fond of showcasing their knowledge. It is even charged that due to frequent references to different streams of knowledge, their poetry and style of writing is lost and there is no perfect balance in between thoughts, feelings and references used in a poem. There is a frequent reference to mathematics, geography, science and philosophy.

1.2.4 Metaphysical Poets

1. John Donne (1573-1631)

John Donne is the pioneer of Metaphysical poetry. He wrote Satires, Songs and Sonnets and Elegies. His poetry can be divided into three categories – amorous, religious and satirical. His love poems *Songs and Sonnets* reveal the mood of the lover expressed in colloquial language. An element of satire runs in his love poetry. *A Hymn to God the Father* is his remarkable religious poem. His poetry is noted for its ingenious fusion of wit and seriousness and represents a shift from classical models towards a more personal style. In that time he took the major position for writing metaphysical poetry. John Donne born on 1572, Donne came from a Roman Catholic family, despite his great education and poetic talents he lived in poverty for several years. He started writing religious poems after his wife's death, before that he wrote many love poems. He died on March 31, 1631. Donne is considered the master of the metaphysical poetry. In his poem we get some unique versatility. Such as, He yoke together two entirely opposite ideas and told very serious matter with the help of playfulness.

Intellectuality, cleverness, unique diction sparkingly expresses through his poem. He draws the material of his figure of speech from highly non-poetical sources. The material is abstract but Donne gives it full poetic concrete Pictures.

Especially, his imagistic writing, use of conceit, abrupt opening with a dramatic style and colloquial diction, made his poems highlighted.

2. **George Herbert** (1593-1630)

George Herbert was born in Montgomery, Wales, on April 3, 1593, the fifth son of Richard and Magdalen Newport Herbert.

His poetry shows that to a large extent he followed the lead offered by Donne, but he also made contributions which were quite distinct. Herbert's poems are characterized by a precision of language, a metrical versatility, and an ingenious use of imagery or conceits that was favoured by the metaphysical school of poets.

Herbert's distinguishing characteristic is his simplicity of diction and metaphor. He retains the colloquial manner, and, to an extent, the logical persuasive presentation of ideas, but he draws his metaphors from everyday domestic experience, employing a range of simple commonplace imagery in contrast to the sophisticated imagery of Donne. A technique Herbert introduced was the ending of a poem with two quiet lines which resolve the argument in the poem without answering the specific points raised by it.

3. **Henry Vaughan** (1622-1695)

Henry Vaughan was born in 1621 to Thomas Vaughan and Denise Morgan. He is considered one of the major Metaphysical Poets, whose works ponder one's personal relationship to God. He shares Herbert's preoccupation with the relationship between humanity and God. He saw mankind as restless and constantly seeking a sense of harmony and fulfilment through contact with God. Vaughan, in contrast, has the arrogance of a visionary. He feels humility before God and Jesus, but seems to despise humanity. In contrast, Vaughan's images are more universal, or cosmic, even to the point of judging man in relation to infinity. The term 'visionary' is appropriate to Vaughan, not only because of the grand scale of his images, but also because his metaphors frequently draw on the sense of vision. He published his four collections of poetry. They are *Poems* (1646), *Older Silex Scintillans* (1650), *Ischanus* (1651), and *Thalia Rediviva* (1640).

4. **Andrew Marvell** (1618-1667)

Andrew Marvell was born at Winestead-in-Holderness, Yorkshire, on March 31, 1621. The life and work of Andrew Marvell are both marked by extraordinary variety and range. Gifted with a most subtle and introspective imagination. His technique of

drawing upon philosophy to illustrate his argument gives the poem an intellectual appeal, not just a visual one.

His famous poems are *The Mistress*, *The Davideis*, *Pindaric Odes* and *To His Coy Mistress* used as a peg on which to hang serious reflections on the brevity of happiness. The Definition of Love is an ironic game - more a love of definition let loose; the poem is cool, lucid and dispassionate, if gently self-mocking

Marvell considers whether the poetic skill which has formerly (and culpably) served to praise his "shepherdess" can "redress that Wrong", by weaving a "Chaplet" for Christ.

5. Richard Crashaw (1613-1649)

Richard Crashaw is one of the major figures of metaphysical poetry. His most popular work is *Steps to the Temple* (1646). He was interested in religion so he wrote religious poems. His poetry was influenced by Spanish mystics. His poetry is more emotional than thoughtful and it is remarkable for striking and fantastic comparison.

1.2.5 Summary

The word 'Metaphysical Poetry' is a philosophical concept used in literature where poets portray the things/ideas that are beyond the depiction of physical existence. Etymologically, there is a combination of two words 'meta' and 'physical in word "metaphysical".' The first word "Meta" means beyond. So metaphysical means beyond physical, beyond the normal and ordinary. The meanings are clear here that it deals with the objects/ideas that are beyond the existence of this physical world.

Metaphysical poetry is to be read with an open mind. It is not purposely trying to convince readers to think in a certain way but it provides a new way of thinking. Metaphysical poets are highly intellectual and people of learning. Reader's minds open up, their area of thinking expands, and they awaken by their writings. The challenging approach of such poetry develops the concentration of readers on the things that exist beyond this physical world. It also permits the poets to state their inner thoughts in the poetry though higher cognitive skills are required to digest the abstract ideas and concepts coined in metaphysical texts of poetry.

1.2.6 Glossary and Notes

Consciousness: awareness, wistfulness

Imagery: the work of one who makes images or imitation work

Paradox: self-contradictory

Perspective: a view or outlook or point of view

Conceit: something conceived in the mind; an idea, a thought

Colloquial: denoting a manner of speaking or writing that is characteristic of familiar or informal

Amorous: involving or expressing love

Diction: the way in which someone pronounces words; choice and use of words in literature.

Versatility: having many different abilities

Etymology: the study of historical development of languages or words.

Cognitive: relating to the part of mental function that deals with logic

Abstract ideas: an idea separated from a complex object, or from other ideas which naturally accompany it.

1.2.7 Check your progress

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

1. Mention the period of the metaphysical poetry
2. Who is the pioneer of the metaphysical
3. What is the meaning of 'meta'?
4. Who wrote the famous poems like- *The Mistress, The Davideis, Pindaric Odes and To His Coy Mistress*.
5. Who is considered the master of the metaphysical poetry?

c) Fill in the blanks

1. *A Hymn to God the Father* is John Donne's remarkable poem.
2. The term metaphysical applied to poetry was first used by
3. *To His Coy Mistress* is a famous poem by
4. wrote both religious and amorous poems.

5. is considered the master of the metaphysical poetry.

1.2.8 Key to your progress

- a)
 1. 1592 to 1678
 2. John Donne
 3. after or beyond
 4. Andrew Marvell
 5. Donne
- b)
 1. religious
 2. Dr. Johnson
 3. Andrew Marvell
 4. John Donne
 5. Donne

1.2.9 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions

1. What are the characteristics of metaphysical poetry?
2. Give definition of metaphysical poetry and write in brief about metaphysical poets.

B) Write a short note on the following

1. John Donne as a metaphysical poet
2. Religious and amorous poetry
3. Andrew Marvell
4. The early 17th century period of England

1.3 Romantic Poetry

1.3.1 Introduction:

The period of Romantic poetry began in 1798 with the publication of *Lyrical Ballads*, a collection of poems composed by Wordsworth and Coleridge. The Preface of *Lyrical Ballads* denounced the poetic diction of the preceding century and proposed to deal with materials from “common life” in “a selection of language really used by men.” The poems in that volume not only marked a significant change in poetic diction, but showed a quite different attitude to poetry in general.

Romanticism in English poetry covers the period from 1798 to 1832. It is broadly emerged as a literary and philosophical cult on literary scenario. It is very significant to study Romanticism in relation to classicism. The term classicism and Romanticism are often presented as thesis and antithesis. There was a movement which began in Germany in the seventeen nineties the only one which has an indisputable title to be called romanticism, since it invented the term for its own use. There was another movement which began pretty definitely in England in the seventeen forties. There was one more movement which began in France in 1801. In an interesting lecture before the British Academy Mr. Edmund Gosse described manifestation of complete revolt against the classical attitude which had been sovereign in all European literature for nearly a century. It was Germany that Romanticism conscious of its aspirations and English Romanticism, in so far as it was nourished by foreign thought, went to school in Germany.

1.3.2 Characteristics of English Romantic poetry

Innovation:

In literature, breaking away from the past inevitably results in new forms. The Romantic poetry sought for and found new forms and style, without regard for classical precedent. For example, the serious or tragic treatment of lowly subjects in common language violated the basic neoclassic rule of decorum. Romantic poetry rendered “the charm of novelty to things of every day.”

Humanitarian outlook:

In the Romantic period reason was replaced by emotion. A feature of the humanism of the Romantic poet is the development of realism in their poetry. Humanitarian outlook increases sympathy for fellow-men and even for lower classes. The Romantic Movement contributed to the liberation of human mind and spirit from the fetter or the dry reasons of the 18th Century. The intellectual heroic couplet which

was popular in the neoclassical period now takes place in the Romantic period by the emotional lyric. Thus, poetry becomes more and more impassioned and sensuous.

Reaction against Neoclassicism

Romantic poetry contrasts with Neoclassical poetry, which was the product of intellect and reason, while Romantic poetry is more the product of emotion. Romantic poetry at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a reaction against the set standards, conventions of eighteenth-century poetry. According to William J. Long, "The Romantic movement was marked, and is always marked, by a strong reaction and protest against the bondage of rule and custom which in science and theology as well as literature, generally tend to fetter the free human spirit."

Imagination

According to the Romantics, imagination is the greatest faculty of a poet. Mind is the "central point and governing factor" and "the most vital activity of the mind is the imagination". The importance of the imagination is a distinctive feature of romantic poets such as John Keats, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and P. B. Shelley, unlike the neoclassical poets. Keats said, "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the Heart's affections and the truth of Imagination- What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth." For Wordsworth and William Blake, as well as Victor Hugo and Alessandro Manzoni, the imagination is a spiritual force, is related to morality, and they believed that literature, especially poetry, could improve the world. The secret of great art, Blake claimed, is the capacity to imagine. To define imagination, in his poem "Auguries of Innocence", Blake said:

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

Love of Nature:

Love for nature is another important feature of Romantic poetry, as a source of inspiration. This poetry involves a relationship with external nature and places, and a belief in pantheism. However, the Romantic poets differed in their views about nature. Wordsworth recognized nature as a living thing, teacher, god and everything. These feelings are fully developed and expressed in his epic poem *The Prelude*. In his poem "*The Tables Turn*" he writes:

One impulse from the vernal wood

Can teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and good,
Than all sages can.

Shelley was another nature poet, who believed that nature is a living thing and there is a union between nature and man. Wordsworth approaches nature philosophically, while Shelley emphasizes the intellect. John Keats is another a lover of nature, but Coleridge differs from other Romantic poets of his age, in that he has a realistic perspective on nature. He believes that nature is not the source of joy and pleasure, but rather that people's reactions to it depends on their mood and disposition. Coleridge believed that joy does not come from external nature, but that it emanates from the human heart.

Back from Set Rules

The poetry of the Romantic Revival is in direct contrast to that of Neoclassical. In the 18th century, poetry was governed by set rules and regulations. There were well-prepared lines of poetic composition. And any deviation from the rules was disliked by the teachers of poetic thought. The first thing that we notice in the poetry Romantic age is the break from the slavery of rules and regulations. The poets of the Romantic Age wrote poetry in freestyle without following any rules and regulations.

Interest in Rural Life

The poetry of the 18th century was concerned with clubs and coffee houses, drawing rooms and the social and political life of London. It was essentially the poetry of town life.

Nature had practically no place in Neo-classical Poetry. In the poetry of Romantic Revival, the interest of poets was transferred from town to rural life and from artificial decorations of drawing rooms to the natural beauty and loveliness of nature.

Nature began to have its own importance in the poetry of this age. Wordsworth was the greatest poet who revealed the physical and spiritual beauty of nature to those who could not see any charm in the wildflowers, green fields and the chirping birds.

Common Life

Romantic Poets started taking interest in the lives of the common people, the shepherds, and the cottages and left the gallant lords and gay butterflies of fashion to the care of novelists.

A renewed interest in the simple life marked the poetry of the poets of the Romantic Age. A feeling of humanitarianism coloured the poetry of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Byron. Thus Romantic Poetry was marked by intense human sympathy and a consequent understanding of the human heart.

Love of Liberty and Freedom

In Romantic Poetry, the emphasis was laid on liberty and freedom of the individual. Romantic poets were rebels against tyranny and brutality exercised by tyrants and despots over humans crushed by poverty and smashed by inhuman laws.

Escape to the Middle Ages

Some Romantic poets felt irritated with the tyranny and ugliness of materialistic life of their age and to avoid the life of uneasy restlessness, they escaped from the problems of the world to a world of beauty and joy which their poetic definitions had pictured.

In many ways, Romantic Poetry proved to be the poetry of escape from the sorrows and sufferings of worldly life and their times to the Middle Ages, where they found the eternal bliss. The enthusiasm for the Middle Age satisfied the emotional sense of wonder on the one hand and the intellectual sense of curiosity on the other hand.

Melancholy

Melancholy occupies a prominent place in romantic poetry, and is an important source of inspiration for the Romantic poets. In "*Ode to a Nightingale*", Keats wrote:

.....for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain.

Medievalism

Romantic poetry was attracted to nostalgia, and medievalism is another important characteristic of romantic poetry, especially in the works of John Keats, for example, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, and Coleridge. They were attracted to exotic, remote and obscure places, and so they were more attracted to Middle Ages than to their own age.

Love of the mysterious and Supernatural:

Most of the romantic poets used supernatural elements in their poetry. When we study the poems of Wordsworth, we witness mysticism in it, and while studying the poems of Coleridge we come across element of supernatural element, Shelley found in mature the spirit of love, whereas, Keats presented the principle of beauty in everything. A sense of wonder and mystery coloured the Romantic poetry. Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the leading romantic poet in this regard, and *Kubla Khan* is full of supernatural elements.

Subjectivity

Romantic poetry is the poetry of sentiments, emotions and imagination. Romantic poetry opposed the objectivity of neoclassical poetry. Neoclassical poets avoided describing their personal emotions in their poetry, unlike the Romantics. The Romantic poet holds the view that poetry is not imitation but self-expression. It is the expression of poet own feelings and passions and not imitation of external nature.

Simplicity in Style

The style of the Romantic Poets is varied but the stress was laid on simplicity. Instead of an artificial model of the expression of classical poets, we have a natural diction and spontaneous way of expressing thoughts in Romantic Poetry.

1.3.3 Major Romantic Poets

The poets of this period are divided into two groups (1) The elder Romantic poets are Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott and Southey (2) The younger are Byron, Shelley and Keats.

William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850)

Born at Cockermouth in Cumberland, he is considered as one of the great English poets since Milton. He fell in love with Annette Vallon and fathered a child but the couple did not marry. He returned to Lake in 1799 A.D. The deaths of his two children and the tragic drowning of his brother declined his poetic powers. Wordsworth is known as the greatest poet of nature. He has the unique power to render in words not only the visible shapes of nature but also what is neither visible nor audible. Throughout his life he remained a true interpreter of nature to humanity. He used language used by men in his early poems. His important works are *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads*, *A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal*, *To a Butterfly*, *To a Skylark*, *A Few Lines Composed Above Tintern Abbey*, *She Was a Phantom of Delight*, *The*

Daffodils, To the Cuckoo, Ode to Duty, Ode on Intimation of Immortality, Lines Written in March etc.

S.T. Coleridge (1772 – 1834)

His poetry contains supernatural elements. His poems depict the darker, hidden and unconscious regions of the human mind and soul. He has completely escaped from reality. His works are *Kubla Khan, Rime of Ancient Mariner,*

Christabel. Quality imaginative power, humanitarianism, music, treatment of nature, narrative skill, and simplicity of diction are the distinctive features of Coleridge's poetry.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1882)

Scott was born in Edinburg in 1771. He was the son of a Lawyer and the descendant of border ancestors. He had a great fascination for the old songs. He came into contact with the rural people and gained knowledge of their ways of life. He started as translator of German romances and ballads. *The Lady of the Last Minstrel* appeared in 1805 as the first of his original work. It contained the old border scenes and incidents *Marmion*, the poetic story appeared in 1808. *The Lady of the Lake*, a great work of Scott appeared in 1819.

Robert Southey (1774-1843)

Robert Southey was an English poet of the Romantic school. He was one of the Lake Poets along with William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and also England's Poet Laureate for 30 years from 1813 until his death in 1843. He was born in Bristol and educated at Oxford. He made a contribution to the writing of ballads. His ballads are comic and humorous. Besides ballads, he produced a large number of epics like '*Thalaba the Destroyer*', '*The Curse of Kehama*', '*Don Roderick*'.

The younger Romantics such as Byron, Shelley and Keats belong to the younger generation of the romantic poets. To them human nature seemed to be born again but very soon they were disillusioned and they turned out to be conservatives but later on Byron, Shelley and Keats all become liberals.

Lord Byron (1782 – 1824)

He was a liberal revolutionary who staked his fortune, prestige and person for the freedom of people of Greece. His important works are *Hours of Idleness, Darkness, The Age of Bronze, The Island*.

John Keats (1795 – 1821)

He wrote seductive poetry. His poetry is full of imaginations and love. He died at the age of 28 due to Tuberculosis. His works are *Ode to Autumn*, *Ode to Nightingale*, *Eve of St. Agnes*, *Happy Insensibility*, *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*

P.B. Shelley (1792 – 1822)

Shelley loved nature but presented it as a destructive and authoritative force. His poetry is free from norms of cultures. He doesn't follow the bonds and boundaries of society. One of his famous works is *Ode to West Wind* that contains all these features. His other works include *When the Lamp is Shattered*, and *The Indian Serenade*.

William Blake (1757 – 1827)

Born in London, he had no formal education and had a little earning. For Blake, the imagination was man's sole redeeming feature and through it, he could see glories of nature. His important works are: *Songs of Innocence*, *Songs of Experience*, *Holy Thursday*

1.3.4 Summary:

The best-known Romantic poets were William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel T. Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and John Keats. Their poetry was dependent on various features peculiar to their time: a reaction against previous literary styles, arguments with eighteenth century and earlier philosophers, the decline in formal Anglican worship and the rise of dissenting religious sects, and the rapid and unprecedented industrialization of Britain and consequent changes in its countryside.

Above all, however, it was the impact of the French Revolution which gave the period its most distinctive and urgent concerns. Following the Revolution itself, which began in 1789, Britain was at war with France on continental Europe for nearly twenty years while massive repression of political dissent was implemented at home. Against this background much of the major writing of the period, associated with the term Romantic, takes place between 1789 (when the French Revolution began) and 1824 (the death of Byron) and can be seen as a response to changing political and social conditions in one respect or another.

1.3.5 Glossary and Notes

Denounced: to announce or to declare

Scenario: an outline or the plot of a literary work

Antithesis: direct contrast or opposition

Aspirations: an ardent wish or desire

Innovation: the introduction of something new, in customs, rites etc.

Disposition: the arrangement or placement of certain things.

Emanates: to come from a source or to send or give out.

Escape: to avoid or to free oneself

Nostalgia: a longing for home or homesickness

Middle Age: relating or belonging to the about 1000 to 1500 A.D.

1.3.6 Check your progress

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

1. Who wrote the poem “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”?
2. Who were the elder Romantic poets?
3. Who were the younger Romantic poets?
4. Against what the romantic revival was a reaction?
5. By whom the poem ‘My Heart Leaps Up’ is written?

B) Fill in the blanks

1. The period of Romantic poetry began in 1798 with the publication of
2. “Ode to a Nightingale”, is a poem written by
3. Lyrical Ballads, a collection of poems composed by and Coleridge.
4. Romanticism in English poetry covers the period from
5. The Romantics were In their outlook and presentation.

1.3.7Key to your progress

- A) 1. S. T. Coleridge
2. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, and Southey

3. Lord Byron, P. B. Shelley and Keats were known as the younger romantic poets.
 4. it was against Neo-classicism
 5. William Wordsworth
- B)
1. Lyrical Ballads
 2. John Keats
 3. Wordsworth
 4. 1798 to 1832.
 5. humanitarian

1.3.8 Exercises

B) Answer the following questions

1. What are the salient features of Romantic poetry?
2. Write a critical note on the contribution to Romantic poetry by elder and younger English Romantic poet.

C) Write a short note on the following

1. John Keats as a Romantic poet
2. William Wordsworth as a pioneer of the 19th century.
3. The contribution of Wordsworth and Coleridge
4. Romanticism is liberalism in literature
5. Romanticism is against the classical age



Module II

Selections from Elizabethan Poetry

2.0 Objectives:

After studying this module students will be able to -

1. Understand subject matter and manner of presentation of Elizabethan poetry.
2. Explain different expressions, forms and poetic devices used by Elizabethan poets.
3. Comprehend, appreciate and analyze selected Elizabethan poems properly.
4. Know and understand Spenser, Sydney and Shakespeare's poetic skills.

2.1 Introduction:

In the previous unit, you have studied three topics for background readings. One of them is Elizabethan Poetry. It covered meaning of the term 'Elizabethan,' span of Elizabethan age and brief idea about famous Elizabethan poets - Spenser, Sydney and Shakespeare. Also, you have studied about history of English sonnet, changes made by Thomas Wyatt and Surrey, etc. As there were hundreds of poets and thousands of poems, 'Elizabethan Age' is called as '*Nest of Singing Birds*.' We know that during Elizabethan age, along with sonnets, songs, pastorals also, became famous.

This is the second module. It deals with some selections from Elizabethan poetry. The poetic form Sonnet is prescribed here for study. Spenser, Sidney and Shakespeare's sonnets are being discussed providing necessary details. They differ in thematic aspects and subject matter but, there is one common thread in them and that is all of them are 'Elizabethan Sonnets.' The art of composing sonnets reached its climax during this age. So, three specimen sonnets of Spenser, Sidney and Shakespeare have been selected for study. Study of every sonnet covers following points – objectives, introduction, the text, glossary and notes, summary, analysis of the poem, check your progress, key to check your progress, exercises and further readings...etc.

Poets and Poems – 1) Edmund Spenser – 'Sweet Warrior' (Sonnet 57)

- 2) Sir Philip Sidney – ‘Sonnet To The Moon’
- 3) William Shakespeare – ‘Full Many A Glorious Morning...’ (Sonnet 33)

2.1 ‘Sweet Warrior’ (Sonnet 57)

--- Edmund Spenser.

Contents:

- 2.1.1 Objectives
- 2.1.2 Introduction
- 2.1.3 The Text
- 2.1.4 Glossary and Notes
- 2.1.5 Summary
- 2.1.6 Analysis of the Poem
- 2.1.7 Check Your Progress
- 2.1.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 2.1.9 Exercises
- 2.1.10 Further Readings

2.1.1 Objectives:

After studying this part of the module, students will be able to –

- Understand Spenser as Elizabethan Poet.
- Interpret Spenser’s concept of love.
- Identify Spenser’s arguments in the poem.
- Comprehend how Christian and Medieval elements are mixed in Spenser’s poetry.

2.1.2 Introduction:

Edmund Spenser (1522 –1599) was born in East – Smithfield, London in 1552. He was son of a journeyman. He was educated at Merchant Taylor’s school. He took his degree in 1576. He read Virgil, Cicero, Ovid, Chaucer’s poetry and Bible. He was much influenced by Gabriel Harvey, a fellow of Pembroke. Also, we notice

memories of Rosalind (lady who despised him) in his poetry. He was good friend of Sir Philip Sidney. In 1579, he published 'The Shepherd's Calendar.' In 1590, he published *The Faerie Queene*. In 1594, he married Elizabeth Boyle and published his sonnet sequence 'Amoretti' in 1595. He returned to London in 1599, no one cared for him and he died in poverty. He was buried in West Minister Abbey.

Spenser is famous Elizabethan poet. Queen Elizabeth appreciated his poems and granted him pension of fifty pounds a year for his *The Faerie Queene*. He tried to evaluate his language and to refine his native tongue. His poems display metrical varieties and use of Spenserian stanza. He used archaic expressions as a link with native tradition. We notice prolixity, diffuseness, pictorial imagination and fantasy in his poetry. His love poems vividly depict physical, spiritual aspects of his beloved.

The present poem "Sweet Warrior" is a typical Elizabethan sonnet; addressed to his wife Elizabeth Boyle. It appears at no.57 in his sonnet sequences *Amoretti*, published in 1595. It presents lover's argument and his persuading to the unwilling beloved to accept his love. Lover asks and requests her to end the war against him. He wishes to have comfort and peace with the beloved.

2.1.3 The Text

*Sweet warrior when shall I have peace with you?
High time it is, this warre now ended were;
Which I no longer can endure to sue,
Ne your incessant battry more to beare:*

*So weake my powres, so sore my wounds appeare,
that wonder is how I should live a jot,
Seeing my hart through launched everywhere
With thousand arrowes, which your eies have shot:
Yet shoot ye sharpely still, and spare me not,
but glory thinke to make these cruel stoures;
ye cruell one, what glory can be got,
in slaying him that would live gladly yours?*

*Make peace therefore, and graunt me timely grace,
that al my wounds will heale in little space.*

2.1.4 Glossary and Notes

Warriour – warrior

Battry – battery

Warre – war

Weake – weak

Lenger – longer

Hart – heart

Eies – eyes

Sue – to seek by request

incessant – continuous

stoures – quivers

heal – recover

grant – permit

to make peace – to reconcile

ye shoot ye sharply still, and spare me not – lover moans in pain when beloved shoots him with her arrows that directly touch his heart.

2.1.5 Summary

Speaker addresses the beloved in argumentative style and tries to persuade the unwilling beloved to accept his love. In the beginning this sonnet presents the question through which speaker presents his view about beloved. He wishes that it is high time now and the war between them must be ended. He couldn't endure it much longer. His powers are weak and wounds are sore. He wonders how he had lived such life without her. Now, she must think of all this and grant peace to him.

Then he states that her eyes are like bow and her looks are like arrows that hurt his heart. He is injured. He is in love with her. But, she is not responding. She is shooting sharply and not thinking to end all this. He couldn't survive without her. He

is very serious that a beautiful lady has such cruelty? She is cruel and what type of glory she does possess? He is slain by her such deceiving, glad, glorious approach.

At last he requests her to be away from all this. It is unbearable for him now. He requests her to make reconciliation, to make peace and grant him timely grace so that all his wounds will heal soon. He is hopeful of such meeting and love making. He is requesting and she is denying. Lover is mere slave persuading beloved to accept his proposal. He wishes to end this war and to live peaceful life.

2.1.6 Analysis of the poem

This sonnet presents Spenser's concept of love. It reflects the sufferings of the lover. Here, the lover is frustrated because the beloved is continuously refusing his proposal. The ongoing struggle is continuous and the beloved is not responding. So, the lover addresses the beloved as, 'sweet warrior.' The question in the very beginning line 'When shall have I peace with you?' is the clear proof of lover's dismood and frustration. Such unresponsive, indifferent attitude of the beloved is tormenting the lover. So, he continues that she should end this war. He couldn't tolerate it anymore. These beginning lines present this war like situation. Her constant refusal hurts him deeply. So, he compares himself to a 'wounded soldier.'

In the next part of the sonnet, lover describes that he is hypnotized by her beauty. He admires her beauty. His heart is shot by thousands of arrows from her eyes. She is shooting very sharply and not sparing him. So, on one hand, he remains a wounded warrior and on the other she is unresponsive. He describes himself as a mere slave pleading the unresponding beloved to accept his proposal. He can't endure her constant refusals and it is very tragic. He remarks that she can't be glorious by slaying him. She is happy, but, he is frustrated. He wishes to end this suing for peace and grace. He writes, "That all my wounds will heale in little space." This irony presents his repeated efforts of wooing an unresponsive woman. Lover is persuading the beloved to return his love. But, beloved is firm, unresponsive and unwilling to make love with him.

In this sonnet, Spenser has used the metaphor of War to present lover's critical situation. It highlights loving couple's quarrel. References to battery, sharp shooting arrows...etc. are the best words that present war like situation. There are three quatrains and an ending couplet. Twelve lines of the quatrains forward the lover's argument and the ending couplet tries to find out final solution to it. It presents the

2. Discuss Spenser as an Elizabethan sonneteer.

Q.2. Write short notes on the following.

1. Argumentative element in the poem.
2. Title of the poem.

2.1.10 Further Reading:

1. Bayley, Peter, 'Edmund Spenser: Prince of poets,' London: Hutchinson, 1971.
2. William A. Oram and others (ed.), 'The shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser,' New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1989.

2.2 'Sonnet to the Moon'

--- Sir Philip Sidney.

Contents:

- 2.2.1 Objectives
- 2.2.2 Introduction
- 2.2.3 The Text
- 2.2.4 Glossary and Notes
- 2.2.5 Summary
- 2.2.6 Analysis of the Poem
- 2.2.7 Check Your Progress
- 2.2.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 2.2.9 Exercises
- 2.2.10 Further Readings

2.2.1 Objectives:

After studying this part of the module, students will be able to –

- Understand Sidney as Elizabethan Poet.
- Interpret Sidney's concept of love.

- Comprehend Sidney as experimenter of the sonnet form.

2.2.2 Introduction:

Sir Philip Sidney was a multifaceted personality during Elizabethan age. He was a scholar, statesman, courtier and a soldier. Ben Johnson praises him as one in whom all the muses met. Sidney was born at Pen Hurst in Kent on Nov.30, 1554. At school he studied Virgil, Cicero, Ovid, Cato and Horace. In 1568, he entered Christ Church, Oxford. He left Oxford in 1571 without taking degree because of outbreak of plague. In 1572, he traveled abroad to gain proficiency in foreign languages. In 1575, he returned to England. Earl of Essex wished that Penelope, his daughter to marry Sidney. But, she married Lord Rich and Sidney became sad and then to overcome this emotional disappointment, in 1582, he penned the sonnets and circulated them to his friends and family. He turned to Italy and Spain for poetic models. His famous poetic works are – *Arcadia, Defense of Poesie, Astrophel and Stella*. He wrote 108 sonnets and 11 songs in *Astrophel and Stella*. He died on Oct.17, 1586 in Netherlands. This sonnet sequence was published in 1591 and authorized edition of it was brought out in 1598 by his sister, the countess of Pembroke.

These sonnets present his love for Stella. It is a semi-autobiographical, semi fictional story of human passion having primary concern for art. Sidney's sonnets provide a narrative and psychological progression in dramatic structure. The present sonnet, 'Sonnet to the Moon,' prescribed for the study appears at no.31 in *Astrophel and Stella*. Here, lover compares his condition to that of the moon in the sky. He wishes to be one with the beloved but, she is not responding to his call.

2.2.3 The Text:

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
 How silently, and with how wan a face!
 What, may it be that even in heav'nly place
 That busy archer his sharp arrows tries!
 Sure, if that long – with love – acquainted eyes
 Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case,
 I read it in thy looks; thy languish'd grace
 To me that feel like thy state descries.

Then, ev'n of fellowship, O, Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be lov'd, and yet

Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

2.2.4 Glossary and Notes:

wan – pale

That busy archer –Cupid, god of love.

thou – you

languish – strongly desire something.

descry – to see, to discover

scorn – hate, dislike

ungratefulness – not expressing gratitude.

Unrequited love – love that cannot be reciprocated even though reciprocation is desired.

2.2.5 Summary:

This is sonnet no. 31 in *Astrophel and Stella*. It narrates Astrophel's hopeless passion for Stella. It presents Astrophel's thoughts while seeing the moon at night. Here poet/Astrophel transfers his own emotion that is his love-lorn condition to the moon. The octave (first eight lines) presents lover's perception of the moon. Lover describes the moon very carefully. It seems to him that the pale moon climbs the skies silently with sad steps, silently and with sad, pale face. Then he wonders and questions that in the heaven also, the Cupid (God of love) tries to pierce the heavenly bodies with his arrows. He does it to bring them under his spell of love. The moon, like the lover stands alone in the sky apart from the stars. So, the moon is a symbol of solitary lover suffering from unrequited love.

He continues that the moon has been ‘long with love acquainted eyes’ can judge the love perfectly. He could feel the lover’s case. Poet states that he has understood the moon’s love experiences through its appearances. Its grace is ‘languished grace.’(graceful but weakened by the effects of love.) Here the moon is a fellow sufferer. Poet states that he has discovered moon’s love – lorn condition.

The Sestet (next six lines) of this sonnet presents a series of questions. The focus is shifted from the description of the moon to the reflections about love. The lyrical voice asks the moon whether in the sky also, love is treated as ‘want of wit.’ He continues if women are as proud as they are on the Earth. He wants to know whether the beauties above are loveable, trustworthy or they are deceiving like here on the Earth. The ending couplet summarizes above thought. The lyrical voice feels that love is a virtue but beloved/Stella does not feel the same way. She still is reluctant, hesitating and giving no response to the lover. She still does not believe in the constant love. So, he refers to this virtue as ungratefulness. The condition of the lover on the Earth and that of the moon is same.

2.2.6 Analysis of the Poem:

This sonnet presents Sydney’s concept of love. It is one of Sidney’s finest sonnets. Here poet is addressing to the moon as a potential fellow sufferer from Cupid’s cruel arrows. Octave presents description of the moon while sestet consists of rhetorical questions asked to the moon by the yearning lover. It deals with hope, frustration and despair within love. The beloved is continuously refusing his proposal. The ongoing struggle is continuous and the beloved is not responding. At the beginning poet/Astrophel transfers his own emotion, love–lorn condition to the moon. Pale moon climbs the skies silently with sad steps. Poet addresses the moon directly. He states that an experienced lover can easily judge the love–lorn condition of the lover. It can be seen through the faded face and sad mood. To him, even in the heaven Cupid fires his arrows into people’s hearts to make them fall in love. Astrophel relates his own earthly experiences of love to that of the moon in the heaven. He observes that moon carries the symptoms of lovesickness that is languished grace.

The sestet presents the shift/change. These six lines are full of questions. Speaker sees moon as cold, distant and sad. The lover asks the moon to tell him whether in the sky, love is treated as ‘want of wit.’ He asks if constancy in love is

regarded as foolish. He continues that if beautiful women in heaven are as proud as they are on the Earth. Do they despise their devoted lovers? He labels her as an ungrateful person. On the Earth love is virtue. But, Stella is not responding to the lover's virtue and constant love. She is ungrateful, is it so in the heaven also? In the end Stella remains remote, proud and feels the speaker as the sucker. So, he remains as a dissatisfied, empty-handed lover seeking answers to all his questions.

Theme of this sonnet is *unrequited love* that is love that can't be reciprocated even though reciprocation is desired. The rhyme – scheme of this sonnet is abba, abba, cdcd, ee. Here the lyrical voice personifies the moon and describes the moon carefully as an individual being. In lines three and four the lyrical voice's connection of his feelings to those of the moon is an example of 'pathetic fallacy' (elements of nature appear to have human emotions, feelings and responses). This sonnet reflects the relationship between Sidney and Penelope. He wished that she should be his wife. But, she shunned his approaches and left him asking questions having no answers to them. Lines five and six of this sonnet are joined by 'enjambment' (a line runs into the next without punctuation but maintaining sense) e.g. – long- with –love - love-feels'st-lover's.

Also, we notice repetition of the word love and derivatives – lover's, loved, lovers...etc.

Title of the sonnet is reflective. It presents main theme of the poem. The octave presents the speaker's mood of self-pity. But, sestet presents shift in the mood – ironical and witty. The ending question presents conventional game of mistress's pride and scorn. The rhyme- scheme of this sonnet is abba, abba, cdcd, ee. Title of this sonnet is very suggestive.

2.2.7 Check Your Progress:

Q.1. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence.

- 1) What is the form of this poem?
- 2) What is the rhyme- scheme of this poem?
- 3) What is the main theme of this poem?
- 4) Who is the speaker?

Q.2. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) 'Sonnet to the Moon' is written by -----.
a) Sidney b) Spenser c) Shakespeare d) none of these.
- 2) 'Sonnet to the Moon' is a ----- sonnet.
a) Miltonic b) Petrarchan c) Italian d) none of these.
- 3) The Moon climbs the skies with ----- steps.
a) peaceful b) happy c) sad d) cautious.
- 4) Cupid is the God of-----.
a) hate b) friendship c) peace d) love.
- 5) Sidney's 'Sonnet to the Moon' is sonnet number -----.
a) 34 b) 31 c) 32 d) 35.

2.2.8 Key to Check Your Progress:

Q.1.1) Sonnet

- 2) abba, abba, cdcd, ee.
- 3) Unrequited love
- 4) lover/poet/Astrophel

Q.2. 1) a 2) b 3) c 4) d 5) b.

2.2.9 Exercises:

Q.1.1. Write critical appreciation of the poem 'Sonnet to the Moon.'

2. Discuss 'Sonnet to the Moon' as an Elizabethan sonnet.

Q.2. Write short notes on the following.

1. Argumentative style in the poem.
2. Poetic devices and expressive techniques in the poem.

2.2.10 Further Reading:

1. Buxton, John, 'Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance,' New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966.
2. Ringler Jr., William A. (ed.), 'The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney', London: Oxford 1962.
3. Rudenstine, Neil, 'Sidney's Poetic Development', Cambridge, Mass, 1967.

2.3 ‘Full Many a Glorious Morning’ Sonnet 33

--- William Shakespeare.

Contents:

- 2.3.1 Objectives
- 2.3.2 Introduction
- 2.3.3 The Text
- 2.3.4 Glossary and Notes
- 2.3.5 Summary
- 2.3.6 Analysis of the Poem
- 2.3.7 Check Your Progress
- 2.3.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 2.3.9 Exercises
- 2.3.10 Further Reading

2.3.1 Objectives:

After studying this part of the module, students will be able to –

- Understand William Shakespeare as Elizabethan Poet.
- Explain subject matter, themes and manner of presentation of Shakespearean sonnets.
- Comprehend how Shakespeare did experiments and perfected the sonnet form.

2.3.2 Introduction:

William Shakespeare was born on 23rd April, 1564 in a village Stratford on the bank of river Avon in Warwickshire County. His father John Shakespeare was by trade, a butcher. His mother Mary brought with her land and houses. William was sent to Grammar school of Stratford for his early education where he learnt small Latin and less Greek. When his father’s fortunes began to decline, he left the school at the age of thirteen to assist his father’s business. When he was of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years older than Shakespeare. She did not possess

any remarkable graces and accomplishments. It hints that his married life was not happy.

He left Stratford for London in about 1586 to try his luck. It is said that he began his career as a lawyer's clerk or Surgeon's assistant. Here he inclined to poetry and acting. He started working as a servant to wait at the door of the play house and hold the horses. Then he became an inferior actor in a play – house. Soon he became an excellent actor. Meanwhile he started writing and adapting plays in collaboration with other playwrights and also became famous as a playwright. Then he became a celebrity in the theatre circle in 1592.

In 1594, theatres reopened and Shakespeare's career began to bloom. Shakespeare and his company formed 'Lord Chamberlain's Company.' Then he became shareholder of 'The Globe.' From 1594 onwards he became a famous dramatist having 37 plays to his credit. In 1597, he purchased the biggest house of the town. His health began to fail in the early months of 1616. So, he did as will leaving his property to his eldest daughter, Susannah Hall. He died on April 23, 1616 and buried inside the Stratford Church.

2.3.3 The Text:

*Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain –tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;*

*Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace.*

*Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out, alack! He was but one hour mine;
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.*

*Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.*

2.3.4 Glossary and Notes:

Sovereign eye – supreme / royal/majestic, kingly gaze

Gilding – Turning to Gold, covering with gold.

alchemy – magic of science turning base metals into Gold.

Anon – very soon

basest – blackest

rack – a line or procession of thin, flying, broken clouds/ portion of floating vapour in the sky.

alack – alas

visage – face

whit – smallest part

disdaineth – a feeling of contempt or scorn

staineth – discolour/dim.

2.3.5 Summary:

William Shakespeare's sonnets from 33 to 36 are labeled as estrangement sonnets. This sonnet no.33 is one of the main sonnets in the Fair Youth sequence of Shakespeare's sonnets. It marks the beginning of a new phase in poet and the youth's estrangement from each other. Here poet expresses his love to a young man, his friend. Many critics viewed this as 'the highest lyrical expression in the English poetry.' Here poet has used his imaginative power to present beauty of nature as the symbol of human emotions. The faith between two men was broken. So, we notice change in poet's attitude to the youth.

There are three quatrains and a couplet. The first two quatrains form one sentence. So, they can be summarized together. It shows that poet has been deeply hurt by his young friend (Earl of Southampton). Poet felt isolated and unwanted. In the first quatrain, poet compares his friend, the youth with the beauty of nature. He states that he has seen many glorious mornings. The Sun appears as a sovereign eye

flattering the mountain tops, kissing the golden faces of the green meadows. Poet says that the Sun with his heavenly magic has turned pale streams into gold.

The second quatrain describes the young man's relationship with the poet. Poet feels that his friend was no more loyal. Here poet says that at once the Sun permits the rack/ugly, thin flying broken clouds to ride on his celestial face. The winds in the upper region move the clouds above. The clouds ride on the face of the heaven as horsemen ride on the face of the Earth. So, to the poet, the world has become forlorn because the clouds have covered the Sun's celestial face. In such condition the Sun is moving to the West secretly. It means that the world couldn't observe the setting Sun. It is the loss. This is the clear mark of the temporary separation between the two friends.

In the third quatrain, we notice change in poet's mood. He states that the Sun shines in the early morning, changes the face of the nature making it beautiful. But, we couldn't know how it sets in the West secretly. It's face was covered by the clouds. In the same way his Son, (Hamnet died in 1596 at the age of 11) who was a matter of pride for the poet, has departed very early. He shined for one hour. It means that like the Sun's secret setting in the west, his Son was no more. He tries to remember his Son. The typical cloud has covered his face now and disgraced him. Loss of his Son is greater than the loss of the friend now. So, at the end, poet thinks of the compromise and reminds his friend again. The ending couplet presents the message of the sonnet. Poet says that though his friend has done something wrong, it will not weaken his love for his friend. He says that the Sun sets and rises again, though shadowed by the clouds for some time, (Suns of the world may stain), the same has happened to his friend. To the poet, Sun of the heaven is stained. So, Sons of the world may stain. It means that poet hopes that the bond of the true friendship will be formed once again. His relations with his friend will be same as they were in the past. This sonnet ends with a hopeful note.

2.3.6 Analysis of the Poem:

This is sonnet no.33. Many critics have labeled it as 'the highest lyrical expression in the English poetry.' It can be seen here through Shakespeare's poetic skill. Shakespeare's sonnets from 33 to 36 are labeled as estrangement sonnets. This sonnet no.33 is one of the main sonnets in the Fair Youth sequence of Shakespeare's sonnets. It marks the beginning of a new phase in poet and the youth's estrangement

from each other. Here poet expresses his love to a young man, his friend. Here poet has used his imaginative power to present beauty of nature as the symbol of human emotions. The faith between two men was broken. So, we notice change in poet's attitude to the youth. At the very end, poet wishes to regain this faith again.

The first two quatrains present most of the main ideas of the poet. At present, what comes to his mind about this shift in the friendship is forwarded. The beginning of this sonnet hints about Shakespeare's imagination and his particular style to present the subject matter. It presents the feeling of necessity of the friendship. Poet compares the separation of the friends with the mountain tops flattered by the rising Sun. There is no clear idea about the supposed fault/mistake committed by his friend. The first two quatrains form a single sentence. They can be analyzed together. In the first quatrain, poet compares the young man with the beauty of the nature. Rising Sun is changing everything in the nature including - green meadows, gilding pale streams, flattering mountain tops...etc. All this is happening only due to the heavenly magic that was working in the form of the rising Sun. But, what he feels was very short lived.

Suddenly a gradual change takes place and in the second quatrain, we notice change in the friendship, the young man's relations with poet. Shakespeare has not mentioned the 'supposed fault' committed by the youth. Here the speaker is torn between hating the clouds and hating the young man. Poet is serious about disloyalty of the young man. The rack/ugly, thin flying broken clouds cover Sun's celestial face. So, to the poet, the world has become forlorn. The Sun is moving to the West secretly. It means that the world couldn't observe the setting Sun. It is the loss. It shows the temporary separation between the two friends.

In the third quatrain, we notice change in poet's mood. The Sun shines in the early morning, changing the face of the nature, making it graceful with its heavenly magic. But, it sets in the West secretly. Its face was covered by the rack. In the same way his Son, (Hamnet died in 1596 at the age of 11) who was a matter of pride for the poet has departed very early. He shined for one hour. It means that like the Sun's secret setting in the west, his Son was no more. He tries to remember his Son. Loss of his Son is greater than the loss of the friend now. But, at the end, poet thinks of the compromise and reminds his friend again.

The ending couplet presents the message of the sonnet. To the poet, Sun is stained. So, Sons of the world may stain. Poet hopes that the bond of the true friendship will be formed once again. His relations with his friend will be same as they were in the past. This sonnet ends with a hopeful note.

In the first two quatrains, poet has used adjective plus noun structure in every line to present the main subject e.g. glorious morning, golden face, pale streams, basest clouds, ugly rack, forlorn world...etc. This sonnet is the first in which, Shakespeare has used the metaphor of the young man as the Sun. Poet compares the breakup of his friendship with the mountain tops flattered by the rising Sun. Though apparently, it seems that this sonnet is addressed to a young man, the third quatrain is co- addressed to his Son, Hamnet who died in 1596 at the age of 11. We notice the pun on the word 'sun', in the line '*Even so my sun one early morn did shine.*' which when replaced with 'Son' presents poet's personal loss. It shows that this sonnet begins a new phase in the poet and the youth's estrangement from each other. The faith between the two men is broken.

References to 'basest clouds, ugly rack, stealing, disgrace, stain...etc.' hints that his friend has committed serious moral offence. The metaphor suggests that the young man is like the sun with golden face that warms and brightens the Earth. But, it allows the basest clouds to block its rays, in the same way; the young man permits other people to interfere with his relations with the poet. He accepts that the friend has deceived him. But, his love for the young man remains unchanged. It presents the theme of this sonnet '*betrayal and hypocrisy.*' The imagery of the beauty reflects his love and friendship that has turned sour now. It is typical English/Shakespearean sonnet having three quatrains and a couplet. Its rhyme- scheme is *abab, cdcd, efef, gg.* Title is very suggestive. It presents the subject of this sonnet.

2.3.7 Check Your Progress:

Q.1. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence.

- 1) What is the rhyme- scheme of this sonnet?
- 2) What is the main theme of this sonnet?
- 3) To whom this sonnet is addressed?

Q.2. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) 'Full many a Glorious Morning' is written by -----.
 - a) Sydney
 - b) Spenser
 - c) Shakespeare
 - d) none of these.
- 2) 'Full many a Glorious Morning' is a ----- sonnet.
 - a) Miltonic
 - b) English
 - c) Italian
 - d) none of these.
- 3) ----- permits the basest clouds to ride with ugly rack on his face.
 - a) Moon
 - b) Star
 - c) Sun
 - d) Sky.
- 4) The third quatrain refers to Poet's son -----.
 - a) Hamlet
 - b) Hamnet
 - c) Herman
 - d) none of these.
- 5) 'Full many a Glorious Morning' is sonnet number -----.
 - a) 34
 - b) 31
 - c) 33
 - d) 35.

2.3.8 Key to Check Your Progress:

- Q.1.** 1) abab, cdcd, efef ,ee.
2) betrayal and hypocrisy.
3) friend/young man.

Q.2. 1) c 2) b 3) c 4) b 5) c.

2.3.9 Exercises:

- Q.1** 1. Write critical note on how Shakespeare has presented the play of hope and despair in this sonnet.
2. Discuss 'Full many a Glorious Morning' as Shakespearean sonnet.
- Q.2.** Write short notes on the following.
1. Sunshine metaphor in this sonnet.
2. Central argument of this sonnet.

2.3.10 Further Reading:

1. Booth Stephen, 'Shakespeare's sonnets,' Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1977.
2. Landry Hilton, 'Interpretation in Shakespeare's sonnets,' Univ. of California Press, Berkley, 1963.
3. Price T.R., 'The Technique of Shakespeare's Sonnets,' Lord Baltimore Press. Baltimore, 1902.



Module III

Selections from Metaphysical Poetry

Objectives:

After studying this module, you will be able to :

1. Understand – the meaning of metaphysical poetry.
2. Explain – different terms and poetic devices used by the metaphysical poets.

Introduction:

Dr. Johnson first used the term ‘Metaphysical school of poetry’ while referring to the poetry of John Donne, Cowley and others. He borrowed the term from Dryden. John Donne was the founder of this school of poetry. He was later followed by Richard Crashaw, George Herbert, Abraham Cowley, and Andrew Marvell. The chief characteristics of this poetry are use of hyperbole, paradox, farfetched conceits, intellectual wit, novel and learned imagery, peculiar blend of passion, and feeling etc. These poets used subtle and unexpected comparisons. They turned to analysis, brooding on religion and probing of their souls. They developed more individual styles. This poetry is conversational, subtle and argumentative. Critics have said that Metaphysical Poetry is born out of man’s passionate thinking about life, love and death. Let us study the following three poems.

- 1) John Donne – **The Sunne Rising**
- 2) Henry Vaughan – **The Retreat**
- 3) George Herbert – **The Collar**

3.1 THE SUNNE RISING

John Donne

Structure:

- 3.1.0 Objectives
- 3.1.1 Introduction
- 3.1.2 The Text
- 3.1.3 Summary
- 3.1.4 Analysis of the poem
- 3.1.5 Glossary and Notes
- 3.1.6 Check your progress
- 3.1.7 Key to check your progress
- 3.1.8 Exercises
- 3.1.9 Further Reading

3.1.0 Objectives:

After studying this poem, students will be able to:

- Understand John Donne as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Understand John Donne as a Love poet.
- Understand metaphysical conceits in this poem.

3.1.1 Introduction:

John Donne (1572 – 1631) was born in London. He was the son of a rich iron merchant. He was a Catholic and therefore, could not continue his education in Oxford and Cambridge because of his religion. He studied law at Lincoln's Inn. He simply called himself a Christian. He studied the philosophic grounds of all faith, repudiated the church in which he was born and renounced all denominations. During this time, he wrote poetry and also shared his wealth with needy catholic relatives. He joined the expedition of Essex for Cadiz in 1596 and for the Azores in

1597. Next he travelled in Europe for three years, but occupied himself with study and poetry. Returning home he became secretary to Lord Egerton. There he fell in love with Anne More, the niece of Lord Egerton. Finding opposition to his marriage, Donne eloped with her and married her. Therefore, Donne was arrested and put behind the bars. Donne suffered from poverty. But his father – in – law, Sir George More forgave the young lovers and settled a handsome allowance on his daughter. He refused the flattering offer of James I for entering the Church of England. After his wife's death, he became the preacher and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. He passed away on 31st March, 1631.

The poetry of Donne can be broadly divided into two groups: 1) Secular Poems, and 2) Divine Poems. The first group includes a) Songs and Sonnets, b) The Elegies, c) The Satires, d) Verse Letters, e) Epithalamus, f) The Progress of the Soul, g) Epicedes and Obsequies, h) The Anniversaries. The second group comprises: a) La Carona, b) Holy Sonnets, and c) Miscellaneous Divine Poems. Besides these poems he has written some prose work.

3.1.2 The Text:

The Sunne Rising

John Donne

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, nedantic wretch, go chide
Late school-boys, and sour prentices,
Go, tell court-huntsmen, that the King will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices:
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend, 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 left'st 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 honour'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 warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy centre is, these walls, thy sphere.

3.1.3 Summary:

In the beginning, the poet addresses the sun as “busy old fool, unruly sun”. He gets angry with the sun for its rays are entering the room and thus disturbing the lovers who are still in their bed till late in the morning. It must realize that lovers are not bound by the rules of the sun and time. He asks the sun to go away from their room. Instead of disturbing them, it should rebuke boys for being late to school and young apprentices for being unwilling to work. It should tell the courtiers to

accompany the king going out for hunting and ask the busy farmers to collect their harvest. It should not disturb the lovers because love is free and knows no bounds of time and space. It remains unaffected by the passing of time.

In the second stanza the poet continues his boastful tone. He challenges the sun saying that his rays cannot encroach on the privacy of the lovers. The poet can obliterate its rays in a moment by closing his eyes. However, he will not do so because he does not want to keep the beloved out of sight. He boasts that her eyes are brighter than the rays of the sun and can even blind him. He praises her beauty extravagantly and says that all the riches and perfumes of the East and the West are present in her personality. Even the kings envy her beauty saying that all wealth lies in the lover's bed.

In the third stanza, the poet says that his beloved is equal to all the states and kingdoms of the world. There is no other world than the world of the lovers and he is proud to be the king (prince) ruling the kingdom. Compared to their glory of love, all other glory is mockery, and all other wealth is false and deceptive. The sun is not as happy as the poet because it is alone and does not have a beloved like his own. He believes that the whole world is shrunk in the bed of the lovers. The sun should perform its duty of giving light and heat to the world. Likewise, he asks the sun to warm their little room i.e. the world of love. If it gives light to them, it will be giving light to the whole world. Henceforth, the little world of theirs would be the centre round which it will revolve and the four walls of their room would mark the limits of its orbit.

3.1.4 Analysis of the poem:

“The Sunne Rising” is an amusing, witty and dramatic lyric in the form of a dialogue between the poet and the sun. The poet treats the sun familiarly and colloquially. The poem opens abruptly and captures the attention of the readers instantly. Donne belittles the sun and calls it, “busy old fool”. He asks the sun not to disturb the lovers, instead, the sun should go and wake up the boys going to school, unwilling workers, busy farmers, flattering courtiers and kings and princes.

In the second stanza the poet continues his boastful tone. He says that the thought of his present good fortune makes him feel greater than the world dominating sun. He pays high compliments to his mistress saying that all the riches and perfumes of the East and the West have mingled in her personality.

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 is the supreme ruler of the world. So let the sun should shine on the lovers only and in this way it would be giving light and heat to the entire world, because the lovers are a microcosm of the world.

The poem is a light verse. It is a genuine and sincere expression of the poet’s feelings of happiness and completeness in the possession of his mistress. The poem is remarkable for its variety of tone. The poem begins abruptly, with a sharp, surprising colloquial expression “Busy old fool, unruly Sun”. The poet expresses his complete joy in possessing his beloved and in this way, he rules and controls the whole world, and therefore, he is superior to the sun itself.

Conceits in the poem:

- 1) The poet claims that with a wink of his eyes, he can eclipse and cloud the sun.
- 2) The beloved who lies in the bed with him is a combination of both the Indies: of spice and mine. 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.
- 3) The beloved is all the kingdoms of the world, and the poet is all the monarchs of the world.
- 4) 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.

3.1.5 Glossary and Notes:

<i>Unruly</i>	-	ill-mannered
<i>Busy</i>	-	interfering
<i>Call on us</i>	-	visit us, and thus disturb us in our love-making
<i>Saucy</i>	-	impertinent
<i>Pedantic</i>	-	making show of learning
<i>Sour prentices</i>	-	trainees unwilling to go to work.
<i>Country ants</i>	-	slavish farmers, who are always busy like ants.

<i>No season knows,</i>	-	is not subject to the change of season and climates.
<i>no climes</i>		
<i>Rags of time</i>	-	The sub-division of time.
<i>Reverend</i>	-	worthy of respect.
<i>Wink</i>	-	closing of eyes for a moment
<i>Blinded</i>	-	dazzled
<i>Both the Indies</i>	-	the East Indies famous for its spices and the
<i>of spice and mine</i>		West Indies known for its gold mines.
<i>Mimic</i>	-	a mockery
<i>Alchemy</i>	-	merely counterfeit
<i>Sphere</i>	-	the orbit

3.1.6 Check your progress:

A) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence only:

- i) How does the poet address the sun?
- ii) What East Indies is famous for?
- iii) What West Indies is famous for?
- iv) What is the meaning of 'Pedantic'?
- v) Why does the poet not ready to wink?

B) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:

- i) The Sunne Rising is a dramatic poem.
 - a) love
 - b) nature
 - c) hate
 - d) city
- ii) is famous for its spices.
 - a) East Indies
 - b) West Indies
 - c) Indiana
 - d) Indigo
- iii) is famous for its gold mines.
 - a) West Indies
 - b) East Indies
 - c) Indiana
 - d) Chile
- iv) The poet asks the sun to go and wake up school.....

- a) children b) teachers c) students d) Head master
- v) “Busy old fool, unruly sun”. The figure of speech used in this line is.....
- a) simile b) metaphor c) personification d) pun

3.1.7 Key to check your progress:

- A)** i) Busy old fool, unruly sun
 ii) Spices
 iii) Gold mines
 iv) Showy like school master who likes to make a display of his learning
 v) Because he does not want to lose sight of the beautiful face of his beloved.
- B)** i) love
 ii) East Indies
 iii) West Indies
 iv) Children
 v) Personification

3.1.8 Exercises:

Q. 1) Answer the following questions in 250-300 words each:

- i) Critically appreciate the poem ‘The Sunne Rising’
 ii) How does the poet glorify and prove the superiority of self-sufficient love in ‘The Sunne Rising’?

Q. 2) Write short notes on the following:

- i) Conceits in ‘The Sunne Rising’
 ii) The boastful tone of the poet in ‘The Sunne Rising’
 iii) Glorification of the world of Love

3.1.9 Further Reading:

Compare the present poem with Donne’s another poem titled ‘*The Dreame*’.

3.2 THE RETREATE

Henry Vaughan

Structure:

- 3.2.0 Objectives
- 3.2.1 Introduction
- 3.2.2 The Text
- 3.2.3 Summary
- 3.2.4 Analysis of the poem
- 3.2.5 Glossary and Notes
- 3.2.6 Check your progress
- 3.2.7 Key to check your progress
- 3.2.8 Exercises
- 3.2.9 Further Reading

3.2.0 Objectives:

After studying this poem students will be able to:

- Understand Henry Vaughan as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Understand the sublime view of childhood as the supreme period of human life.
- Understand the imagery and metaphysical conceits.

3.2.1 Introduction:

Henry Vaughan (b. 1621 – d. 1695) was born at Newton St. Bridget. He spent his childhood in the intimate company of the Welsh mountains and valleys. After his school education he went up to Jesus College, Oxford, in 1633. However, he left Oxford without graduation and went to London with a view to study law, but studied medicine and became a physician at his native place. His early poems show the influence of Jonson and Donne on him. His famous anthologies are 1) *Poems, with the Tenth Satire of Juvenal Englished* (1646), *Olor Iscanus* (1651), *Silex Scintillans* (Part I in 1650 and Part II in 1655), and *Thalia Rediviva* (1678). He composed some religious poetry when he came under the influence of George Herbert, his

contemporary metaphysical poet. Vaughan liked to call himself a “Silurist”, i.e. related to the Silures, the name given to people who in olden times lived in a certain locality on the Welsh borders. He also published some translations from Latin and some works in prose. He passed away on 23rd April, 1695 at the age of seventy – three.

3.2.2 The Text:

The Retreat

Henry Vaughan

Happy those early dayes ! When I
Shin'd in my Angell-infancy,
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy ought
But a white, Celestiall thought,
When yet I had not walkt above
A mile, or two, from my first love,
And looking back (at that short space,)
Could see a glimpse of his bright-face;
When on some *gilded Cloud*, or *flowre*
My gazing soul would dwell an houre,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My Conscience with a sinfull sound,
Or had the black art to dispence
A sev'rall sinne to ev'ry sence,
But felt through all this fleshly dresse
Bright *shootes* of everlastingnesse.

O how I long to travel back
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plaine

Where first I left my glorious traine,
From whence th' Inlightned spirit sees
That shady City of Palme trees;
But (ah!) my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move,
And when this dust falls to the urn
In that state I came return.

3.2.3 Summary:

The poem glorifies childhood because Vaughan regards the time of childhood as a time of innocence and happiness. According to the poet it was a time when he shone with an angelic light. It was a time when the poet had thoughts only of heaven and when he could still see glimpses of God. During his childhood, he had visions of eternity when he looked at a cloud or a flower. He was so innocent in those days that he never uttered a sinful word and never had a sinful desire. He could feel the bright beams of eternity.

The poet recalls the childhood memories and wishes to go back to those early days. However, the weight of material world prevents him from seeing visions of heaven. He says that some people love a forward movement in their life, but he wants to retreat to his childhood. He wishes to return to heaven in the same glorious state in which he came from there.

3.2.4 Analysis of the poem:

'The Retreat' is one of the important poems of Henry Vaughan. It gives us his doctrine of childhood. For him, the period of childhood is the best period in one's life. It is the time full of innocence and purity. Therefore, he glorifies and idealizes childhood. He regards childhood as the supreme period of human life.

The poem has two parts. In the first part of the poem, the poet begins his argument by saying that a child is close to heaven, having just come from there. Being close to heaven and having lived in the presence of God, the child is able to catch glimpses of the bright face of God. When the child looks at a cloud or a flower, they remind him of the higher beauty and glory with which he was familiar in

heaven. He could feel eternity in the company of God. During his innocent childhood, he never uttered a sinful word nor had sinful desire. In spite of his claims of body and flesh, he saw the bright beams of heaven. He had heavenly thoughts, a lifeline for his grown up years.

In the second part of the poem the poet longs to go back to his childhood days. He says that the human spirit falls more and more under the influences of this material world and is overtaken by darkness. As a result, it becomes oblivious of its heavenly origin. It gets engrossed in worldly activities and interests and forgets heavenly origin. Therefore, the poet wishes to go back to the childhood days. This refers to the title of the poem: "The Retreat". The word "retreat" means going backwards. He concludes that after his death he would return in that state in which he came. It means that after his death he would go back to his original abode in heaven in the same glorious state in which he had come in this world.

Imagery in the poem:

The poet has used concrete imagery to explain his point of view. e.g.:

- 1) Happy those early dayes! When I
Shin'd in my Angell-infancy,
- 2) When yet I had not walkt above
A mile, or two, from my first love,
- 3) When on some gilded cloud, or flowre
My gazing soul would dwell an hour

In the first image, the poet means that as a child he still had distinct memories of his life in heaven before his birth. The second image underlines that he had only white celestial thoughts in his childhood. At that time he had walked hardly one or two miles from his "first love" and could still look back and catch a glimpse of the bright face of his first love. In the third example there is a concrete picture of the poet looking at a flower and he could perceive the great glories of heaven. Thus the poet has given physical form to abstract ideas with the help of powerful concrete images. The poet has packed the lines with meaning. There is a felicity of words and phrases. There is conciseness and the terse style which is a marked characteristic of metaphysical poetry.

Metaphysical conceits:

There are three metaphysical conceits in the poem. They are as follows:

- 1) Before I taught my tongue to sound
My conscience with a sinful sound;
- 2) Or had, the black art, to dispense,
A several sin to every sense
- 3) But (ah!) my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way.

In the first example, the poet explains that during his childhood his tongue did not utter any sinful words which would have hurt his conscience. In the second example, the poet regards a sinful deed as a result of the black art which a man employs in order to dispense a sin appropriate to a particular sense. In the third example the poet regards the soul of a man as being so drunk with its prolonged stay on earth that it cannot walk steadily backwards to heaven but staggers on the way like a drunken fellow.

3.2.5 Glossary and Notes:

<i>My angel</i>	-	infancy – the period of poet’s childhood
<i>Fancy</i>	-	imagine
<i>aught</i>	-	anything
<i>celestial</i>	-	heavenly
<i>Gilded cloud</i>	-	golden cloud
<i>spy</i>	-	see
<i>to wound</i>	-	to hurt
<i>black art</i>	-	devilishness
<i>To dispense</i>	-	to give
<i>Glorious train</i>	-	It means the memories of heaven which the poet had brought with him when he came into this world.

<i>Whence</i>	-	Where
<i>Urn</i>	-	pot
<i>Eternity</i>	-	infinity, everlastingness
<i>Fleshy dress</i>	-	physical body
<i>That shady city</i>	-	heaven
<i>of palm tress</i>		
<i>In that state I came return</i>	-	I would return to heaven

Archaic words and their Modern spellings:

<i>Retreate</i>	-	retreat
<i>Angell</i>	-	angel
<i>Dayes</i>	-	days
<i>Celestiall</i>	-	celestial
<i>Walkt</i>	-	walked
<i>Flowre</i>	-	flower
<i>Hour</i>	-	hour
<i>Sinfull</i>	-	sinful
<i>Dispence</i>	-	dispense
<i>Sev'rall</i>	-	several
<i>Sinne</i>	-	sin
<i>Sence</i>	-	sense
<i>Dresse</i>	-	dress
<i>Shootes</i>	-	shoots
<i>Everlanstingnesse</i>	-	everlastingness
<i>Travell</i>	-	travel
<i>Plaine</i>	-	plain
<i>Traine</i>	-	train

Inlightned - enlightened

Palme - palm

3.2.6 Check your progress:

A) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence only:

- 1) What does the poet mean by 'my angel – infancy'?
- 2) What does the poet mean by 'Glorious Train'?
- 3) Name the anthology of Vaughan which was published in two parts.
- 4) What is the meaning of the word 'retreat'?

B) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:

- 1) Henry Vaughan spent his childhood in the close company of the Mountains and valleys.
a) Scotland b) England c) Welsh d) Yorkshire
- 2) In the poem 'The Retreat' the poet glorifies his days.
a) Childhood b) manhood c) old age d) Middle age
- 3) The word 'celestial' means belonging to the
a) hell b) heaven c) earth d) sky
- 4) Henry Vaughan was a by profession.
a) physician b) lawyer c) carpenter d) teacher

3.2. Key to check your progress:

- A) 1) The period of childhood
2) memories of heaven
3) Silex Scintillans
4) going backwards
- B) 1) Welsh
2) Childhood
3) Heaven

- 4) physician

3.2.8 Exercises:

Q. 1) Answer the following questions in 250 – 300 words each:

- i) Critically appreciate the poem ‘The Retreat’
- ii) Discuss ‘The Retreat’ as a metaphysical poem.

Q.2) Write short notes on the following:

- i) The title ‘The Retreat’
- ii) Metaphysical conceits in “The Retreat”
- iii) Imagery in “The Retreat”

3.2.9 Further Reading:

Read William Wordsworth’s *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*.

3.3 THE COLLAR

George Herbert

Structure:

- 3.3.0 Objectives
- 3.3.1 Introduction
- 3.3.2 The Text
- 3.3.3 Summary
- 3.3.4 Analysis of the poem
- 3.3.5 Glossary and Notes
- 3.3.6 Check your progress
- 3.3.7 Key to check your progress
- 3.3.8 Exercises
- 3.3.9 Further Reading

3.3.0 Objectives:

After studying this poem, students will be able to:

- Understand George Herbert as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Understand the rebellious feelings of the poet against his priestly vocation, and his victory over those feelings.
- Understand the use of vivid imagery and metaphorical language.

3.3.1 Introduction:

George Herbert was born on the 3rd April, 1593 at Montgomery, Welsh, in an aristocratic family. He attended the Westminster School and at the age of sixteen he took admission in Trinity College, Cambridge. He became a Fellow of Trinity College in 1616 and Reader in Rhetoric in 1618. Then he became the Public Orator at the University on 18th Jan. 1619 and remained in that post till 1627. He became a Member of Parliament from Montgomery in 1624. In 1626 he was ordained deacon. In March 1629 he married Jane Danvers, a cousin of his friend, the Earl of Danby. In 1630, he moved to Bemerton and was ordained priest. He passed away in 1633. He never published his poems during his life – time. However, his friend, Nicholas Ferrar published his poems posthumously under the title of “The Temple” in 1633. In his poems, Herbert describes his mental crisis for not being able to choose between the priesthood and the worldly life. After having become a priest, he was not able to forget his worldly interests and therefore, he experienced the spiritual conflicts which are vividly painted in his poems. His poetry is wholly devotional, and by virtue of both his piety and the sacred character, he is regarded as the saint of the metaphysical school of poets. He also wrote a number of Latin Poems. “*The Country Parson*” is prose writing whereas “*Jacula Prudentum*” is a collection of proverbial sayings.

3.3.2 The Text:

The Collar

George Herbert

I struck the board, and cry'd, No more.

I will abroad.

What? Shall I ever sign and pine?
My lines and life are free; free as the rode,
Loose at the winde, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me bloud, and not restore
What I have lost with cordiall fruit?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did drie it : there was corn
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year onely lost to me?
Have I no bayes to crown it?
No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?
All wasted?
Not so, my heart: but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all the sigh-blown age
One double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit, and not. Forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,
Which pettie thoughts have made, and made to thee,
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away; take heed.
I will abroad.

Call in thy deaths head there: tie up thy fears.
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need,
Deserves his load.
But as I rav'd and grew more fierce and wilde
At every word,
Me thought I heard one calling, *Child!*
And I reply'd, *My Lord.*

3.3.3 Summary:

This poem deals with the rebellious feelings that arose in the poet's heart against his priestly vocation, and how he overcame those feelings. Being a priest, the poet had sacrificed all worldly ambitions and pleasures of life and this made the poet restless and discontented.

In the beginning the poet angrily declares that he will not tolerate the life of self – denial. He wants to be free like a road, irresponsible like the wind, and independent of all restraints. He does not want to lead a life of servitude to the Church and to God. He asks why should he not reap the harvest of pleasure instead of being pierced by thorns and get bleeding. He thinks that he could enjoy the pleasures he has renounced. He no longer wants to get entangled in thinking of what is right and what is wrong. He wants to make up for the lost time, by getting out of the cage of priestly life. He emphasizes that he wants to discard all fears and throw off all restraints.

The poet was all angry. At this moment, he heard God's words: "My child, do not be rash." At once he responded to the voice and said, "My Lord, I am still your servant". Thus the poet humbly surrendered himself to the service of the God.

3.3.4 Analysis of the Poem :

'The Collar' is one of the important poems composed by George Herbert. It presents the mental and spiritual conflict of the poet against his priestly life. Herbert was reluctant to accept the job of priesthood. Even after becoming a minister of God, he was not able to forget the worldly ambitions. Therefore, he emphasizes the

fact that he wants to throw off all the restraints and enjoy the pleasures of life like all other human beings.

In the very beginning of the poem a note of protest is sounded when the poet strikes the board and cries: “No more. I will abroad” which means that he doesn’t wish to continue his priestly life; rather he would give up his slavery to religion and the Church. He wants to be as free as the road, as loose as the wind, and as large as a storehouse. Therefore, he says that he does not want to continue to be “in suit” i.e. subordination. He gets more irritated to think that he has no laurels, flowers or garlands for him. His life seems to be wasted. Next he thinks that he can still give up his priesthood and make up for the lost time. He can enjoy the pleasures of life. He no longer wants to think about what is right and what is wrong for him. He wants to come out of the cage of priesthood by discarding rope of sands and flimsy bonds. In this way the poet is tempted to tie up his fears and he no longer wants to carry the burden of his priesthood that has been imposed on him. But just when his rebellion against God has reached its climax, he hears the voice of God saying to him: “Child, do not be rash”. On hearing this gentle rebuke, all his resentment melts away and he replies in humble submission to God: “My Lord, I am sorry”. Thus the initial angry mood of the poet ends and he completely surrenders to his God. The conflict in the mind of the poet gets resolved and the poem ends on a note of serenity and joyfulness.

The title of the poem ‘The Collar’ is very apt and significant. There is an idiom “to slip the collar” which means to escape from the collar and thus to achieve freedom from all restraints. The title indicates that the poet has worn the collar of the priesthood and he wants “to slip the collar” i.e. he wants to give up his priestly life and escape from those restraints. Thus the title is metaphorical. It is a proper title as it relates the theme of the poem.

The mental conflict in the mind of the poet and his complete submission to the God has been effectively conveyed through a number of figures of speech and graphic imagery. The feeling of resentment of the poet is conveyed through the following images:

1) I struck the board and cried: No more

I will abroad.

What? Shall I ever sign and pine?

- 2) Have I no harvest but a thorn
 To let me blood, and not restore
 What I have lost with cordial fruit?
- 3) My lines and life are free: free as the road,
 Loose as the wind, as large as store.

Thus the images and the metaphorical expressions convey the anger of the poet very effectively. The poem is autobiographical in nature since it deals with the poet's own experience. The style is powerful and vigorous. It underlines the subject of the poem very effectively.

3.3.5 Glossary and Notes:

Archaic words and their Modern spellings:

<i>Rode</i>	- road	<i>Onely</i>	- only
<i>Bloud</i>	- blood	<i>Bayes</i>	- bays
<i>Cordiall</i>	- Cordial	<i>Pettie</i>	- petty
<i>Drie</i>	- dry	<i>Wilde</i>	- wild
<i>Yeare</i>	- year		
<i>Collar</i>	- the word "Collar" here means anything that keeps a man under restraint and curbs his freedom.		

I will abroad - The word 'abroad' underlines disconnection from The Church and conveys the sense of freedom.

Shall I be still in suit?- The phrase "in suit" means to be under an obligation to serve anybody else. Here the poet is to serve as a priest of God and so he is "in suit".

Have I no harvest but a thorn/To let me blood - The word "harvest" means reward, while the word "thorn" means the duties a priest has to perform and which deprives him of all personal freedom.

- Bays* - Laurels, or the leaves of the laurel tree.
- Having hands* - a capacity for enjoying worldly pleasures.
- Forsake thy cage*- get rid of all the restraints.
- Thy rope of sands*- your flimsy bonds, your ties which have no power to bind.
- Forbears* - has the patience.
- To suit* - to lead a life of servitude
- Raved* - talked like a madman
- Me thought* - I thought.

3.3.6 Check your progress:

- A) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence only:
- i) Who published Herbert's poems posthumously under the title "The Temple"?
 - ii) From which province Herbert became the Member of Parliament?
 - iii) Why Herbert is regarded as the saint of the Metaphysical School of poets?
 - iv) What does an idiom "to slip the collar" mean?
 - v) What was Herbert by profession?
- B) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:
- i) George Herbert is a poet.
 - a) Romantic b) Victorian c) Metaphysical d) Neo-classical
 - ii) Herbert became a Fellow of college in 1616.
 - a) Trinity b) Hart Hall c) London d) Lincoln
 - iii) Herbert died at the young age of
 - a) 41 b) 40 c) 38 d) 36
 - iv) Herbert's poems appeared posthumously in a volume entitled.....
 - a) Thalia Rediviva b) The Temple
 - c) Holy sonnets d) Divine Poems.

- v) Jacula Prudentum is a collection of..... sayings.
 a) proverbial b) religious c) devotional d) rational
- vi) The poem contains an account of the feelings of the poet against his priestly vocation.
 a) melancholy b) unhappy c) serene d) rebellious

3.3.7 Key to check your progress:

- A) i) Nicholas Ferrar, his friend
 ii) Montgomery
 iii) Because of his piety and the sacred character of his verse
 iv) to escape from the restraints that deny to a human being the freedom of action and conduct.
 v) A priest
- B) i) Metaphysical ii) Trinity iii) 41 iv) The Temple
 v) Proverbial vi) rebellious

3.3.8 Exercises:

Q.1) Answer the following question in 250 – 300 words each:

- i) Critically appreciate the poem ‘The Collar’
 ii) How does Herbert express his rebellious feelings against his priestly vocation and how does he overcome those feelings?

Q. 2) Write short notes on the following:

- i) Mental conflict of the poet and its resolution in ‘The Collar’.
 ii) The title ‘The Collar’.
 iii) Use of vivid imagery and metaphorical language in ‘The Collar’.

3.3.9 Further Reading:

Read a companion prose work to ‘The Collar’, titled ‘The Country Parson’.



Module IV

Selections from Romantic Poetry

Contents:

- 4.0.1 Objectives
- 4.1.1 Introduction
- 4.1.2 The Poem
- 4.1.3 Glossary & notes
- 4.1.4 The Summary
- 4.1.5 Analysis of the poem
- 4.1.6 Self-assessment questions
- 4.1.7 Key to check your progress
- 4.1.8 Exercises
- 4.1.9 Further reading

4.0.1 Objectives

- After studying this unit, you will be able to understand the favorite themes of Romantic poets and their love for Nature.
- The main themes are disappointments in love, natural beauty and its spiritual aspects
- These poets also deal with the supernatural phenomenon.
- Romantic poets were aware of the futility of material achievements
- The lyric was the favourite form.
- The language of these poets is marked by subjectivity different from the intellectual poems of the Metaphysical.
- Students will understand Wordsworth's appreciation of the value of childhood in man's life.
- Students will understand an important stage in Wordsworth's development as a Nature poet.

My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold

William Wordsworth

4.1.1 Introduction:

In the previous unit, the Metaphysical poems of John Donne, Henry Vaughan, and George Herbert were studied for their intellectual arguments and their use of 'conceit' .a peculiarity of the Metaphysical style. Now we study four Romantic poems which will underline the typical Romantic themes and subjective style as well as the use of lyrical form.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) was the most famous of English Romantic poets. Born in the beautiful region of Lake Districts in Cumberland in England, he developed love for Nature's beauty and wrote poems about his observations. At first he loved Nature for its sensuous beauty and described beautiful landscapes in his own style. But there was development in his vision. He found spiritual aspects in natural sights and asked people 'to make Nature their Teacher'. An elaborate statement of his love for and faith in Nature is found in his poems like *Tintern Abbey*, *Immortality Ode* and *Lucy Poems*. Wordsworth was made the Poet Laureate of England in the final years of his life.

4.1.2 The Poem

My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

4.1.3 Glossary & notes

- 1) **leaps up** -jumps UP
- 2) **behold**-see
- 3) **when my life began** -it indicates childhood days of the poet
- 4) **Now I am a man**-It refers to days of maturity (Now)
- 5) **So be it** -let it be as it was in childhood and as it is now
- 6) **Child is father of man**-This proverbial expression means the character that we form as children stays with us into our adult life.
- 7) **I could wish my days to be bound each to each by Natural piety**

Natural piety means feelings of sacredness about Nature like religious feelings. The poet thinks that, each day of his life at various stages will be bound together by this attachment and awe for Nature.

4.1.4 The Summary:

The colorful rainbow appearing in the sky provokes the poet to do some thinking. He realizes that, his heart jumps with joy at the sight of the rainbow; He recalls the wonder he felt as a child at the sight of the rainbow. Now as a grown up man, he has similar feelings. He knows that, he will continue to wonder about it even in his old age. Thus through all the stages of his life, he will continue the same wonder for Nature. Absence of these feelings will be a kind of death for him. This thinking makes him utter a great philosophical truth that, in a child, the signs of the future Man are revealed. It means that, the child's really love for and wonder at a natural sight hides a philosophical man of the future. Finally, he says that, his days at different stages in life are bound by a kind of holy feelings which binds his days together.

4.1.5 Analysis of the poem

This poem is a short narrative lyric containing germ of the famous "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality." The last three lines of this lyric embody the central idea of the poem. Wordsworth believed that, the child was nearer to heaven than man. He still feels that rapture in the objects of Nature, which he used to feel when he was a

child. This rapture is a sort of link between childhood and old age. He suggests that, childhood and manhood are connected.

In the poem, a child is filled with delight when it sees rainbow, a brilliant phenomenon of Nature. But when it grows and learns science, it is not thrilled by it. It loses its surprise, its freshness and its joy. But a poet or a man of genius is one who retains the emotions of childhood even when grow -up. We should retain the same feeling of delight in Nature, even when we grow old. Children are superior to men because of their closeness to nature: We can learn many things from the child who never lies. In reality, we try to learn from father. We can also say that a man can be younger by age but maybe more matured by the mind that is what the poet wants to express through this paradox in the line, "The Child is father of the Man." For this reason, he wishes to bind himself to his childhood self: "And I could wish my days to be / Bound each to each by natural piety." He says that present is the result of the past and future will be the result of the present.

In this way the poet shows that time and nature are ongoing phenomena of universe. If there is any break in this continuation, the poet wants to die. The poet also says that both are inevitable. Natural piety the poet refers to the feeling of natural reverence or respect, the reverence that a child should have for its parents. Piety normally has a religious connotation. Someone who follows the laws of their religion and is very devoted to God would be called pious. So we might interpret "natural piety" as a religion that is natural, or not forced.. He wants the natural continuity of this happiness up to his old age. If the natural continuation of happiness is interrupted, he rather wants to die.

4.1.6 Self-assessment questions:

Q.I. Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentence each.

- 1) What does the speaker says is the father of the man?
- 2) How did the poet want his days to be bound each to each?
- 3) Where did the poet see rainbow?
- 4) What is the meaning of the line "So was it when my life began;"
- 5) What does the speaker desire to do if he stops revering Nature?

Q.II. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) Choose the correct meaning for "leaps up"
a) Dances b) Sigs c) Jumps up d) None of the above
- 2) What does the speaker describe as leaping when he see a rainbow?
a) Soul b) Legs c) Heart d) None of the above
- 3) How many lines does the poem consist of?
a) Seven b) Nine c) Ten d) None of the above
- 4) What did the poet admire in the poem My Heart Leaps up?
a) Rainbow b) Rain c) Animals d) None of the above
- 5) When did William Wordsworth write this poem?
a) July 06, 1801 b) March 26, 1802
c) September 11, d) 1803 January 28, 1800

4.1.7 Key to check your progress:

Q.I 1) The child 2) the natural piety 3) in the sky 4) in my childhood days 5) die

Q.II. 1) c 2) c 3) b 4) a 5) b

4.1.8 Exercises:

Q.I 1) Write a critical appreciation of the poem

- 2) What is the main theme of the poem?

Q.II Write short notes on the following.

- 1) Explain the paradox "The Child is the Father of The Man".
- 2) Explain what William Wordsworth means by "Natural piety"

4.1.9 Further reading:

- 1) Read Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality"
- 2) William Wordsworth. The Major Works. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Contents

- 4.2.0 Objectives
- 4.2.1 Introduction
- 4.2.2 The Poem
- 4.2.3 Glossary & notes
- 4.2.4 The Summary
- 4.2.5 Analysis of the poem
- 4.2.6 Self-assessment questions
- 4.2.7 Key to check your progress
- 4.2.8 Exercises
- 4.2.9 Further reading

4.2.0 Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand Coleridge's treatment of the theme of the supernatural
- 2) Students will learn the moral of universal love for every created creature
- 3) Students will understand Coleridge's art in making his supernatural believable with the help of appropriate descriptions of Nature.

4.2.1 Introduction-:

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) was born in Devonshire, England. He was educated at Christ's Hospital School and Jesus College, Cambridge. He met Robert Southey and thought of establishing a new colony called Pantisocracy, a type of communism was happy in his friendship with William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. Wordsworth and Coleridge published a collection of poems in 1798 called Lyrical Ballads, The preface of this book becoming manifesto of Romantic Poetry. Coleridge was addicted to opium and was physically and mentally weak whereas, Wordsworth chose Nature as the main theme of his poems. Coleridge dealt with Medieval and supernatural themes. *Christabel* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

are marked with supernaturalism and Medieval elements. Another poem *Kubla Khan* remained incomplete but describes vividly the poetic process.

4.2.2 The Poem

PART I

1 It is an ancient Mariner,
2 And he stoppeth one of three.
3 'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
4 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?
5 The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
6 And I am next of kin;
7 The guests are met, the feast is set:
8 May'st hear the merry din.'
9 He holds him with his skinny hand,
10 'There was a ship,' quoth he.
11 'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
12 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.
13 He holds him with his glittering eye--
14 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
15 And listens like a three years' child:
16 The Mariner hath his will.
17 The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
18 He cannot choose but hear;
19 And thus spake on that ancient man,
20 The bright-eyed Mariner.
21 'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
22 Merrily did we drop

23 Below the kirk, below the hill,
24 Below the lighthouse top.
25 The Sun came up upon the left,
26 Out of the sea came he!
27 And he shone bright, and on the right
28 Went down into the sea.
29 Higher and higher every day,
30 Till over the mast at noon--'
31 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
32 For he heard the loud bassoon.
33 The bride hath paced into the hall,
34 Red as a rose is she;
35 Nodding their heads before her goes
36 The merry minstrelsy.
37 The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
38 Yet he cannot choose but hear;
39 And thus spake on that ancient man,
40 The bright-eyed Mariner.
41 And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
42 Was tyrannous and strong:
43 He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
44 And chased us south along.
45 With sloping masts and dipping prow,
46 As who pursued with yell and blow
47 Still treads the shadow of his foe,
48 And forward bends his head,

49 The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
50 And southward aye we fled.
51 And now there came both mist and snow,
52 And it grew wondrous cold:
53 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
54 As green as emerald.
55 And through the drifts the snowy clifts
56 Did send a dismal sheen:
57 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken--
58 The ice was all between.
59 The ice was here, the ice was there,
60 The ice was all around:
61 It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
62 Like noises in a swound!
63 At length did cross an Albatross,
64 Thorough the fog it came;
65 As if it had been a Christian soul,
66 We hailed it in God's name.
67 It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
68 And round and round it flew.
69 The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
70 The helmsman steered us through!
71 And a good south wind sprung up behind;
72 The Albatross did follow,
73 And every day, for food or play,
74 Came to the mariner's hollo!

75 In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
76 It perched for vespers nine;
77 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
78 Glimmered the white Moon-shine.'
79 'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
80 From the fiends, that plague thee thus!--
81 Why look'st thou so?'--With my cross-bow
82 I shot the ALBATROSS.

PART II

83 The Sun now rose upon the right:
84 Out of the sea came he,
85 Still hid in mist, and on the left
86 Went down into the sea.
87 And the good south wind still blew behind,
88 But no sweet bird did follow,
89 Nor any day for food or play
90 Came to the mariner's hollo!
91 And I had done a hellish thing,
92 And it would work 'em woe:
93 For all averred, I had killed the bird
94 That made the breeze to blow.
95 Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
96 That made the breeze to blow!
97 Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
98 The glorious Sun uprist:
99 Then all averred, I had killed the bird

100 That brought the fog and mist.
101 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
102 That bring the fog and mist.
103 The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
104 The furrow followed free;
105 We were the first that ever burst
106 Into that silent sea.
107 Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
108 'Twas sad as sad could be;
109 And we did speak only to break
110 The silence of the sea!
111 All in a hot and copper sky,
112 The bloody Sun, at noon,
113 Right up above the mast did stand,
114 No bigger than the Moon.
115 Day after day, day after day,
116 We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
117 As idle as a painted ship
118 Upon a painted ocean.
119 Water, water, every where,
120 And all the boards did shrink;
121 Water, water, every where,
122 Nor any drop to drink.
123 The very deep did rot: O Christ!
124 That ever this should be!
125 Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs

126 Upon the slimy sea.
127 About, about, in reel and rout
128 The death-fires danced at night;
129 The water, like a witch's oils,
130 Burnt green, and blue and white.
131 And some in dreams assurèd were
132 Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
133 Nine fathom deep he had followed us
134 From the land of mist and snow.
135 And every tongue, through utter drought,
136 Was withered at the root;
137 We could not speak, no more than if
138 We had been choked with soot.
139 Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
140 Had I from old and young!
141 Instead of the cross, the Albatross
142 About my neck was hung.

PART III

143 There passed a weary time. Each throat
144 Was parched, and glazed each eye.
145 A weary time! a weary time!
146 How glazed each weary eye,
147 When looking westward, I beheld
148 A something in the sky.
149 At first it seemed a little speck,
150 And then it seemed a mist;

151 It moved and moved, and took at last
152 A certain shape, I wist.
153 A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
154 And still it neared and neared:
155 As if it dodged a water-sprite,
156 It plunged and tacked and veered.
157 With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
158 We could nor laugh nor wail;
159 Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
160 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
161 And cried, A sail! a sail!
162 With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
163 Agape they heard me call:
164 Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
165 And all at once their breath drew in.
166 As they were drinking all.
167 See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
168 Hither to work us weal;
169 Without a breeze, without a tide,
170 She steadies with upright keel!
171 The western wave was all a-flame.
172 The day was well nigh done!
173 Almost upon the western wave
174 Rested the broad bright Sun;
175 When that strange shape drove suddenly
176 Betwixt us and the Sun.

177 And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
178 (Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
179 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
180 With broad and burning face.
181 Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
182 How fast she nears and nears!
183 Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
184 Like restless gossameres?
185 Are those her *ribs* through which the Sun
186 Did peer, as through a grate?
187 And is that Woman all her crew?
188 Is that a DEATH? and are there two?
189 Is DEATH that woman's mate?
190 *Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,
191 Her locks were yellow as gold:
192 Her skin was as white as leprosy,
193 The Night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
194 Who thicks man's blood with cold.
195 The naked hulk alongside came,
196 And the twain were casting dice;
197 'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
198 Quoth she, and whistles thrice.
199 The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
200 At one stride comes the dark;
201 With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
202 Off shot the spectre-bark.

203 We listened and looked sideways up!
204 Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
205 My life-blood seemed to sip!
206 The stars were dim, and thick the night,
207 The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
208 From the sails the dew did drip--
209 Till clomb above the eastern bar
210 The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
211 Within the nether tip.
212 One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
213 Too quick for groan or sigh,
214 Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
215 And cursed me with his eye.
216 Four times fifty living men,
217 (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
218 With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
219 They dropped down one by one.
220 The souls did from their bodies fly,--
221 They fled to bliss or woe!
222 And every soul, it passed me by,
223 Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV

224 'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
225 I fear thy skinny hand!
226 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
227 As is the ribbed sea-sand.

228 I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
229 And thy skinny hand, so brown.'--
230 Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
231 This body dropt not down.
232 Alone, alone, all, all alone,
233 Alone on a wide wide sea!
234 And never a saint took pity on
235 My soul in agony.
236 The many men, so beautiful!
237 And they all dead did lie:
238 And a thousand thousand slimy things
239 Lived on; and so did I.
240 I looked upon the rotting sea,
241 And drew my eyes away;
242 I looked upon the rotting deck,
243 And there the dead men lay.
244 I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
245 But or ever a prayer had gusht,
246 A wicked whisper came, and made
247 My heart as dry as dust.
248 I closed my lids, and kept them close,
249 And the balls like pulses beat;
250 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
251 Lay dead like a load on my weary eye,
252 And the dead were at my feet.
253 The cold sweat melted from their limbs,

254 Nor rot nor reek did they:
255 The look with which they looked on me
256 Had never passed away.
257 An orphan's curse would drag to hell
258 A spirit from on high;
259 But oh! more horrible than that
260 Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
261 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
262 And yet I could not die.
263 The moving Moon went up the sky,
264 And no where did abide:
265 Softly she was going up,
266 And a star or two beside--
267 Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
268 Like April hoar-frost spread;
269 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
270 The charmed water burnt alway
271 A still and awful red.
272 Beyond the shadow of the ship,
273 I watched the water-snakes:
274 They moved in tracks of shining white,
275 And when they reared, the elfish light
276 Fell off in hoary flakes.
277 Within the shadow of the ship
278 I watched their rich attire:
279 Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,

280 They coiled and swam; and every track
281 Was a flash of golden fire.
282 O happy living things! no tongue
283 Their beauty might declare:
284 A spring of love gushed from my heart,
285 And I blessèd them unaware:
286 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
287 And I blessed them unaware.
288 The self-same moment I could pray;
289 And from my neck so free
290 The Albatross fell off, and sank
291 Like lead into the sea.

PART V

292 Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
293 Beloved from pole to pole!
294 To Mary Queen the praise be given!
295 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
296 That slid into my soul.
297 The silly buckets on the deck,
298 That had so long remained,
299 I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
300 And when I awoke, it rained.
301 My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
302 My garments all were dank;
303 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
304 And still my body drank.

305 I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
306 I was so light--almost
307 I thought that I had died in sleep,
308 And was a blessed ghost.
309 And soon I heard a roaring wind:
310 It did not come anear;
311 But with its sound it shook the sails,
312 That were so thin and sere.
313 The upper air burst into life!
314 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
315 To and fro they were hurried about!
316 And to and fro, and in and out,
317 The wan stars danced between.
318 And the coming wind did roar more loud,
319 And the sails did sigh like sedge,
320 And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
321 The Moon was at its edge.
322 The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
323 The Moon was at its side:
324 Like waters shot from some high crag,
325 The lightning fell with never a jag,
326 A river steep and wide.
327 The loud wind never reached the ship,
328 Yet now the ship moved on!
329 Beneath the lightning and the Moon
330 The dead men gave a groan.

331 They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
332 Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
333 It had been strange, even in a dream,
334 To have seen those dead men rise.
335 The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
336 Yet never a breeze up-blew;
337 The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
338 Where they were wont to do;
339 They raised their limbs like lifeless tools--
340 We were a ghastly crew.
341 The body of my brother's son
342 Stood by me, knee to knee:
343 The body and I pulled at one rope,
344 But he said nought to me.
345 'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'
346 Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
347 'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
348 Which to their corses came again,
349 But a troop of spirits blest:
350 For when it dawned--they dropped their arms,
351 And clustered round the mast;
352 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
353 And from their bodies passed.
354 Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
355 Then darted to the Sun;
356 Slowly the sounds came back again,

357 Now mixed, now one by one.
358 Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
359 I heard the sky-lark sing;
360 Sometimes all little birds that are,
361 How they seemed to fill the sea and air
362 With their sweet jargoning!
363 And now 'twas like all instruments,
364 Now like a lonely flute;
365 And now it is an angel's song,
366 That makes the heavens be mute.
367 It ceased; yet still the sails made on
368 A pleasant noise till noon,
369 A noise like of a hidden brook
370 In the leafy month of June,
371 That to the sleeping woods all night
372 Singeth a quiet tune.
373 Till noon we quietly sailed on,
374 Yet never a breeze did breathe:
375 Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
376 Moved onward from beneath.
377 Under the keel nine fathom deep,
378 From the land of mist and snow,
379 The spirit slid: and it was he
380 That made the ship to go.
381 The sails at noon left off their tune,
382 And the ship stood still also.

383 The Sun, right up above the mast,
384 Had fixed her to the ocean:
385 But in a minute she 'gan stir,
386 With a short uneasy motion--
387 Backwards and forwards half her length
388 With a short uneasy motion.
389 Then like a pawing horse let go,
390 She made a sudden bound:
391 It flung the blood into my head,
392 And I fell down in a swoond.
393 How long in that same fit I lay,
394 I have not to declare;
395 But ere my living life returned,
396 I heard and in my soul discerned
397 Two voices in the air.
398 'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
399 By him who died on cross,
400 With his cruel bow he laid full low
401 The harmless Albatross.
402 The spirit who bideth by himself
403 In the land of mist and snow,
404 He loved the bird that loved the man
405 Who shot him with his bow.'
406 The other was a softer voice,
407 As soft as honey-dew:
408 Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,

409 And penance more will do.'

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

410 'But tell me, tell me! speak again,

411 Thy soft response renewing--

412 What makes that ship drive on so fast?

413 What is the ocean doing?'

SECOND VOICE

414 'Still as a slave before his lord,

415 The ocean hath no blast;

416 His great bright eye most silently

417 Up to the Moon is cast--

418 If he may know which way to go;

419 For she guides him smooth or grim.

420 See, brother, see! how graciously

421 She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

422 'But why drives on that ship so fast,

423 Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE

424 'The air is cut away before,

425 And closes from behind.

426 Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!

427 Or we shall be belated:

428 For slow and slow that ship will go,

429 When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

430 I woke, and we were sailing on
431 As in a gentle weather:
432 'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
433 The dead men stood together.
434 All stood together on the deck,
435 For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
436 All fixed on me their stony eyes,
437 That in the Moon did glitter.
438 The pang, the curse, with which they died,
439 Had never passed away:
440 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
441 Nor turn them up to pray.
442 And now this spell was snapt: once more
443 I viewed the ocean green,
444 And looked far forth, yet little saw
445 Of what had else been seen--
446 Like one, that on a lonesome road
447 Doth walk in fear and dread,
448 And having once turned round walks on,
449 And turns no more his head;
450 Because he knows, a frightful fiend
451 Doth close behind him tread.
452 But soon there breathed a wind on me,
453 Nor sound nor motion made:
454 Its path was not upon the sea,
455 In ripple or in shade.

456 It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
457 Like a meadow-gale of spring--
458 It mingled strangely with my fears,
459 Yet it felt like a welcoming.
460 Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
461 Yet she sailed softly too:
462 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze--
463 On me alone it blew.
464 Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
465 The light-house top I see?
466 Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
467 Is this mine own countree?
468 We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
469 And I with sobs did pray--
470 O let me be awake, my God!
471 Or let me sleep alway.
472 The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
473 So smoothly it was strewn!
474 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
475 And the shadow of the Moon.
476 The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
477 That stands above the rock:
478 The moonlight steeped in silentness
479 The steady weathercock.
480 And the bay was white with silent light,
481 Till rising from the same,

482 Full many shapes, that shadows were,
483 In crimson colours came.
484 A little distance from the prow
485 Those crimson shadows were:
486 I turned my eyes upon the deck--
487 Oh, Christ! what saw I there!
488 Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
489 And, by the holy rood!
490 A man all light, a seraph-man,
491 On every corse there stood.
492 This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
493 It was a heavenly sight!
494 They stood as signals to the land,
495 Each one a lovely light;
496 This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
497 No voice did they impart--
498 No voice; but oh! the silence sank
499 Like music on my heart.
500 But soon I heard the dash of oars,
501 I heard the Pilot's cheer;
502 My head was turned perforce away
503 And I saw a boat appear.
504 The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
505 I heard them coming fast:
506 Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
507 The dead men could not blast.

508 I saw a third--I heard his voice:
509 It is the Hermit good!
510 He singeth loud his godly hymns
511 That he makes in the wood.
512 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
513 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

514 This Hermit good lives in that wood
515 Which slopes down to the sea.
516 How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
517 He loves to talk with marineres
518 That come from a far countree.
519 He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve--
520 He hath a cushion plump:
521 It is the moss that wholly hides
522 The rotted old oak-stump.
523 The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
524 'Why, this is strange, I trow!
525 Where are those lights so many and fair,
526 That signal made but now?'
527 'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said--
528 'And they answered not our cheer!
529 The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
530 How thin they are and sere!
531 I never saw aught like to them,
532 Unless perchance it were

533 Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
534 My forest-brook along;
535 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
536 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
537 That eats the she-wolf's young.'
538 'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look--
539 (The Pilot made reply)
540 I am a-feared'--'Push on, push on!'
541 Said the Hermit cheerily.
542 The boat came closer to the ship,
543 But I nor spake nor stirred;
544 The boat came close beneath the ship,
545 And straight a sound was heard.
546 Under the water it rumbled on,
547 Still louder and more dread:
548 It reached the ship, it split the bay;
549 The ship went down like lead.
550 Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
551 Which sky and ocean smote,
552 Like one that hath been seven days drowned
553 My body lay afloat;
554 But swift as dreams, myself I found
555 Within the Pilot's boat.
556 Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
557 The boat spun round and round;
558 And all was still, save that the hill

559 Was telling of the sound.
560 I moved my lips--the Pilot shrieked
561 And fell down in a fit;
562 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
563 And prayed where he did sit.
564 I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
565 Who now doth crazy go,
566 Laughed loud and long, and all the while
567 His eyes went to and fro.
568 'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
569 The Devil knows how to row.'
570 And now, all in my own countree,
571 I stood on the firm land!
572 The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
573 And scarcely he could stand.
574 'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
575 The Hermit crossed his brow.
576 'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say--
577 What manner of man art thou?'
578 Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
579 With a woful agony,
580 Which forced me to begin my tale;
581 And then it left me free.
582 Since then, at an uncertain hour,
583 That agony returns:
584 And till my ghastly tale is told,

585 This heart within me burns.
586 I pass, like night, from land to land;
587 I have strange power of speech;
588 That moment that his face I see,
589 I know the man that must hear me:
590 To him my tale I teach.
591 What loud uproar bursts from that door!
592 The wedding-guests are there:
593 But in the garden-bower the bride
594 And bride-maids singing are:
595 And hark the little vesper bell,
596 Which biddeth me to prayer!
597 O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
598 Alone on a wide wide sea:
599 So lonely 'twas, that God himself
600 Scarce seemed there to be.
601 O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
602 'Tis sweeter far to me,
603 To walk together to the kirk
604 With a goodly company!--
605 To walk together to the kirk,
606 And all together pray,
607 While each to his great Father bends,
608 Old men, and babes, and loving friends
609 And youths and maidens gay!
610 Farewell, farewell! but this I tell

611 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
612 He prayeth well, who loveth well
613 Both man and bird and beast.
614 He prayeth best, who loveth best
615 All things both great and small;
616 For the dear God who loveth us,
617 He made and loveth all.
618 The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
619 Whose beard with age is hoar,
620 Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
621 Turned from the bridegroom's door.
622 He went like one that hath been stunned,
623 And is of sense forlorn:
624 A sadder and a wiser man,
625 He rose the morrow morn.

4.2.3 Glossary & Notes

Part I

1. Rime-story in verse or rhyme
2. Poem opens like a ballad. The hero, the Mariner is introduced abruptly
3. Ancient Mariner -Old sailor or the sailor of old time
4. Stoppeth-stops
5. Long grey beard and glittering eye-these details make the Mariner a mysterious figure fit for the story of the Supernatural. The Mariner stops the wedding guest who is the bridegroom's next of kin. He is eager to join the wedding feast but has to listen to the Mariner .Like a three year's child; he is in complete command of the Mariner. The Mariner describes his journey in the ocean merrily.

6. Drop- leave the harbor
7. Kirk-church
8. Loud bassoon -sound of the musical instrument played at the wedding place
9. Beat his breast – expressed his displeasure because he was held by the Mariner.
10. Minstrelsy -group of minstrels or Medieval singers
11. Storm blast – forceful wind of the storm
12. Tyrannous – very powerful
13. Prow -the front part of the ship
14. Aye – all the time
15. Wonderous cold – extremely cold
16. emerald – green in colour like a precious stone
17. drifts – mist and snow pushed by strong current
18. cliffs -icebergs
19. dismal – cheerless
20. sheen – brightness ,dull brightness
21. ken- see, discern
22. all between – everywhere
23. Line 59-62 gives us a vivid picture of noises created by the movement of the ice in the ocean.
24. Swound -swoon ,kind of sleep
25. At length -at last
26. Albatross- a large sea bird. The Albatross is notably compared with a Christian soul giving to the poem a religious touch.
27. Thorough-through
28. Hailed-greeted
29. Hollo-call

30. Shroud-a rope used in the ship
31. Vespers-evenings .This word is used for evening prayers
32. Fiends-the word suggests ghosts indicating that the Mariner had something of a devil in him because he killed the Albatross
33. Crossbow- a kind of weapon with which he killed the bird

Part II

1. Hellish -terrible like hell
2. Averred-asserted

Line 91-96-The companions of the Mariner asserted that, the Albatross was a bird of good omen and by killing it the Mariner had committed a sin

Up wrist-uprose

The sun is compared to God's head.

Line 97-102-

The fog and mist cleared and the sun rose. Now the sailors thought that it was a bird of ill omen and praised the Mariner for killing it. It is suggested here that, they became the Mariner's partners in sin by praising the act of killing the bird. When the fog and mist came, they blamed him but when it cleared off, they change their mind and praised him for the same act.

Lines 103-122

These stanzas are very famous and beautiful because Coleridge draws a sonorous picture of the sea and the sky and their ship which looks like a ship in a painting.

3. The very very deep-sea
4. Rot-become rotten
5. Slymy things-sea creatures full of mud
6. Witches' oil- oil used by witches

A terrible sight is described by the poet .There is a suggestion of the supernatural element here.

Line 131-134

The sailors thought that, they had seen in a dream how a spirit was taking revenge by following them.

Line 135-138

There was no drinking water on the ship and their tongue had gone dry .They couldn't speak. The Mariner was reproached by the looks of the sailors. They hung the dead Albatross round his neck.

Part III

1. Glazed-glassy, shining
2. Wist -think, knew
3. Speck- spot
4. Dodged-tried to escape
5. Sprite-spirit

Here the supernatural is suggested

6. Tacked-changed the course of the ship abruptly
7. Veer-turn about
8. Tacked and veered- the ship moved with a zig zag motion
9. Unslaked- un moistened
10. black lips baked-lips parched by heat and thirst
11. wail-express sorrow
12. agape-open mouthed
13. sail-ship
14. gramercy-grand mercy, great thanks
15. as-as if
16. weal-welfare
17. keel-support frame of the ship
18. The strange shape-suggestion of supernatural because a ship is called a shape
19. drove suddenly-the ghost ship comes suddenly between the sailors and the sun

20. straight-immediately
21. heaven's mother-virgin Mary
22. dungeon great-the bars of a prison cell
23. peered-peeped through
24. glance-shine
25. restless- always moving
26. gossamers- fine substance like cobwebs floating in the air
27. a death-skeleton
28. nightmare-evil spirit which suffocates sleeping people
29. Life-in-Death- Three details are to be noted of this horror-red lips, yellow locks and leprous skin. These suggest death.
30. thicks-thickens
31. with cold-with horror
32. the necked hulk-the skeleton ship

Lines 196-198

The ghost ship has Death and Life-in-Death playing dice for the Mariner. Life-in-Death wins the game and has the Mariner suggesting that he will have to undergo Life-in-death. Whereas the other 200 sailors won by death will die.

The ghost ship vanishes all of a sudden.

34. Clombed-climbed
35. Eastern bar-eastern horizon

Line 210-211

Coleridge refers to a superstition held by the sailors that, something is going to happen whenever a star dogs the Moon.

36. Horned Moon-the crescent shaped Moon
37. Nether tip- lower end
38. Star dogged-followed by the star

39. Ghastly pang-frightening pain

Lines 216-219

Two hundred sailors drop down dead one by one

40. Whizz-sound of the string of the bow

Part IV

Lines 224 The wedding guest is full of fear thinking that ,the Mariner is a ghost .

41. Lank-thin

42. Ribbed sea sand- the sand left with mark of the tide

Line 230-231 The Mariner assures that, he is not a ghost as he did not die

Line 2032-235 These lines describe the terror of the lonely Mariner left alone with the bodies of dead sailors on the boat surrounded by the vast sea.

43. Slimy things-creatures in the sea with muddy bodies. The Mariner dislikes those thousands of sea creatures although they are living but, he is sorry for the death of the sailors. He prefers dead sailors above the beautiful living sea creatures.

Line 244-247 The Mariner tries to pray but, because his heart is unrepentant ,it is dry and can't pray. He can't even close his eyes.

44. Reek- to smell foul .The bodies of the sailors don't give foul smell.

45. From on high-from heaven. The Mariner suffers for seven days and seven nights. The number seven has mystical associations; The Mariner couldn't die because he was won by Life-in-Death.

Line 263-268 beautiful description of the moon light. A change comes over Mariner's mood

46. Abide-stay

47. Bemocked- caused to be mocked

48. Sultry main-hot sea

49. Hoar frost-white frost ,the Moonlight

50. Charmed-under a spell

51. Elfish-supernatural like an elf

52. Rich attire-coloured skins of the sea creatures. The Mariner is attracted towards the beauty of the sea creatures and thus instead of death, he begins to appreciate life. Now his curse will be lifted. This is a sort of his recovery because, formerly. He sympathised with dead sailors and dislikes the sea creatures but now, he appreciates God's creation and its beauty. Thus, life wins over death. This is the moment of the Mariner's redemption and freedom from the curse.

53. Might-could

54. Gushed-burst forth

55. Unaware-spontaneous

56. My kind saint-his guardian spirit

Now the Mariner can pray for others and for him and gets back God's grace. This is suggested by the dead Albatross falling off into the sea.

Part V

Sleep is described as a blessing for human soul

1. From pole to pole-from one end of the world to the other
2. Mary Queen-the virgin Mary
3. Slide-descend upon
4. Silly-empty
5. It rained-rain is the sign of God's grace
6. Dank-wet
7. Blessed ghost- blessed spirit
8. Sere- dry
9. Fire flags-lightening
10. sheen- bright
11. wan- pale
12. sedge- kind of grass on the bank of the river
13. cleft- split into two

14. jag- division

Line 330-332 Supernatural touch

The dead sailors again resume their duties

15. ghastly crew- ghostlike crew

16. nought- nothing

Line 345-346

The wedding guest expresses his fear at the dead sailor's coming back to life and working at the ship. The Mariner however clarifies that, a group of blessed spirits was running the ship and not the dead sailor.

17. corpses- dead bodies

Line 350 The spirits gathered round the mast and started singing the praise of God.

18. jargonong- the sound of singing birds

19. mute- silent

Line 350-375

Contrasts the heavenly music, natural song of birds, instrumental music, sound of the brook which suggests peace and harmony all over the world. Whereas earlier, everything was dry, lifeless and horrible

Line 377-380 The ship is being navigated by the polar spirit

20. swoond- swoon, unconscious fit

21. bideth by himself- lives all alone

Part VI

1. Great bright eye- the bright bosom of the sea

2. Graciously- kindly

3. Belated- delayed

4. Trance- unconscious condition

5. Abated- become less

6. Charnel dungeon- a place full of dead bodies

7. Spell was snapt- the charm was broken
8. Frightful fiend- fearful monster
9. Meadow gate- breeze from the green meadow
10. Now the ship is approaching the human world. It is suggested by the sight of the lighthouse, the hill, the church etc.

Line 472 The Mariner has seen terrible and unreal storm .Now there is pleasant picture of the sea before him.

11. Shadow- reflection
12. Holy roode- Christ's cross
13. Seraph man- angel
14. Perforce- by force, The Mariner is greatly relieved .Now the dead men do not trouble him.
15. Blast- destroy
16. Shrieve- absolve, free from sin

Part VII

1. Skiff boat- light boat
2. Trow- think
3. Lights- angelic forms
4. Warped- distorted
5. Sere- dried up
6. Aught- anything
7. Ivy tod- ivy bush
8. Whoops- cries
9. That- the wolf
10. Afeared- terribly afraid

The ship is full of dead bodies.

Makes it sink- to indicate that, the whole experience of the poem was something from the unconscious which comes up from time to time

11. Stunned- staggered
12. Uncertain hour- at any time
13. Uproar- loud noise
14. Vesper Bell-bell for the evening prayers

Lines 612-617

This is the moral of the poem. Coleridge suggests that, true worship of God has nothing to do with formal prayers but it consists in showing sincere love for every form of created life. Real devotion to God is in learning to love all his Creatures both Great and Small. Love is the bond between all created things. It is also the bond between the Creator and His Creatures.

Line 620 the wedding guest is uninterested in the wedding feast

15. Morrow- next morning

4.2.4 The Summary

The hero of the poem is an Ancient Mariner with long grey beard and bright eyes. He meets a wedding guest in the street, looks into his eyes and makes him spellbound. The guest is forced to listen to his tale. He starts describing his voyage in the Antarctic regions and narrates how a bird Albatross was thoughtlessly killed by him. This act attracted the anger of the whole spiritual world of Nature. His companions on the boat praised his action of killing the bird and thus became participants in crime. The weather changed and intense thirst killed them but the Mariner himself was the victim of the Nightmare Life-in-Death. There was specter ship on the ocean. Death won the Mariner's companions and they died because of extreme heat and no drinking water. The Mariner suffered the curse of Life-in-Death and could not even offer prayers. But, he blessed the living creatures of the ocean waters. He appreciates their beauty and colours and was happy at the sight of water snakes. This was a sign that, the hardness of his heart started melting. He established meaningful contact with the beauty of Natural World. In his suffering he had paid for his sin of killing the Albatross and now he was free from suffering and he reached his native land. But throughout his future life at an

uncertain hour, the terrible agony of the experience would return. He would be compelled to travel from land to land and his soul would be happy only by narrating his sufferings and confession of his crime to his companions. His story brings home the moral in the form of a lesson of love for all things great and small.

4.2.5 Analysis of the poem

Part I

The story is introduced without giving background details of the setting and occasion. The Ancient Mariner narrates his story. He detains a wedding guest in the street in an ungentlemanly manner and forces him to listen to his tale. The story hurries on, as the ship sails on leaving behind the familiar landscape. A storm drives the ship to the misty and snowy regions of the South Pole. A sea bird called Albatross comes and becomes friendly with the sailors. But all of a sudden the Ancient Mariner kills the bird. The first part ends with the crisis in the story and in the Mariner.

Part II

This part describes the horrible effects of his senseless crime. A period of uneventful calm follows the murder of the bird. The other sailors praise the Mariner for killing the bird as they think that, Mariner's action had brought in calm weather. Thus by satisfying his deed they become his accomplices in the crime. Now, the effects of the crime in the form of revenge begin to appear. The wind stops totally and the ship comes to a standstill. The stock of fresh water in the ship gets exhausted. The sailors are thirsty and see in a dream that, a supernatural source, the Polar Spirit had brought them into trouble. It was taking revenge of the killing of the bird. The Ancient Mariner becomes the focus for killing the bird. As a punishment of his sin, they hung the dead bird on his neck.

Part III

With this part, a new phase in the revenge begins. Now they are tortured with hopes which will never be fulfilled. The Mariner finds something on horizon. It is a ship coming to them. They think that, there was a hope of their rescue. But they discover the ship appears weird and its movements are strange. The Mariner sees the mysterious game between the ghosts Life-in-Death and Death. They are the only crew in the strange ship. The Ancient Mariner's soul is won by Life-in-Death

meaning that he will have to suffer throughout his life for the punishment of his sin. The other sailors meet with absolute death. The Mariner lives in the midst of 200 dead bodies.

Part IV

This part further describes the tortures held by the Mariner. But these tortures have good effect on his heart. His insensible heart is gradually softened down. At first he despises the sea creatures thinking that, they lived on while his companions lay dead. He feels the curse in the dead men's eyes. He looks at the Moon and notices the beauty of the water snakes. He begins to sympathies with the living creatures of the sea. Now he is a changed person and this is indicated by the weight of the Albatross dropping off from his neck.

Part V

The Mariner's hardness of heart and insensibility has been cured by his act of sympathy for natural life. He realizes the value of love for all Natural things. The moral and Natural balance is achieved and this is a rebirth for the Mariner. He experiences Natural sleep when the ship is reanimated. Instead of Supernatural horrors, he hears melodious voices of the angels. The ship is brought back to normal path. The Mariner faints and hears in his dream a debate between the spirits of Mercy about his punishment. Justice demands that, his torture be continued. Mercy pleads that, he had been adequately punished and he should now come to normal life.

Part VI

The conversation between Justice and Mercy goes on. Mercy dominates and puts her refreshing hand on the Mariner's soul. His journey continues in a natural way. The Natural forces are now liberated. The Mariner is refreshed by gentle and cool breeze. The ship is brought back to the harbour from where it had departed. The pilot's boat approaches the Mariner's magic stricken ship. The hermit of the wood comes in the pilot ship. The Mariner's soul is full of joy at the thought of his deliverance.

Part VII

This last part deals with the physical deliverance of the Mariner and his purification. The hermit and the pilot ship with his boy approach the Mariner's ship. The magical ship suddenly sinks and the prolonged supernatural drama comes to an

end. The Mariner comes to the real physical world. He requests the hermit to free his soul from the sin and we understand that, throughout his future life, the agony of sad memory will compel him to travel from land to land. He will teach by his own example how one should and respect all things created and made by God.

4.2.6 Self-assessment questions:

A) Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

- 1) To whom does the Mariner tell his tale?
- 2) What bird that flew overhead was considered a good omen by the Mariner and his crew?
- 3) Who steers the ship towards home?
- 4) What did the Mariner do for no particular reason?
- 5) Where are the three young men going to at the beginning of the poem?

B) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct option.

- 1) The Ancient Mariner stopped one of the three wedding guests because.....
 - a) He wanted to attend the wedding with him
 - b) He wanted him to sit with him
 - c) He wanted him to listen to his story
 - d) He wanted to stop him from going to the wedding
- 2) Why do the sailors hang the Albatross around the Mariner's neck?
 - a) The bird was associated with bad luck
 - b) The sailors think this will bring good luck
 - c) The Mariner is a hero of the sailors
 - d) The bird was a good omen
- 3) What ocean do they end up in when the wind stops blowing?
 - a) Indian Ocean b) Pacific Ocean c) Atlantic Ocean d) Arctic Ocean
- 4) The sailors felt depressed on reaching the land of mist and snow because.....
 - a) There was no sign of any living creature

- b) They felt they would die in that cold weather
 - c) They were surrounded by icebergs and there seemed to be no sign of life
 - d) Everything was grey in colour and they felt very cold
- 5) The mariner shoots the albatross with
- a) a cannon b) a crossbow c) a bow d) a musket

4.2.7. Key to check your progress:

A) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase or sentence each:

- 1) The wedding Guest
- 2) Albatross
- 3) the dead sailor
- 4) shot the Albatross
- 5) a wedding

B) Complete the following sentences choosing the correct alternative from the ones given below each sentence.

- 1) - c 2) - d 3) - d 4) - c 5) - b

4.2.8 Exercises:

- Q.I 1) Write a critical appreciation of the poem.
- 2) Critically examine the supernatural element in the poem.

Q.II Write short note on the following:

- 1) Significance of the title of the poem “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”
- 2) Supernatural element in the poem

4.2.9 Further reading:

- 1) D. W. Harding, 'The Theme of “The Ancient Mariner”', *Scrutiny*, Vol.IX,No.4 (March 1941), pp.334-342.
- 2) Bougler, James D., ed., *The Ancient Mariner: Twentieth Century Interpretations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).

Ozymandias

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Contents

- 4.3.0 Objectives
- 4.3.1 Introduction
- 4.3.2 The Poem
- 4.3.3 Summary
- 4.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 4.3.5 Glossary and Notes
- 4.3.6 Check Your Progress
- 4.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress
- 4.3.8 Exercises
- 4.3.9 Further Reading

4.3.0 Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand Shelly's contribution to the sonnet form.
- 2) Students will find how Shelly deals with the theme of vanity of human wishes.

4.3.1 Introduction:

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was born on 4th August, 1792 in Sussex. He was educated at Eton and University College Oxford but his radical views about religion made him publish a pamphlet, 'The Necessity of Atheism'. He was expelled from Oxford with his friend Hogg in 1811. He had multiple love affairs with Harrieth West Brook, Mary Godwin. Harrieth committed suicide and Shelley married Mary Godwin. In 1818 he went to Italy never to return to England again. He was drowned at sea near Leghorn on 8th July, 1822.

Shelley is the brightest of the English Romantic poets. He is known for his lyrical masterpieces such as his famous odes *Ode to a Nightingale*, *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, *Ode to Autumn*. He is also famous for his songs on platonic love. His elegy on John Keats, *Adonis* is a long song of mourning which is full of philosophical

statements about life, death and immortality. Some of the ideas in this poem touch the Indian philosophy of Brahman, the Eternal Reality. It is to be noted that, in his brief life of 26 years, he wrote masterpieces of Romantic poetry. He also wrote a critical essay, "*A Defence of Poetry*" in which he calls the poets as the unacknowledged legislators of mankind.

The poem "Ozymandias of Egypt" is a sonnet in technical terms but departs from the usual rhyme scheme.

4.3.2 The Poem

Ozymandias

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

4.3.3 Summary

A traveler tells the poet about a broken statue he has seen in Egyptian desert. Ozymandias was the king whose statue stood in broken condition. There was a time when around the statue there were grand buildings and palaces indicating the wealth and glory of the empire of the king.

Anybody would have been jealous of his glory. But now after the lapse of time, all the glory has departed and the Empire is in ruins. The vast desert has buried the king's rich monuments and buildings. What have remained is only three legs of the broken statue and its face lying half buried in the desert sand.

If one looks at the statue's face lying under the sand, one can see the expression of cold, cruel authority and contempt for common people reflected therein. The artist who had created the statue had understood and mockingly made the king's expressions declare his real nature. Both the king and the artist have gone but, the artist has made the king immortal by stamping his face with negative expressions. The king's pride and arrogance and challenge to mighty people expose his vainness. He boasted of his empire and thought that, his glory was beyond any competition but ironically, the words on the pedestal of broken statue declare Ozymandias to be king of kings challenging everybody but today, apart from these words on the pedestal and the expressions on the broken face of the statue, nothing remains. Time has destroyed everything and turned the king's glory into vast desert full of sand.

4.3.4 Analysis of the Poem:

The poem is a powerful comment on the vanity of human ambition and usefulness of worldly glory. Time is the greatest destroyer before whose hand, human greatness has a very brief life. All the monuments of kings decay and are forgotten.

This universal truth is illustrated by Shelley in this fine sonnet. He describes here the broken statue of an Egyptian king Ozymandias. This statue was once surrounded by the grand monuments in the form of temples, palaces, gardens etc. These indicated the powerful kingdom and the glory of the king. In the course of time all these vanish and only the desert remains as the testimony of the once glorious kingdom.

The first part of the sonnet describes the broken statue seen by a traveler in a desert. Only two legs stand on the proud inscription on the pedestal of the statue. The last three lines make an indirect comment on the king's boast. The pride of the king is contrasted with the total destruction of his achievements. Thus the comparison between what was with what is brings home the point of the poem. The feelings carved on the face of the statue by its maker suggest his haughty temper, his pride

and cold tyranny. The inscription on the pedestal suggests his shallowness of mind and foolishness in challenging the destruction of the time.

The poem is notable for the use of irony and the shallowness of the dead king. The last three lines present an intense comment by the poet on the destruction of time and shallowness of human ambition. Technically the sonnet lacks the usual rhyme scheme because the rhyme scheme is ABAB, BCDC.EDEFEF

4.3.5 Glossary and Notes:

1. I -: The speaker in the poem
2. Antique land-: ancient or old land (Egypt)
3. Trunkless - : without trunk-a broken statue is described here
4. Half sunk -: sunk in the desert sand
5. Shattered -: broken into pieces
6. Visages -: face (of the statue)
7. Wrinkled lip -: curved
8. Sneer -: expression of contempt
9. Cold command -: ruthless expression of domination suggested through the expression of contempt
10. Tell -: suggest ,declare
11. Sculptor-: maker of the statue
12. Those passions-: feeling of contempt and cruel authority reflected in the face of the king Ozymandias whose statue is described here.
13. Stamped-: placed forever
14. ;lifeless things-: parts of the statue
15. The hand that mocked them-: the land of the sculptor who had laughed at king Ozymandias' passion by expressing them in his face
16. The heart that fed -: the heart of king Ozymandias which nourished those passion
17. Pedestal-: base for the statue

18. King of kings -: emperor
19. Look on my works -: see what I have built
20. Ye Mighty -: Ozymandias is boasting to the later kings that, they will regret looking at his monuments and be impressed by them
21. Despair -: regret
22. Colossal wreck -: huge ruin
23. Decay -: destruction

4.3.6 Check Your Progress:

Q.I. Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

- 1) What is the setting of the poem?
- 2) Who is telling the story of Ozymandias?
- 3) What did the traveler see in the desert?
- 4) The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed". Whose hand and heart has the poet referred to in this line?
- 5) Where was the visage laying in the desert?

Q.II. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative

- 1) What are "trunkless" legs referred to in the poem?
 - a) legs on an elephant
 - b) legs without a body
 - c) not enough legroom in a car
 - d) legs on a doll in a toy trunk
- 2) What sort of a king was Ozymandias, according to the statue?
 - a) a kind and generous king
 - b) a courageous warrior king
 - c) a wise but very old king
 - d) a cruel and powerful king

- 3) The poem throws light on thenature of Ozymandias.
 - a) cruel
 - b) arrogant
 - c) boastful
 - d) aggressive.
- 4) The traveller comes from
 - a) an ancient land
 - b) a modern land
 - c) a mountain land
 - d) an antique land
- 5) The visage had a.....
 - a) frown on the face
 - b) a cheer on the face
 - c) a smile on the face
 - d) a sadness on the face

4.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress

Q.I. 1) The desert 2) the traveler 3) a broken statue 4) the sculptor's hands are referred to here. 5) half sunk in the sand

Q. II. 1) B) 2) D) 3) C) 4) D) 5) A)

4.3.8 Exercises:

Q.1) Write the critical appreciation of the poem.

Q. 2) Comment on the moral of the poem.

- 1) Write a short note on Ozymandias, the king
- 2) What is ironic about the inscription on the pedestal of Ozymandias' statue?

4.3.9 Further Reading

- 1) Ozymandias by P. B. Shelley read by John Gielgud on the You Tube
- 2) Understanding "Ozymandias" <https://youtu.be/iZMpIxt4fMw>

When We Two Parted

George Gordon Byron

Contents:

- 4.4.0 Objectives
- 4.4.1 Introduction
- 4.4.2 The Text
- 4.4.3 Summary
- 4.4.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 4.4.5 Glossary and Notes
- 4.4.6 Check your progress
- 4.4.7 Key to check your progress
- 4.3.8 Exercises
- 4.3.9 Further Reading

4.4.0 Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand John Byron as a Romantic love poet.
- 2) Students will mark the note of sadness in Romantic Poetry.

4.4.1 Introduction:

George Gordon Byron - (1788-1824),

George Gordon, Lord Byron belonged to the group of the English poets called 'the second generation romantics, Shelly and Keats being the other poets. All the three died young. Byron criticized the hypocrisy of the English society. He wrote a famous epic-satire, Don Juan. He also wrote many short, graceful lyrics. His poetry is coloured by his strong personality. Byron himself was the hero of many of his important poems.

4.4.2 The Poem:

When We Two Parted

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,

How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

4.4.3 Summary

The present poem describes the parting scene between a lover and his beloved. There were some sad signs of the dark future which have come true. The lover says that she has broken her vows and brought shame to her name. People say bad things about her. They do not know that the poet had been in love with her and that the poet had been in love with her and that he is full of grief for the sad end of their love affair. He wonders how he would greet her if he meets her again, probably silence and tears would come to his help.

4.4.4 Analysis of the Poem

'When We Two Parted' is a typical Romantic poem. It is a short lyrical poem reflecting the personal emotions and thoughts of the poet himself and focusing on his own feelings about the end of his love affair. The poem describes the speaker's growing distance from the beloved whom he once loved. In the first stanza of the poem the speaker sets a dark scene filled with "silence and tears" because of a breakup between the speaker and his beloved. He describes her kiss as "colder thy kiss" which shows the falling apart of their relationship. The second stanza describes how the cold morning air is like the sorrow he feels without his lover. He speaks of "thy vows are all broken" which suggests an infidelity. He ends it by describing how he feels shame when he hears the name of the beloved person he adored a lot. The third stanza begins with the speaker questioning why it is so hard to move on. He ends the stanza by saying he might not even be able to get over this heartbreak. In the final stanza the author describes a secret meeting with his former lover; we are not sure if they really did meet, because the poem ends with the speaker questioning what he would do if they ever met again.

4.4.5 Glossary and Notes:

1. We two : the lover and the beloved
2. Silence and tears : because of shock and sadness
3. Sever : separate, to go away from
4. Foretold : told beforehand

5. Sunk chill : made cold
6. Vows : pledges
7. Light is thy fame : you have become notorious
8. Shame : feeling of shame
9. Name thee : speak bad thing about you
10. Wert : were
11. Rue thee : express sorrow for you

4.4.6 Check your progress

Self-assessment questions:

- A) Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.
- 1) What has the woman broken?
 - 2) What was the state of the speaker's and his friend's hearts when they parted?
 - 3) Why does the lover says the beloved's fame' is light?
 - 4) How the speaker in poem will meet the beloved after long years?
 - 5) How was kiss felt by the speaker after separating from the beloved?
- B) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct option given below them:
- 1) What sort of relationship is it in "When We Two Parted"?
a) A marriage b) A happy one
c) A secret one d) parent / child relationship
 - 2) Who is more broken-hearted in "When We Two Parted"?
a) The speaker b) The woman c) The friends d) The
 - 3) What is the overall tone of the poem "When We Two Parted"?
a) sombre b) distressful c) bittersweet d) joyful
 - 4) What kind of poem is "When We Two Parted"?

- a) lyric b) sonnet c) epic d)ode
- 5) The cheeks of the beloved grew.....
- a) crimson b) pale c) red d) wrinkled

4.4.7 Key to check your progress:

- A) 1) Vows
2) they were half-broken
3) beloved has become notorious.
4) With silence and tears
5) Colder
- B) 1) -c 2) -a 3) -b 4) -a 5) -b

4.4.8 Exercises:

- Q.1 1) What is the central idea of the poem “When we Two Parted”?
2) Write down the critical analysis of the poem.
- Q.II 1) Write a note on the theme of loss of love
2) Write a note on the intensity of feelings of a lover.

4.4.9 Further reading:

1. Daisy Hay, *Young Romantics: The Shelley’s, Byron, and Other Tangled Lives*.
Bloomsbury, 384 pp.



Module V
Topics For Background Reading
5. Victorian Poetry

5.1.0. Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand Victorian poetry and its characteristics.
- Understand why it is called as Victorian poetry and its salient features.
- Understand how it is different from Romantic poetry.
- Understand Victorian Poets.

5.1.1. Historical Background:

This period derives its title from the reign of Queen Victoria lasting 1837-1901. As the literary trends, most marked in this age, had begun some years earlier, it is often dated from 1832, the year of Scott's death. Its notable events were the Oxford Movement, the rise of democracy, the expansion of the British Empire, and the progress of science and industry. The Oxford Movement, so called from its origin of Oxford, was a movement for reviving the same faith in the church that is commanded in the middle ages. In this way, it sought to combat the skeptical tendencies of the age. It was initiated by John Keble with a sermon 'national apostasy' at Oxford University in 1833. It is also called the Tractarian Movement because it carried on its campaign in a periodical called the 'Tracts for the Times' which ran for ninety numbers.

In the field of science, a number of inventions and discoveries took place: those of Pasteur in medicine and Darwin in Biology, the railway, the automobile, and the aeroplane; the telephone, the telegraph, the wireless; and the application of machinery to industry. Of these, the last and Darwin's discovery of the 'Origin of Species' had the greatest impact on the age. While industry increased wealth, resulted in its concentration in a few hands and unbearable misery to the laboring classes which included women and children, Darwin's theories, by challenging the biblical version of the creation, shook people's faith in Christianity.

The Poetic trends of the Age:

In spite of the changes political, economic, scientific, religious- noticed above, the poetic temper of the Victorian age is not materially different from that of the early 19th century. In its individualism, play of imagination, love of the picturesque and, interest in Nature and the past, it continues the romantic tradition. But in its response to the changed conditions, it acquired a distinctive character of its own which is briefly analyzed below.

1. The Victorian poetry, which marks the transition from the romantic to the modern, attempted with fair success in experimentation with respect to style and subject matter. One of the most significant advances in the history of English poetry is the kind of dramatic monologues written during this period, especially the kind written by Robert Browning. In the words of Joseph Bristow, these monologues "indicate how language speaks over against the speaker. Poetry, here, is no more spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions."

2. Romantic poetry, by and large, was written rather for the delight of the poet / himself than for that of the reader. The reading public being but the educated few, he could afford to ignore it. But with rise of democracy and the expansion of education, both making for a larger reading public the whole conception of the poet's function changed. Poetry was not only written for its benefit but had to be of a kind which it could readily appreciate reader. In this way, too Victorian poetry comes to be related more to life than the romantic. It is the voice of Victorian England.

3. In consequence of 'Darwin's Evolutionary Theory' which conclusively proved that the flora and fauna of the earth, instead of having been created as such in seven days by an Almighty power, have evolved to their present shape by a gradual process of change which continues, the poetry of the age is permeated either by doubt or a positive disbelief in God. The degrading conditions in mills and factories seemed to point to the same conclusion. Had there been a God above, he would not have looked on helplessly at this sorry scheme of things entire. While four poets-Fitzgerald, Clough, Arnold and James Thomson - definitely give way to this despair in their verse, the others are not-whole free. 'Honest doubt' is writ- large in the pages of Tennyson, while Browning, who had determined to be an optimist, by a queer logic, turns failure to success.

4. Science also had its impact on the poet's attitude to Nature. With the existence of God himself in doubt, he saw no divinely in its, nor did he invest in with any philosophical significance. It was just what science had revealed it to him matter motion, taking an inconceivable variety of form, but always in its variety acting rigidly according to certain ways, which, for want of a wiser term, we call laws. Where Nature serves for a scene, it is observed and described with scientific accuracy.

5. Under the impact of science, again, the poetic style underwent a change. While it continued to be ornate, most notably in Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites, it became more to the point than before. It is more rational and less extravagant. It is neo-classical in its plainness and romantic in its pictures queness. One more factor contributed to this change. The stress the age laid on order and discipline in every walk of life. Poetry therefore shed the mere flowers of speech. It strove for beauty within the limits of reason.

6. The Victorian poetry has a note of pessimism and cynicism resulting from the contemporary conflict between science and religion. The theory of evolution influenced man's attitude to nature and to religion. The poets like Edward Fitzgerald, James Thomas and Arthur Hugh Clough came to be known as the sceptics.

7. There is a note of patriotism arising out of the unparalleled prosperity of England, the astonishing discoveries of science and the expansion of the British empire, Like the romantics, the Victorian poets tried their hands at many genres and metrical forms such as lyrical, descriptive, narrative and reflective.

The Poets:

The poets of this age may be classified as follows:

The two major poets, Tennyson and Browning who are often compared and contrasted; the sceptics who include Fitzgerald, Clough, Arnold and James Thompson; the spasmodic; the Pre- Raphaelites consisting chiefly of D.G. Rossetti, William Morris and Swinburne; the women poets, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (wife of Robert Browning) and Christina Georgina Rossetti (sister of D. G. Rossetti); and the 'Decadents'. In each the trends of the age expressed themselves in different ways.

5.1.2. The Major Poets:

1. Alfred (Lord) Tennyson (1809-92):

Browning mainly dealt with the unique individual human soul. He delved in to the deepest psyche of the individual and sought to express the hidden motives and principles which govern individual action. The best technique he used for achieving his goal was the dramatic monologue, although he wrote also pure dramas narratives like *Pippa Passes*. He has little to do with his age.

His poems do not have the lyrical beauty of Tennyson's Poems. They have a rugged rhythm and colloquial vigor, both of which add splendour to the dramatic force of the poems. Browning was an innovation and never tired of experimenting with forms. The prominent features of his poetry are simplicity, clarity, lucidity, stateliness love of beauty and originality. Tennyson wrote on almost to the end of his life.

His Works:

Tennyson wrote several volumes of verse but the more important of his poems include: *The Lotos-Eaters*; *Ulysses*; *Break, Break, Break*; *Locksley Hall*; *The Lady of Shallot*; *The Princess*; *In Memoriam*; *Ode on the death of the Duke of Wellington*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*; *Maud*; *Idylls of the King*; *Enoch Arden*; *To Virgil*; and *Crossing the Bar*. They comprise lyrics, odes, dramatic monologues, and elegy, metrical romances, and verse tales. Their metres and stanza forms are equally varied.

2. Robert Browning (1812-89):

His Works:

The volumes of verse by which Browning is best known are *Bells and Pomegranates*, *Men and Women*, *Dramatis Personae*, and the *Ring and the Book*. The last named is a long poem in four volumes in which the story of a famous murder trial in Italy is retold from ten points of view. The best-known poems in the other Volumes include:

Evelyn Hope, *Porphyria's Lover*, *My Last Duchess*, *Meeting at Night*, *Parting at Morning*, *The Lost Leader*, and *The Bishop Orders his Tomb in Bells and Pomegranates*; *Fra Lippo Lippi*, *Andrea del Sarto*, *The Last Ride Together* and *One*

Word More in Men and Women; and *Abt Vogler*, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, and *Prospice in Dramatis Personae*.

3. Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-94):

Her Works:

Her chief volumes of verse are: *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, *The Prince's Progress and Other Poems*, *Sing-Song: A Nursery Rhyme Book*, and *A Pageant and Other Poems*. Besides her title poems of the first two volumes, her other best-known poems include: *When I am dead, my dearest*, apparent, Keats made the greatest impact on the Pre-Raphaelites. Rossetti got the very idea of initiating the movement from Lord Houghton's *Life and Letters of Keats* in which he first read of Keats's interest in Pre-Raphaelite painting. Pre-Raphaelitism, therefore, was not a new movement in English poetry but a development of the aesthetic qualities of the Romantic Revival.

5.1.3. The Sceptics:

Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83):

Of the several translations he made from Greek, Persian and Spanish into English, he lives by one only- that of *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam a Persian Poet of the late eleventh and early twelfth century, who wrote quatrains rhyming on wine, roses, and love. Fitzgerald's translation has the same features but from a translation it develops into an exquisite composition of the poet's own. Its theme is both pessimistic and optimistic. Its belief in determinism and disbelief in immortality it is a product of the sceptical tendencies of the age, but in its call to make the most of this life.

Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-61):

Clough wrote both long poems and short among the former may be mentioned. *The Bothie of Toper-na-fuosich*, a love tale written during an Oxford vocation, *Amours de voyage*, another love tale written during a tour of Italy, and *Dipsychus* (double souled) the story of a soul struggling between good and evil. While the first two poems are light hearted in tone, the latter strikes a pessimistic note. All, however, are failures. The best of Clough is in his shorter pieces. In poems like the *Songs of Absence*, a series of tainted love lyrics, *The Latest Decalogue* and *Say not the struggle naught availeth*. The appeal of them all, however, is to the intellect

rather than to the heart Clough's despair is not unmixed with hope. In the poem last mentioned, by which he is best known, he is even robustly hopeful.

Matthew Arnold (1822-88)

Arnold shines both as a poet and as a prose writer. The more important of his poetical works include: *The Forsaken Merman*, *Resignation*, *Shakespeare*, *Empedocles on Etna*, *Tristram and Iseult*, *Lines written in Kensington Gardens*, *Sohrab and Rustam*, *The Scholar Gipsy*, *Requiescat*, *Balder Dead*, *Thyrsis*, *Rugby Chapel*, *Calais Sands*, *Dover Beach*, and *A Southern Night*. Their form comprises the narrative, the elegy and elegiac verse, the lyric and the sonnet. Arnold makes his mark in each.

Thus, Matthew Arnold, like Dryden, Coleridge and Eliot belongs to the class of its writers who have excelled in the two areas: poetry and criticism. Arnold's poetry is marked with a conflict between classicism and romanticism. We find in his poetry a serious concern with the life around and an elegiac note of melancholy and stoicism. He had read the literatures of Greece, France and Italy, so his poetry was influenced by the classical literatures. His style is simple and lucid. Nature, the love of melancholy, the worship of natural objects, the yearning for a happier time, loss of faith and the loneliness of the human hearts are some of his concerns.

James Thomson (1834-82):

He published only two volumes of poems, *The City of Dreadful Night* and *Other poems* and *Vane's story and other poems*. No poet of his age or of any age has sung so well of despair as Thomson does in these poems.

5.1.4. The Spasmodic:

W.E Aytoun, in his *Firmilian: A Spasmodic Tragedy*, applies this title to a group of poets whose poetry is marked by strangeness in subject matter and language. They included P. J. Bailey (1816-1902), Sydney Dobell (1824-74) and Alexander Smith (1829-67). In subject matter wanting to be more modern than their contemporaries, theory dealt with abstract philosophical questions rather than with concrete things concretely presented in *Bailey in Festus*, *Dobell in Balder*, and *Smith in A Life Dram*. They do succeed in expressing the perplexed mood of the age in a language to match.

5.1.5. The Pre-Raphaelites:

The Pre-Raphaelites owe their name to a school of painting called the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, that was established in England in 1848 to revive the ideal of painting simplicity, sincerity, truth to life that inspired the Italian painters before Raphael (1483-1520). It consisted of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his brother William Michael Rossetti, Holman Hunt, John Everett-Millais and Thomas Woolen. But as the movement progressed, it developed but as the movement progressed, it developed a manner of its own which, though not strictly Pre-Raphaelite in character, is still given that name from its inception from the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. It attracted two other poets of note, William Morris and A. C. Swinburne.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82):

His chief poems include the *Blessed Damozel*, a sorrowful tale of a dead girl pining in Heaven for her lover lifted off earth; *The House of Life*, a sequence of one hundred and one sonnets in the patriarchate form inspired by his wife, Elizabeth Siddal; *Sister Helen*, a tale of false love and superstition, and *The King's Tragedy*, a ballad in the form of a monologue. As the leader of the Pre-Raphaelites, he most shows the characteristics of the school noticed; above. His verse is closely allied to the sister arts of painting and music.

William Morris (1834-96):

His chief works are: *the Defence of Guenevere and other poems*, the latter including *The Haystack in the Floods*, and all medieval in inspiration; *The life and death of Jason*, retelling the ancient Greek story of the quest for the golden fleece; *The Earthly Paradise* a sequence of twenty. Four tales modelled on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and told in pairs, of which one is a medieval romance and the other a Greek legend; and *Sigurd the Volsung* an epic in four books on an ancient Norwegian theme. Morris is charming as a story teller, now employing the method of the ballad, now of the epic

5.1.6. The Women Poetess:

Elizabeth Browning (1806-51):

Her work roughly falls into two divisions: poems that are purely topical in their interest and those that have a more abiding appeal. To the former category belong: *The Cry of the Children*, drawing attention to the evils of child labour; *The Cry of the*

Human, expressing similar sympathy for the down-trodden and the oppressed; *Casa Guidi Windows*, inspired by the Italian struggle for freedom; and *Aurora Leigh*, a blank-verse romance in nine books, voicing the Victorian woman's yearning for a place of honour in society. Admired in their day, they have little interest today. To the second category belong the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, a sequence of forty-four sonnets expressing Elizabeth Barrett's love for Robert Browning and so called because the latter playfully called her his 'little Portuguese' on account of her dark complexion. They are truer poetry than any of her other poems, sincere in feeling and simple in expression. Their structure is Petrarchan, perhaps because they were written in Italy. Part of their interest is due to the fact that they are the first sequence of sonnets in English literature to be addressed by a woman to a man. They are her only title to a place in literature today.

Other Poets:

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82):

His chief poems include *The Blessed Damozel*, a sorrowful tale of a dead girl pining in Heaven for her lover left on earth; *The House of Life*, a sequence of one hundred and one sonnets in the Petrarchan form inspired by his wife, Elizabeth Siddal; *Jenny*, attacking prostitution; *Sister Helen*, a tale of false love and superstition; and *The King's Tragedy*, a ballad in the form of a monologue. As the poet, he mostly shows the characteristics of the school, noticed above. His verse is closely allied to the sister arts of painting and music.

William Morris (1834-96):

By profession Morris was first an architect, then a painter, and finally a house furnisher. But he found time to write poetry, too, and, under the influence of Carlyle and Ruskin, to attend to the problems of the factory workers. In all these three spheres he sought to replace ugliness by beauty. Beauty was his quest in all that he undertook to do. In poetry he found it in the past, particularly in Greek antiquity and the Middle Ages, which he depicts colourfully and musically in the manner of his school. His chief works are: *The Defence of Guenevere and Other Poems*, the latter including *The Haystack in the Floods*, and all medieval in inspiration; *The Life and Death of Jason*, retelling the ancient Greek story of the quest for the golden fleece; *The Earthly Paradise*, a sequence of twenty-four tales modelled on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and told in pairs, of which one is a medieval romance and the other

a Greek legend; and *Sigurd the Volsung*, an epic in four books on an ancient Norwegian theme. Morris is charming as a story-teller, now employing the method of the ballad, now of the epic.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909):

Excluding his poetic plays, the best of which is *Atlanta in Calydon*, his chief volumes of poems are: *Poems and Ballads* in two series, the first containing *The Garden of Proserpine* and the second *A Forsaken Garden* and *Ave Atque Vale*, a premature elegy on the reported death of his French master Baudelaire; *Songs before Sunrise*, pleading the cause of *Sleep at Sea*, *My heart is like a singing bird*, *Uphill*, *The Convent Threshold*, and the sequence of fourteen sonnets in the Petrarchan rhyme, *Monna Innominata* ("Nameless Lady"), addressed to Charles Cayley whom she could not marry for the difference in their religious views. Under the influence of her brother, she began as a Pre-Raphaelite but was influenced more by the Oxford Movement which gave a religious direction to her verse. Her sonnets bespeak her love for Cayley in a strain that is more of parting than of union. In fact, all her verse is tenderly pathetic. Only in *Sing-Song*, intended for children, the tone is one of liveliness. Her style is one of the simplest in English verse. As a devotional poet, she ranks with Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan.

The Decadents:

The Victorian attitude towards life may be defined as one of acceptance of authority. What was, was right. The writers and readers alike were satisfied with the existing order in religion, politics, industry/ home life, literature. The last taught the same lesson: that God was in his heaven and all was right with the world. But in the last decade of Victoria's reign (1890-1900), this attitude began to be challenged. In place of concern with contemporary social conditions, art for art's sake, earlier advocated by the Pre-Raphaelites, was revived. This led, on the one hand, to shallowness in thought and, on the other, to care for style for its own sake. In place of complacency with the existing social order, poetry acquired a note of sadness. It began to seek beauty more and more in ugliness. It even defied the moral conventions of the age with sensual pleasure. Lastly, symbolism took the place of the direct statement. All these features were largely borrowed from a literary movement in France, popularized by Baudelaire and Gautier, which was called Decadence and which propagated its ideals in a journal called *Le Decadent*. The English poets who

most came under this influence were Oscar Wilde (1856-1900), Arthur Symons (1865-1945), Ernest Dowson (1867-1900), and Lionel Johnson (1867-1902). Among their best known poems may be mentioned: Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*; Symons's *Rain on the Down*, *Emmy*, *The Shadow*, *Credo*, *The Street Singer*, *Javanese Dancers*, *Ipals*, *Requies*, *White Magic*, *The Ecstasy*, and *Indian Meditation*; Dowson's *I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion* *Villanelle of Marguerites*; and Johnson's *By the Statue of King Carle Charing Cross* and *The Dark Angel*. Their decade is called by two separate names to distinguish it from the rest of the century—*fin de siècle* (end of the century) and 'the naughty nineties

5.1.7. Check your Progress:

A. Choose the most correct alternative from the ones given below each sentence.

1. Darwin's discovery of the-----had the greatest impact on the Victorian Age.

a) Origin of Man	b) Origin of Species
c) Origin of Animal	c) none of these
2. 'The Lady of Shallot' is written by-----.

a) Alfred lord Tennyson	b) Robert Browning
c) William Morris	d) William Wordsworth
3. Algernon Charles Swinburne is-----.

a) Romantic poet	b) Pre-Raphaelites poet
c) Shakespearean poet	d) none of these
4. 'The King's Tragedy' is -----.

a) a ballad in the form of a monologue	b) song
c) lyric	d) dramatic monologue
5. 'The Cry of the Children' is written by-----.

a) Robert Browning	b) Elizabeth Browning
c) Christina Rossetti	d) None of these

B. Answer the following questions in one word / phrase / sentence each.

1. What is Tractarian Movement?
2. Give the names of sceptics of the Victorian age
3. What does mean by spasmodic Tragedy?
4. Where did Pre-Raphaelites establish?
5. What is Le Decadent?

5.1.8 Key to check your progress

5.1.7.A. 1. b 2. a 3. b 4. a 5. b

- 5.1.7. B.** 1. Tractarian Movement is called the Tracts for the Times which ran for ninety numbers.
2. The poets, Edward Fitzgerald, James Thomas and Arthur Hugh Clough.
 3. Poets whose poetry is marked by strangeness in subject matter and language.
 4. It was established in England in 1848.
 5. The literary movement in France, popularized by Baudelaire and Gautier, which was called Decadence, propagated its ideals Decadent.

5.1.9 Exercises:

- I. What are the characteristics of Victorian poetry?
- II. Write a note on the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.
- III. Victorian poetry shows a marked decline when compared to the Romantic poetry, which factors were responsible for this?
- IV. What was the contribution of the two leading fibers, Tennyson and Browning to the Victorian poetry?

5.2 Modern English Poetry

5.2.0 Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- Understand twentieth century poetry and its characteristics.
- Understand why it is called as modern poetry and its salient features.
- Understand how it is different from Victorian poetry.
- Understand how it is also marked by a note of realism and why it is known as poetry of revolt.

5.2.1 Introduction:

The poetry of the 20th century, terribly witnessed pangs and sufferings of the World Wars. Reflection of these wars also broadly seen in the poetry. By the end of the Victorian age, Great Britain was the supreme power in the world which led to territorial expansion and trade. It has been also affected by the two devastating World Wars. But in the literary area it was very vigorous and prosperous, especially in the field of poetry. It embodying a rich variety of human experiences and incredibly effective in criticizing life. One of the distinguishing and prominent characteristics of Modern English Poetry is its centrality to human concern. However, Modern Poetry has been condemned as eccentric, wayward and trivial. It is hard, intellectual, realistic and slightly cynical. Poetry is a criticism of life. Modern Poetry is the reflection of modern life. Twentieth century poetry represents rebelling against established values. Sexual candor, vernacular diction, elliptical syntax, a complex organization of imagery, erudite reference, freedom from verse rhythm and preference for sense rhythm, are the hallmarks of Twentieth Century literature especially of poetry.

5.2.2 Presentation of subject matter:

Twentieth Century English Poetry is divided into four main divisions, they are: Edwardian Poetry, Georgian Poetry, the Poetry of the Second World War and the Poetry of the Post-War period, each of these four divisions can be further divided according to the trends and movements.

The poetic trends of the Modern English poetry:

1. Edwardian poetry: Edwardian poetry can be divided into four sections, namely, *'The Decadents'*, *'The Realists'*, *'The Pessimists'*, and *'The Transitional Poets'*. Earnest Dowson, Lionel Johnson and Arthur Symons were chief of the Decadents. They stood not for *'Art for Art's sake'*, but for *'Art for Life's sake'*. They believed in ornamentation and beauty of sound only. On the other hand, Wilfred Blunt, William Earnest Henley and Rudyard Kipling kept alive the claims of Realism. The two great pessimistic poets were Thomas Hardy and A.E. Housman. Their poetry was representation of final expression of disillusionment. Robert Bridges, G.M. Hopkins, W.B. Yeats, Francis Thomson and Gordon Bottomley were the main transitional poets who paved the way for the Georgian group of poets.

2. Georgian Poetry: Georgian Poetry derives its title from five volumes of that name edited by Edward Marsh in 1912. Georgian Poetry covers the period of (1910-35) King George V. Rupert Brooke, W.H. Davies, Walter De La Mare, John Drinkwater, James Elroy Flecker, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Edmund Blunden are some of the names that stand out among Georgian poets. The poetry of these 25 years can be sub-divided into that of *'The Imagists'*, *'The Soldier Poets'*, and *'The New Country Poets'* and *'The Metaphysical'*. English Poetry took a turn from the Modernist with the advent of Imagist Movement, which started in 1912 by a group of poets mostly American of whom Ezra Pound was the leader. The Imagists, like Ezra Pound, Hilda Doolittle and Amy Powell believed in the 'Free' Poetry and concentrated upon the creation of sharp and precisely delineated images in a language of the common people

3. The First World War: Poetry of Soldiers: Isaac Rosenberg, Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen are four important names. The effect of the war in the verse of Owen, Sassoon and Rosenberg was to cause them to turn away from rapid romanticism of much war poetry. Thus, they played a significant role in the development of poetic language. After them T.S. Eliot and Edith Sitwell shown the influence of the symbolist movement.

4. In the 1930, with the rise of W.H. Auden and the poets associated with him known as the 'Pink Poets' i.e., Communists. They are Louise MacNeice, Stephen Spender, C. Day Lewis and others. There was a return to more traditional forms; the political and lyric poetry of the early 1930s. is occasionally inventive in technique,

experimenting with alliterative patterns rhythm and rhymes. They took their formal lessons from Hardy and from Eliot. They are the new country poets.

Experimental poetry of 20th century:

The poetry written in this age is characterized by innovations in subjects-matter and form. It is a highly complex one, born of the complexities of the contemporary world. The form has undergone a corresponding change. Word and Phrase are used differently, new rhythms have been invented and rhyme is not advocated as being too scarce or too stale. The most marked influence on it has been those of psycho-analysis and the French symbolists. The psycho-analysis making for greater complexity of theme and the French symbolists making the use of words and not for their logical meaning but to evoke the sensation.

1. The Imagist movement in Modern English poetry: The Modernist mode, interest in the complex and search for new modes of expression first time appear in the poems of G.M. Hopkins. This movement was revolt against Romantic revolt against Romantic extravagance in thought and expression. The objectives of this movement were as follows:

- a. To employ the language of common speech, preferring the exact word.
- b. To create new rhythms including free verse, as the expression of new moods.
- c. To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subjects.
- d. To replace vague description by an exact image.
- e. To give effect of utmost economy in the use of words.

The images it presents are merely those of objects but mostly of ideas. It was considered both as artificial external additions to poetry. It found free verse more suited to the present condition. It was a short lived, movement, almost beginning and ending with the two great wars respectively.

2. The Neo-Metaphysical: It was motivated by the publication of Herbert Grierson's edition of his poem by the Clarendon Press in 1912. In it the complex mode of thought and expression seemed eminently to suit the complex world situation in which the poet was soon to find himself the havoc caused by the war and its aftermath. It is soon supported by T.S.Eliot. He modifies the metaphysical convention by using the language of the day and borrowing his imagery or pictures

not from the traditional sources but from modern science, modern industry and other modern things.

3. The Surrealist movement: Surrealism or Super realism is a modern psychological concept that regards subconscious- the state of dream, delirium, even madness. It came to England from France. It is also seen in James Joyce's novels, '*Ulysses*' and '*Finnegan's Wake*'. In poetry, the movement enlisted the support of David Gascoyne, who wrote a book on the subject and Herbert Read, who edited an anthology of surrealist poems and pictures.

4. Neo-Romanticism: In the nineteen-thirties, there was a move to revive Neo-classicism by the poet critic Geoffrey Grigson who in the preface to his new verse declared that poetry, which had interested itself more and more in highly complex thoughts and emotions. It seeks its subjects not from the traditional sources but from the realm of the subconscious, differing from surrealism. The images of surrealism are both significant and insignificant. In spite of the presence of ugliness, drabness in modern Poetry, the Modern poet has not completely given up Romanticism. The spirit of romance continues to sway the minds of certain poets like Walter De La Mare, W.B. Yeats, John Masefield, and Gibson. Amongst them, we still hear the echoes of old Romanic Poetry of Coleridge and Keats.

Other characteristics of Modern Poetry:

1. Variety of themes: It is widely known that Modern Poetry is the poetry of revolt. As it is experimental in its technique, it is written on almost any subject. The Modern Poet is inspired by commonplace subjects and the whole world is the Modern Poet's experience. He writes the poetry on nature, patriotism, religion and even philosophy too. These poets also reflected different mood in their poetry.

2. Realism: It is observed that Twentieth Century Poetry has also the shade of realism. It appears as a reaction against the Pseudo-romanticism of the last century. The Modern poets were dissatisfied with Pseudo-romanticism, so they see the life and paint as it is. The Second World War has exercised a deep rooted and overwhelming influence on English Poetry; so the poetry represents spiritual realism. Poets like Owen, Graves, and Sassoon have described heartrending horrors of war in realistic manner.

3. Pessimism: Pessimism, another aspect of human nature is also widely reflected in Modern Poetry. The poet has deeply realized the pettiness of human life and its

broodings are reflected in the form of poetry. The poetry of 20th century has representing deeper sense of tragedy of everyday life. Houseman, Huxley, T.S. Eliot are the poets of pessimism. In the famous poem 'The Waste Land', T.S. Eliot expresses the feelings about life's nothingness. The poem is deeply reflective and meditative and it reflects pessimism.

4. Mysticism and Religion: Another striking aspect of Modern English poetry is its mysticism. The chief mystic poets in this period are Walter De La Mare, W.B. Yeats and Hodgson. All of them seem to have trodden the path of Wordsworth and Blake. Walter De La Mare's poems explore tirelessly the dream of wake. In that dream, natural and supernatural become one, as muffins and mutton. Thompson, Robert Grave and G.K.Chesterton have written poems on religion. All of them have kept alive the flame of religion and mysticism even in this scientific age. Some of the well-known poems are '*Hounds of Heaven*', '*In Strange Land*', '*The Song of Our*' and '*The House of Christmas*'

5. Theme of Love: Love theme in Modern poetry does not occupy the same prominence as it does in the Victorian poetry. However, we come across some fine lyrics of love in Modern poetry written by Robert Bridges and W.B. Yeats. Bridges has written some fine lyrics of love, as '*Awake My Heart to be loved*', '*I Will Not Let Thee Go*', W.B. Yeats has also given contribution love poem like '*When you Are Old and Gray*'. Despite such fine love poems, the future of English love poetry seems very uncertain.

6. Nature: The smoke and the murkiness, the dust and the hurry of the modern world have not destroyed man's affection for nature. The Modern poets present deep intimacy for nature. It is not the spiritual life of nature that fascinates him but the simple charm of nature's outward manifestation also attracts him.

7. Humanitarian treatment: The modern poet not only describes the sufferings of the poor and downtrodden but also glorifies their mean and obscure existence. The poets like Masfield, Gibson and Galsworthy have broadly shown their inclination to depict common man and his sufferings. Masfield's '*Consecration*' is a representative poem of this type. The modern poet's interest in the common and humanity in general has made him turn his attention towards the animals, plants and birds. He is interested not in the joy of animal life but its mode of suffering. Galsworthy's '*Stupidity Street*' pleads for greater sympathy for animals.

8. Complexity and aspect of psychology: In twentieth century, some modern poets produced their poems under the influence of scientific and psychological ideas of the time. They have realized that there is an incessant activity of jumbled thought in every individual. So, they believed that there is not leisure for "emotions recollected in tranquility". The modern poetry is always vague, that is why the poems of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot are difficult to follow.

9. Style and techniques: In 20th Century Poetry the techniques of imagism and symbolism were developed by some of the poets very effectively. Association of ideas which have grown up from our first hearing of it and the poet exploits this symbolism of words, as he exploits more directly 'Psychological' symbolism or substitute values of images. The modern poets give priority or preference for simple and direct expression. They do not strictly follow metrical rules. They also replaced verse rhythm by sense rhythm.

Modern English poets: The poets of this period are broadly divided into two groups i.e., the 'traditionalists' and 'experimentalists'.

The Traditionalists:

1. Thomas Hardy: Hardy, a poet and a novelist, was born in 1840. He ranks with Bridges and Houseman as one of the outstanding poets of the early part of this century. He published about nine hundred poems and one epic drama. He had a few obsessive ideas that determined both the substance and the style of his poems. His novels were all written and published in the Victorian age, whereas, his poetry belongs to the 20th century. In both he appears as a prolific and genius writer. His poetical volumes consist of '*Wessex Poems*', '*Poems of the Past and Present*', '*The Dynasts*' an epic drama in three parts, '*Times Laughing Stocks*', '*Satires of Circumstances*', '*Moments of Vision*', '*Late Lyrics and Earlier*'. The Famous '*Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall*' a poetic play is in one act form. His chief concern is man's powerlessness against the circumstances, natural and social things that surround him from his very birth. In his poetry first time appears that scientific view of life that challenges traditional beliefs. Nature is found to be neither favourable nor unfavourable but a fellow sufferer with man. He takes a somber view of life which he views, as dominated by capricious and malignant destiny.

2. Robert Bridges: He is the most notable active poet of twentieth century. His chief volumes of verse consist of '*Shorter Poems*', '*The Growth of Love*', '*A Sonnet*

Sequence', *Eros and Psyche*', *New Verses*' and *The Testament of Beauty*'. In form they comprise lyrics, sonnets, elegiac verses and long poems. His subjects range from such well-worn themes as love and Nature to the joys and sorrows of life. The theme of *The Testament of Beauty* 'is also the joys and sorrows of life. The poem is written over 4000 lines in four books entitled, *Introduction*', *Selfhood*', *Breed*' and *Ethics*'. The poem was published barely six months before his death i.e. 1929. Even in this poem, he dwells on the achievements and failures of man. However, achievements are stressed more than failures. Bridges was essentially a passionate writer and his poetry composed on artistic subjects like ' beauty, love and nature. His emotion is "emotions recollected in tranquility". He is reflective like that of Arnold, but as a poet of lyrics, he lacked the force and fire of Shelley's lyrics. In his poems *Nightingale*', *A Passerby*', *On a Dead Child*' he appears beyond the technique of classicist.

3. Rudyard Kipling: He has been called "Self-appointed Laureate of the Empire". As per the timed sense he is known as half of Victorian and half of modern, but when we glance at the choice of some of his subject such as ships, engine, cables he appears ahead to the modern age in the outlook but from political, social and religious point of view he appears all Victorian. He was honored with noble prize in literature in 1907 making him the first English-language writer to receive the prize, and its youngest recipient to date. He wrote tales and poems of British soldiers in India. So many of his literary subjects drawn by his birth and early residence in India. His famous poems are such as *The Ballad of East and West*', *Danny Deever*' *Tommy*' and *The Road to Mandalay*'. *Departmental Ditties and other Verses*'. He wrote patriotic poems, such as *The Ballad of Camperdown*' and English poems such as *The Way through the Woods*'. His other outstanding lamentation poem is *The Dead King*', laments on the occasion of death of King Edward VII.

4. William Yeats: His poetry falls roughly into three divisions: 'the romantic', 'the realistic' and 'the mystical'. In the poetry of the first period he relates with love, beauty, nature and Irish mythology and tales of the supernatural, which he weaves into lovely dreams. In the second period the grim reality on the Irish struggle for freedom claims most of his attention. In the final period both the dreams of early Youth and the realities of the Irish situation are replaced by mystic contemplation of life. He makes use of symbols to convey his inner sensations, his vision and trances and his mystic experience which cannot be conveyed in any other way. His poem

'*The Two Trees*' is a symbolic poem addressed to Maud Gonne, a beautiful woman, to whom he loves much. Yeats here warns her not to lose her freshness by looking at the second tree. His poetic collections are 'The Juvenilia', 'The Crossways', 'The Rose' etc. The Wind among the Reeds' 'Adam's Curse', 'In the Seven Woods', His famous poem 'Sailing to Byzantium' is the first poem in the volume of verses entitled, '*The Tower*', 'Leda and the Swan' is a sonnet and one of the most perfect poems ever written by Yeats. Yeats, another famous poem 'A Prayer for My Daughter' (1919) the poem written soon after the birth of his daughter Annie.

5. Robert Laurence Binyon: His representative volumes of verse are: '*London Visions*', '*Porphyrion*', '*Odes*', '*The Four Years*', '*The Secret*', and '*The Sirens*'. He wrote narratives, lyrics and elegiac poetry. His best-known single poem is the elegiac lyric, '*For Fallen*' contained in '*The Four Years*' in which he expresses the deep and proud feelings for the English soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the great war of 1914-18.

6. W. H. Davies: His lyrics have a force and simplicity uncharacteristic of the poetry of most of his Georgian contemporaries, after several years of his wandering experiences, he published his first volume '*The Soul's Destroyer and Other poems*' (1905) followed by '*Nature poems and Others*'. His poetry includes '*Forty New Poems*', '*Poems 1930-31*' and '*The Loneliest Mountain*' etc.

7. Walter De La Mare (1873-1956): He is the most distinguished poets of Georgian period. His poems explore tirelessly the dream of wake. In that dream, natural and supernatural become one, as muffins and mutton. '*The Scribe*' is about the subject of all great verse-God and man and the universe. He is famous for his love of fantastic and curious aspects of things. His poems are generally covered with the glamour of dream like quality. His chief volume consists of '*Songs for Children*', '*The Listeners and other Poems*', '*Peacock Pie*' and '*The Fleeting and Other Poems*'. His principal subjects are two: the world of children and the world the supernatural.

8. Wilfred Gibson: He wrote two types of verse, the romantic and realistic. His early romantic volumes are, '*Urlyn the Harper*', '*The Queen's Vigil*' and '*The Golden Helm*' and his realistic volumes are the poems in the verse drama '*Daily Bread*', '*Fires*', '*Thoroughfares*' and '*Livelihood*'. These verse dramas deal with the lives of the working-class poor, mostly of the native country of north umber land. Many of

his poems, particularly those *'Fires* 'and *'Live hood* 'are written in the monologue form like that of Browning.

9. John Masefield: He succeeded Bridges as poet Laureate in 1930. His early poetry was written in the style and manner of Kipling. He wrote chiefly lyrics and narratives. His principal volumes of lyrics are *'Salt Water Ballads'* and *'Ballads and Poems'* in which such popular pieces as *'Sea fever'* and *'Cargoes'* appeared. Afterwards he wrote a better narrative poem - *'Reynard the Fox'*. His *'Everlasting Mercy'*, *'Dauber* 'also shows the influence of both Chaucer and Crabbe. His love of nature and countryside is presented in some of his poems.

The Experimentalist Poet:

1. G. M. Hopkins: Though Hopkins lived and wrote in the Victorian age, he is one of the poets of the modernist movement in poetry. His poems may be classified into two kinds: those that follow the romantic tradition such as *'The Caged Skylark'*, *'Felix Randal'*, *'Pied Beauty* etc. He expresses delight in nature and love of god. The poem that Hopkins wrote was *'The Wreck of Deutsch Land'* He sees it as a symbol of faith and hope. It begins and ends with praise of God's majesty and mercy. His other poems are *'The Windhover'*, *'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves'* and *'That Nature is Heraclitean Fire'*. These poems deal with themes nature and the life of the poor, for whom, Hopkins had a great sympathy. His poetic power is clearly reflected in the seven or eight sonnets that he wrote during the last years of his life. His famous poem *'The Windhover'* is about the bird falcon or kestrel. He himself declares that the poem is his best creation that he ever wrote. He was influenced by philosopher and lecturer at Oxford Duns Scotus.

2. World War Poets and their poetry: The first world war came with a devastating experience, which also caused the emergence of a group of poets like Rupert Brooke, Charles Sorely, Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg and Edmund Blunden. The Great War provided many poets with a kind of material which they utilized with varying success during war. Many of the poets have first-hand experience of war as soldiers.

3. Wilfred Owen: He was emerged as foremost poet of First World War. In his poetry, there is broad sense of humanity and the devastating experience of war is reflected in shapes of beauty. The greatness of Owen's poetry lies in its moral power. Owen was chiefly inspired by Siegfried Sassoon. His volume *'Poems* 'collected and

edited by Sassoon, approved posthumously in 1920. His famous poem '*Strange Meeting*', shows meeting between a soldier and the enemy that he had recently killed. Owen's technical mastery and pity for the doomed is expressed strongly in his poems. Owen died on the battle field at the age of twenty-five fighting for England as a soldier.

4. Siegfried Sassoon: He was a very different type of poet of war. In the early months of the war, he served as an officer. The war-poems of Siegfried Sassoon take more account of war as a dirtiness of blood and decaying bodies than as a source of heroic deed. His poetic volumes are '*The Old Huntsman and Other Poems*', '*Counter Attack and Other Poems*' and '*War Poems*'.

5. Rupert Brooke: He was one of the first to react to the war and expressed it as glorious one. But soon this view was changed. The best admired of his poems consists of '*The Old Vicarage Grantchester*', '*The Great Lover*', and sequence of five sonnets on the Great War entitled '*1914*'. He shot to fame with the sonnet on the war and particularly with one '*The Solider*'. The sonnets made him the hero of the hour because what he said in the sonnet had come true. His sonnets proved a kind of morale-booster to England when she had odds in heavy manner.

The Twenties: This decade in a way was known 'as age of quietness', though deceptive in a literary sense.

1. T.S.Eliot: Eliot was a poet, critic and dramatist. His period of active literary production extended over a period of forty-five years. He has come to be regarded as one of the greatest English poets, and he has influenced the course of modern poetry more than any other poet of the 20th century. Eliot's career as a poet may conveniently be divided into five phases or periods: Eliot began writing quite early in life while a still a school boy. The poems were published in the various college and school magazines. Eliot is frankly satirical of Boston society; and the love-theme, when it appears, receives an ironic treatment. The rottenness, the corruption and decadence of contemporary society is exposed with a rare poignancy. The collection was published entitled, '*Prufrock and other Observations*' in 1917. The most important poems of this collection are: '*The love song of J Alfred Prufrock*', '*Portrait of a Lady*', '*The Preludes*', '*Rhapsody on a Windy Night*', '*The Boston Evening Transcript*', *Mr. Apollinax*. In the third phase i.e., 1918-1925 the most significant poems are published. They are: '*Gerontion*', '*Burbank with a Baedekar*', '*Sweeney*'

Erect, *'A Cooking Egg'*, *'Sweeny among the Nightingales'*, *'The Waste Land'*, *'The Hollow Man'* etc. After the pause between 1922 and 1927, the fourth period begins with Christian poems chiefly the *'Ariel Poems'* and *'Ash Wednesday'*. Eliot's poems are entirely pessimistic. His famous epic like poem *'The Waste Land'* portrays the state of the civilization out of which it grows. He was a close associate of Ezra Pound in preparing the ground for the new poetry through critical pronouncement and creative practice. He was awarded the order of Merit and the Noble Prize for literature in 1948.

2. Cecil day Lewis: He was associated with left wing doctrine. Among his individual verse collection maybe mentioned *'Transitional Poems'* *Overtures to Death and Other Poems*. A Collected edition of his poems appeared in 1935. Among his best poems are, *'From Feathers to Iron'*, *'The Magnetic Mountain'*, *'Italian Journey'* and the translation of Virgil's *'Georgics'* and *'Aeneid'*

3. W.H. Auden: He is partly English and partly American by nationality. Until 1939, he lived and wrote in England but there after he went America. The medical background and his early lives reading of medical books was to be seen in many of his poems. His major works are, *'Poems'* (1929), *'City Without Walls'*, and *'Many Other Poems'*(1969), *'Epistle to a Godson and Other Poems'* (1972), *'Thank You Fog: Last Poems'* (1974). Many of his poems have evidence of the 'Quest Theme'. He became famous when he was described by literary journalists as the leader of the so-called "Oxford Group". It was a member of the circle of young English poets influenced by Literary Modernism.

4. D. H. Lawrence: It was 1920 that Lawrence began writing his famous collection of his poems *'Birds, Beasts and Flowers'*, He also wrote *'Poems for Pansies'* and prepared his collected poems during this decade. His poems are deep, intimate and depict his personal emotions. His poems such as *'Snack'*, *'Piano'*, *'Bavarian Gentians'*, *'Baby Tortoise'*, *'Mosquito'* and *'End of Another Home Holiday'* portray the acute insight, mystical and psychological experiences.

5. Louis MacNeice: He is not as popular as Auden or Spender. His chief collection of poems are *'Blind Fire Works'*, *'The Earth Compels'*, *'Autumn Journal'*, *'Plant and Phantom'*, *'Springboard'*, *'The Dark Tower'*, *'Ten Burnt Offerings'*, *'Visitations'* and *'Solstices'*. His central theme is also a pitiless exposure of the ills of

the modern Industrial civilization. An Irishman by nationality, he shows the influence of Yeats.

6. Stephen Spender: His notable collection of verse are *'The Still Centre'*, *'Ruins and Visions'*, *'Poems of Dedication'* and *'The Edge of Being'*. His personal tragedy in his life became the symbol of his poetry. It is also observed that the poetry of Spender is personal and passionate in nature. He was brought up in the ruins of the First World War and recruited for the Second World War.

Robert Graves, Edwin Muir and John Benjamin and a host of others have also received largest share of attention among the poets of 1920s and 30s.

The Neo-Romantic poetry of the 1940: This decade witnesses a pronounced shift in poetic style in the 1940s symbolized by Dylan Thomas, so let us have bird's eye view at this poetry.

Dylan Thomas: He was strictly speaking, a prophet of Neo-Romanticism. His verses are filled with rich daring images both biblical and Freudian. Some of his themes were the relation between man and his natural environment, the problem of identity in view of perpetual changes brought by time. Poems such as *'The Force That Trough, The Green Fuse Drives The Flower'*, *'Do Not Go Gentle Into that Good Night'*, *'Poem in October'*, *'Fern Hill'* and *'A Refusal to Mourn The Death, By Fire Of A Child In London'* show the development of his mature poetry and it also indicates that he is one of the finest poets in English poetry, his poems depict the unity of all life and death as a part of continuing process in the natural world in which we live. Thomas' two collections of verses *'Death and Entrances'* and *'Collected Poems'* reveal him as a disciplined poet

World War II Poetry and Postmodernism: During the Second World War, a group of poets contributed to English poetry but unlike the earlier war poets they did not express the horror or pity of war. Poets like Keith Douglas (1920-1944) and Alun Lewis (1915-1944) wrote verses which were detached whimsical, and with a humor. Douglas is popularly remembered as a war poet, whose description of war time Cairo and desert fighting are captivating. Many of Lewis' poems show a recurring obsession with themes of isolation and death.

Postmodernism: During the 1950, poets in England as in America rejected the styles those were prevalent. Postmodernism has been defined as synonym for today

multination list capitalist world at large. It is an attitude to art, life and thought system in the post war era. It is applied to the poetry that came after 1950s.

Philip Larkin: He was the most distinguished voice of a new generation He was inspired by Yeats and Dylan Thomas. In his poems he spoke of erosion of the world, the wisdom of the grave and the failure of love. Larkin's first poems appeared in *'Poetry from Oxford in Wartime'* edited by William Bell in 1944. His second volume of poems. *'The Less Deceived'* which was the best came out in 1955. Another collection *'The Whitsun Weddings'* came out in 1956. The later poetry of Larkin is much possessed by death such as *'The Building'* and *'Next Phase'*. Every of his poems shows he is not casual but a conscious writer, a technically formidable one.

Ted Hughes: He was a prolific writer, fascinating and bewildering at times. He was appointed Poet Laureate in 1984 and continued till his death to be an enigmatic writer, His first volume of poems *'The Hawk in the Ruin'* was published in 1957. His other poetic collection *'Lupercal'*, *'Meet my Folks'*, *'Earth owl and other Moon people'*, *'Wodwo'* and *'Cave Birds'*.

5.2.3. Summary:

To sum up, Modern English poetry witnesses many new changes and schools. The new trends began to appear in poetry from 1885 to 1930. It is also observed that modern poetry is no longer romantic but it sees life as it is. It is poetry of revolt. It has revolted against the old ideas about diction, subject-matter, metre, and view point. It is also more compassionate and humane. Stark realism is another mark of this poetry. Barrenness, Cruelty, emptiness, heart-rending disastrous two World Wars, famines, poverty, deep sorrows have been painted realistically it is the reflection of modern life. As it is realistic in tone, it expresses true spirit of the age. This period has given talented and genius creative personalities like Rupert Brooke, Owen, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, Ted Hughes, Philip Larkin and host of other poets. In a nutshell, twentieth century poetry is the great period, which mainly helped to prosper form of poetry like that of Elizabethan poetry.

5.2.4. Terms to Remember:

- **Laureate:** someone honoured for great achievements; figuratively someone crowned with a laurel wreath.

- **Modernism:** The term, according to Terry Eagleton, "At once expresses and mystifies a sense of one's particular historical conjuncture as being somehow peculiarly, insistently present.
- **Candour:** the quality of being honest and straight forward in attitude and speech.
- **Pessimistic:** The doctrine or belief that this is the worst of all possible worlds and that all things ultimately tend toward evil.
- **Delirium:** a state of Temporary mental confusion and clouded consciousness from high Fever, intoxication or shock and marked. by anxiety, tremors, hallucinations, delusion and incoherence
- **Malignant;** dangerous to health, highly injurious
- **Postmodernism:** is often applied to the literature and art after World War II (1939-45), when the effect on western morale of the First World War greatly exacerbated by the experiences of Nazi, total destruction by the atomic bomb. Past modernism in literature and the arts has parallels with the movement known as post structuralism in linguistic and literary theory

5.2.5. Check Your Progress:

A) Answer in one sentence each

1. How was the modern poetry condemned in the beginning of its period?
2. Name the four divisions or sections of the Edwardian poetry?
3. By whom the title Georgian poetry was given? And when?
4. Name the titles of four divisions of Georgian poetry?
5. Name any four World War poets of the period 1914 to 1918?
6. For what concept surrealism or stand for?
7. Name the poet who has composed the volume of his poem under the title 'Wessex Poems'?
8. Which incident caused G. M. Hopkins to compose the poem 'The Wreck of Deutschland? And when?
9. Which are the three types of poems written by W.B. Yeats?

B) Complete the following statements choosing the correct alternative from the ones given below each.

1. Wilfred Owen was chiefly inspired by -----.
 - a) T. S. Eliot
 - b) Rudyard Kipling
 - c) Siegfried Sassoon
 - d) Rupert Brooke
2. W. H. Auden was described by the literary journalists as the leader of ----- group.
 - a) Latin
 - b) Cambridge
 - c) Oxford
 - d) European
3. When the twentieth century was opened-----had been dead nine years ago.
 - a) Robert Browning
 - b) Matthew Arnold
 - c) Alfred Tennyson
 - d) John Keats
4. The advent of Imagist movement which started in the year-----by a group of poets mostly American of whom Ezra Pound was the leader.
 - a) 1909
 - b) 1912
 - c) 1920
 - d) 1930
5. W. B. Yeats' poem 'The Two Trees' is a symbolic poem addressed to -----.
 - a) Annie Yeats
 - b) Maud Gonne
 - c) Wilfred Owen
 - d) Helen
6. Yeats' poem 'Among School children' is written in 1926 after-----.
 - a) a senate-inspired visit to Waterford convent
 - b) the poet's visit to Cambridge University
 - c) the poet's visit to Oxford University
 - d) the poet's visit after Irish countryside
7. Walter De La Mare's poem, 'The Scribe' is about the subject-----.
 - a) God and man and universe
 - b) God and devil and universe
 - c) God and ghost and man
 - d) God and man and hell

8. The shipwreck accident that had overtaken a German ship, in which five nuns among the passengers drowned is the incident that caused G. M. Hopkins to compose the poem 'The Wreck of Deutschland' in 1876.
9. Yeats has written three types of poetry: they are 'the romantic', 'the realistic' and 'the mystical'.

- 5.2.5 B.**
1. c. Siegfried Sassoon
 2. c. Oxford
 3. c. Alfred L. Tennyson
 4. b. 1912
 5. b. Maud Gonne
 6. a. Senate inspired visit to Waterford Convent
 7. a. God and man and universe
 8. c. falcon or Kestrel
 9. b. John Masefield
 10. b. 1877
 11. d. T.S.Eliot

5.2.7 A. Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

1. Write a critical note on the salient features of Twentieth Century Modern poetry?
2. Write a critical note on contribution made by the First World War poets to Modern English poetry?

B. Write short notes in about 100-150 words each.

1. Georgian poetry
2. The poetry of the First World War
3. Contribution of W. B. Yeats to Modern poetry
4. T. S. Eliot's contribution to 20th century English poetry
5. Philip Larkin's contribution to Postmodern English poetry
6. The Imagist movement in the 20th century poetry

5.2.8 References for Further Study:

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5.3 Modern Indian English Poetry

5.3.0 Objectives:

- After studying this unit you will be able to:
- Understand Modern Indian English Poetry and its salient features.
- How contemporary Indian English Poetry is playing pivotal role in world literature.
- Like British Poetry, American English Poetry and African English Poetry, Indian English Poetry is a part and parcel of world literature.
- It is nearly one hundred and fifty years since Indian poets gathered under the common umbrella of the English language.

5.3.1 Introduction:

In the previous two general topics you have studied the early 19th cen. English *Romantic Poetry* and *Twentieth Century Modern English Poetry*, like these two phases *Modern Indian English Poetry* is also vigorous and most promising poetry in English. So let us study Modern Indian Poetry and its salient features. In order to trace the development of Indian English Poetry in its proper perspective it is very essential to trace out the origin and continuity. A number of early poets, such as M.M. Dutt, Henry Derozio, Sarojini Naidu, Rabindranath Tagore, Toru Dutt etc. have given a respectable and promising resume to the Indo-Anglican Poetry. Indian English Poetry is now almost two hundred years old since the day of Derozio's first volume in 1827. He motivated many young Indians with the love of English language and literature. Deeper tone and accent of Romanticism were caught by the poets who came later. Govind Dutt was the first man to introduce the introspective I men in poems like '*Romance*'. Great, Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore was influenced by the poetry of Shelley. Thus, the poets before independence were interested in some old classical and historical legends. Critics and scholars divide the whole gamut of Indian English Poetry into two periods: Pre-Independence and Post-Independence Poetry. The Pre-Independence Poetry was romantic, narrative and imitative. But afterwards it became pure: Spiritual, Lyrical and Indian. Some of the poets treat ballad form and the theme of these ballads were based on historical and legendary themes. The glorification, of heroic deeds and domestic virtues was made and it appealed to the imagination of these poets. Indian English Poetry of the last

century was imitative or derivative or that it was more an echo than voice. What really happened was that the creative impulse of the English educated Indians was stirred by the Poetry to which they were exposed. It drew their sentence and momentum worn the same tradition and tried to create a new Poetry out of that experience and aspiration. In a nutshell, the poet continues that tradition on the Indian soil even as many British and American poets did on their respective soils. Thus, it is observed that the Pre-Independence Poetry was under romantic influences and then became the Victorian, Georgian and Decadent. However, the themes were all Indian and oriental. It is also important that they have also formed the image of Indo-Anglian humanism. Eminent critic and scholar V.K. Gokak in his introduction to *'The Golden Treasury of Indo-Anglian Verse'* and also in his studies *'Indo-Anglican Poetry'*, traces the growth and progress of Indian English Poetry. He classifies the Pre-Independent Indian English poets as neo-symbolists and neo-modernist. It is also broadly seen that there is a typical national awareness in their Poetry. It was after Britishers had left India, that Indo-Anglian literature achieved universal respectability and rapid development.

5.3.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

Indian Independence in 1947 ushered in a period of prosperity in all walks of life. In the field of literature more and more turned to write in English. Thus, the form of poetry in Indian writing in English was truly on its peak. Many of the poets have made attempts in which it would voice more and more personal and private concerns. The post 1960 Indian Poetry in English has proved increasingly robust, varied; responsive to the times and enjoyable. There appeared a group of talented poets on the Indian English poetic scene whose response to experiences has been refreshingly direct and highly enjoyable. It is they who have made Indian Poetry in English acceptable to a larger public in India and abroad. One more significant thing is that along with fiction, poetry was also published by the prestigious foreign publishers. In the sixties the writer's workshop published some important volumes of Poetry of Nissim Ezekiel, Kamala Das, A.K. Ramanujan, Gouri Deshpande, Monika Varma, Lila Ray and Margaret Chatterjee. Ezekiel's *'The Unfinished Man'*(1960) and *'The Exact Name'* (1965), Kamala Das *'The Descendants'*(1968), Gouri Deshpande's *'Between Births'*, Lila Ray's *'Entrance'*(1961), Monika Varma's *'Gita Govinda and Other Poems'* (1966) and Margaret Chatterjee's *'The Spring and Spectacle'*(1967) are some of the important publications of Writers Workshop which

W ushered in a new era for Indian English Poetry. In the early nineteen seventies the Writers Workshop published quite a few noteworthy volumes of Poetry by Keki N. Daruwala, Shiv K. Kumar, Margaret Chatterjee, Monika Varma, Gouri Deshpande and Gouri Pant. In the mid-seventies Oxford University Press started publishing new Poetry from India and the series included Nissim Ezekiel's *Hymns In Darkness* (1976), Shiv k. Kumar's *Subter Fuges*, R. Parthasarathy's *Rough Passages*, A. K. Ramanujan's *Selected poems* and Keki N. Daruwala's *Crossing of Rivers*. R. Parthasarathy also credited an anthology of Indian Poetry in English entitled, *Ten Twentieth Century Indian Poets* 'published by Oxford University Press in 1976. Of all Indo English or Indian English poets of today Nissim Ezekiel and P. Lai enjoy immense historical significance by virtue of unflinching devotion to the muse and their support to a number of young versifiers. Both produced a fine body of the cause of contemporary Indian English verse and launched almost a cultural crusade against the age-old taboos and doubts. Ezekiel has been a source of inspiration and model to many young practitioners of English in India. His book of poems, *A Time to Change*, can be said as a herald to modernism in Indian English Poetry. Indian English Poetry won recognition both at home and abroad. In this, context Dr. K.R.S Iyengar's words are very appropriate. He observes: "The emergence of the new Poetry in Indian English literature was like its emergence in England, France and the U.S.A. The result of a visible stir, partly the rustle of a new hope, partly the stutter of a new despair".

The Post-Independence Indian English Poetry-A Brief Glance: The Post-Independence period in the history of Indian English Poetry is generally equated with the modern period. Scholars and critics divide Indian English Literature from 1930 to the end of the 20th century into two phases: Modernist and Post-Modernist. Modernist phase begins with Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938) and the post-Modernist begins with Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) and Ezekiel's *Later Day Psalms* (1982). Even when Leeds University established a chair for Common Wealth Literature in 1958 and started imparting it as a course, Indian English Literature becomes a part of it. Thus, Indian English Poetry came to be viewed both as an Indian English Literature and Common Wealth Literature. Nissim Ezekiel becomes the first modern Indian English poet in the post-Independence period, and his book of poems, *A Time to Change* can be considered as the herald of modernism in Indian English Poetry.

The Influences on contemporary Indian English Poetry: Indian English Poetry had its humble beginning in the environment of growing craze for English education and English literature. The foremost influence on early Indo-Anglian Poetry was that of English Romantics like Scott, Byron and Shelley. A new Indian sensibility nourished by local cultural traditions and English literary influence. A few pioneers responded to the challenge by simply assimilating their poetic styles. Indian situations form a vital part of the new poetry. The superstition and folk beliefs that exist in Indian society became favourite themes of the new poets. Indian situation, folk beliefs, customs, rituals, corruption in a socio-political life, and eternal themes like love and death fill the colours of poetry by Indian English Poets. A.K.Ramanujan realistically presents such typical Indian rituals and traditions in his famous poem '*Small Scale Reflections on a Great House*'. Ezekiel handles such a theme with superb irony and subdued mockery in '*Night of the Scorpion*'. Arun Kolatkar also represents typical blind beliefs in his collection, '*Jejuri*'.

Not only superstitions but the mode of living in our contemporary society arrest the attention and engage the minds of these poets. Sometimes they revolt against a particular trend of our society and at others they sympathize with some aspects of contemporary living. Shiv k. Kumar reflects on the contemporary living in a number of his poems. The decaying standard of political life and behavior forms an ideal subject for contemporary Indian Poetry in English. The desire to portray the childhood life seems to be a very favourite theme for the Indian poets. Most of them look back upon their past, particularly their childhood and youth age and want to share their experiences with readers. This is the reflection of their desire to preserve and guard their identity i.e., search for the roots. This leads them for the search of their cultural moorings.

Prominent themes in Modern Indian English Poetry:

1. Love and Sex as the major theme: Love and sex is the eternal theme of all literatures of the world. So, it is a favourite theme of modern Indian English Poets. They are no longer prudes in public and sex is no longer a taboo in recent Indian Poetry in English. Ezekiel considers love arid the consummation of it as the spring of life. And therefore, he emphasizes fulfillment in love leading to marriage. He deals with the theme of love, and sex directly and boldly. Ezekiel pronounced that 'nakedness' is good. Kamala Das, is the second important Indian English Poet to appear on the poetic scene after Ezekiel, who also presented theme of love and sex in

different context and perspectives. She expresses her need for love. In her poem '*The Looking Glass*', while addressing other women says, "*getting a man to love is easy*". Kamala asks them to be bold. She may be regarded as a 'renowned feminist' presenting the kaleidoscopic image of woman as a wife, mother, beloved, streetwalker, prostitute, sometimes as a goddess and also as a love lorn, ecstatic, despondent, hoping, yearning whoring and enduring. There is daring portrayal of love in all respects in her poetry. Shiv k. Kumar, another contemporary Indian English poet presented the theme of love and sex in his poems. Love and companionship are his major themes. His love poems are essentially poems of failure, compromises and reconciliation and not of consummations and sexual frustration is even transferred to the elemental word of land and sea. Shiv k. Kumar's, '*The Sun Temple of Konark*' catches the spirit of *the Kama sutra*. Shiv k. Kumar, who has described love and sex as successfully as is expected by the Indian English Poet in his poems, very often deals with unrequited love and resultant frustration. Contemporary Indian English poets have surely outgrown on Victorian models and accepted sex and sensuality as an integral part of life. Another poet who has risen to the heights of distinction among the poets is, Jayantha Mahapatra. His Poetry also shows the stamp of the modernist and the post-modernist influences. In his poem he too presents the complex nature of love and sex.

2. Confessional Mode in Modern Indian English Poetry: Another dominant feature of post 1960 poetry is its confessional mode. The poets hark back upon the personal failures, losses and agonies of self. The poets express themselves in a confessional mode or assume some kind of imaginary "self or even put on a mask to achieve the reader's total participation. Adil Jussawalla writes about confessional tone, he observes, "the value of the confessional is that it exposes those dark areas which are normally concealed". The love poetry of Kamala Das, Gouri Deshpande and Shiv K. Kumar are striking examples-of confessional poetry. Kamala Das' poems are based on variety of themes and they are largely confessional in tone and tenor. The confessional poetry which was popularized by some of the American poets was, also followed by some Indian English poets. The confessional poetry is a conflict of the mind to relate private and confidential life experiences with the outer world. Thus without any barriers they show the private, personal feelings to the readers through their poetry. Kamala Das represent her sufferings, dreams, yearnings and loneliness in a symbolic manner. Her poems, '*The Old Playhouse*', '*An Introduction*', '*My*

Grandmother's House, *The Freaks*, *The Looking Glass*, *The Invitation*, *A Hot Noon in Malabar*, *The Sunshine Cat* and many other poems reflect her confessional tone. In confessional Poetry the poet always tries to give vent to the hidden feelings of his/her mind and inner self. As a confessional poet, Kamala Das has made candid confession about her miserable conjugal life in poems after poems. While revealing something of his inner reality the confessional poet exposes the harsh realities of human life. Ezekiel also practiced this technique in his poems. His famous poem *'Background Casually'* also presents this aspect. Gouri Deshpande, R. Parthsarthy also have written some of their poems in this perspective. Gouri Deshpande's *'Between Births'* and *'The Female of the Species'* and Mamata Kalia's *'Tribute to Papa'* are also known as confessional poems.

3. Indian Sensibility in Indian English Poetry: Jayanta Mahapatra, Ezekiel, Bhatnagar, Shiv K. Kumar, R. Parthsarthy, Kamala Das and a host of others underline the typical Indian sensibility in their Poetry. While talking about this sensibility, Indian scholar B.K. Das remarks that "Indian Poetry in English is Indian first and anything else afterwards. Its base is pan -Indian and it has audience all over the country". Indian poets have taken for their themes various Indian subjects from legend, folklore and contemporary Indian situations. This way they truly endeavored to develop Indian sensibilities. Both in content and in form Kamala Das poetry shows originality and reveals Indian sensibility. Shiv K. Kumar's 'Sahitya Akademi Award' winning fifth book of verse *'Trapfalls in the Sky'*(1987) gives a distinct touch to elements of Indian sensibility: Kumar's treatment of the theme of love in terms of element of Indian landscape has the poetic reconciliation of the spirit and the country. Unlike other Post-Colonial Indian English poets Kumar writes a number of poems on the West and sees it from the Indian view point. In fact Indian English Poetry has emerged as a major expression of Indian sense and sensibility. Ezekiel's poetry is suffused with typical Indian's. In his famous poem *'Background Casually'* he clearly reveals his commitment to and attachment with India.

4. The Portrayal of Urban Life: It must be said that Modern Indian Poetry in English has characteristics which make it distinctive and different from the poetry of the earlier period. Most of the poets wrote in English more under an inner compulsion than any external motivation and they found a delight in expressing themselves in English. It is a poetry of the urban and metropolitan rather than rural Indian and it is certainly a Poetry which carries with it greater sophistication and

complexity than that of earlier years showing considerable maturity and depth, clarity and precision, and earnest striving for perfection in the art of communication and presentation. While talking about Modern Indian English Poetry Bruce King, a critic comments, "It as a recognized and expanding role in contemporary Indian culture". The Urban theme dominates in Ezekiel's poetry. He is a poet of the city Mumbai (Bombay). Mumbai is mortifying experience for the poet and this city has a baneful influence on the poet. He believes that the city reduces human personality to a zero. In his poems he realistically depicted the ugliness loneliness, and frustration of Bombay metropolitan life. He describes dehumanizing influence of the city on human individuality in the poem entitled 'Urban'. He describes it as:

"The city like a passion burns
He dreams of morning walks, alone
And floating on a wave of sand
But still his mind its traffic turns".

Another Indian English Poet, Arun Kolatkar also realistically and graphically presented the theme of urban life in his famous poem '*Irani Restaurant Bombay*'. R. Parthasarathy's poem '*Complaint*' also expresses middle class individual's mood of despair and suffocation in urban area. Kamala Das also realistically depicted the urban life in her poems. She compares her married life in Bombay and the childhood days in Malabar in Kerala. A.K.Ramanujan also presented degradation of culture and human values in the poem '*The River*' and he describes the culture of city of temples Madurai and the river '*Vaikai*'. Though these poets have described the urban life in their Poetry, yet they criticize its artificial life and monotonous atmosphere in it.

Modernism: The post-1960s poetry acquired a distinct characteristic by making its own idiom. Modernity in the post-1960s Indian Poetry in English means a break with the past. It has three manifestations 1) A past-oriented vision associated with a sense of loss and hopelessness a sort of culture pessimism. 2) A future oriented vision associated with a desire to remake the world. 3) A present oriented attitude, historical, a moral, neural, stoic, ironic ambivalent absurdist thus modernism represents two types of modes of expression (a) Voyage within and (b) Voyage without.

Most of the time modernism is considered as opposite of the Romantic. However, in some other way modernism has been continuation or mutation of Romanticism.

These poets are more innovative and experimental in their style and techniques. They like to bring modern aspect in their poetry. They ironically criticize modern man's 'greediness', moral degradation and hypocrisies through their poetry. Nissim Ezekiel through his poetry satirizes the corruption and dishonesty in India. In his poem, 'Guru', the poet draws attention of the readers to a hypocritical attitude of the fake Gurus who are much materialistic in their approach to life. Thus the modernist vision appears really ironic which presents humor, fun and ridicule. Sometimes they are sarcastic in their style. So it is broadly witnessed that modernist sensibility is a reflection of metropolitan sensibility.

5. Alienation and Search for Identity: Alienation, loneliness, rootlessness and search for identity, are the recurring aspects of contemporary Indian English Poetry. In his poem '*Background Casually*', Ezekiel represents themes of alienation and search for identity. Ezekiel is alienated from the cultural heritage of India. As a school boy he felt alienated among his classmates.

"A mugging Jew among the Wolves

They told me I had killed the Christ"

Thus, he expresses the feeling of alienation, as he- was an alien among both Muslims and Hindus. His alienation also appears in the way he has depicted the conditions of life in this country. There are the smart fellows who face the superstitious villagers in the poem '*Rural Suite*'; there is the Guru who totally locks all the virtues of a saint in the poem '*Guru*'. R.Parthsarathy and Adil Jussawala have also expressed their feeling of alienation and disappointment in their poetry. R.Parthsarathy's poem '*Complain*,' which is taken from his '*Rough Passage*', also express the poet's feelings of frustration,-alienation, dislocation and isolation. Jussawala traces his marginality to the Indian middle class and to a colonial and capitalist alienation from the masses. Dilip Chitre's poem '*Father Returning Home*' also expresses the feeling of alienation. An old father was: treated in his own family like an alien and boycotted in his own family. Kamala Das's poem also represents the aspect of search for identity in her poem '*My Grandmother's House*', '*The Sunshine Cat*' and '*The Invitation*'.

6. Theme of Protest: Protest theme is also one of the dominant themes of contemporary Indian English Poetry. Protest is reflected in different forms in contemporary Indian English Poetry. Kamala Das's poetry also regarded by the critics and scholars as the poetry of protest. Her protest is directed against the

injuries, injustices and persecution to which women in Indian have been subjected. In a poem entitled *'The Conflagration'*, she scolds the Indian women for thinking that their only function is to lie beneath a man in order to satisfy his lust. Thus, her poetry serves a social purpose and reformative function too. In this respect too her poetry differs from the poetry of most of other woman poets writing in English. Arun Kolatkar also presents the theme of protest in his poems, like '*The Boatrike*', '*Jejuri*' and '*Sarpasatra*'. In these poems he presents protest to superstition and orthodoxy in social life. Jayantha Mahapatra also presents theme of protest against poverty, hunger and starvation in his poems, entitled as '*Dawn at Puri*', '*The Whore House in a Calcutta Street*' and '*Hunger*'. Nissim Ezekiel presents protest theme against superstition in the '*Night of the Scorpion*' and protest to corruption in the poem, '*The Railway Clerk*'.

7. Quest for Self-Realization and Self Expression: It is generally believed that Indian Poetry in English having passed the phase of imitation and national self-consciousness has attained maturity through in dependence and individuality. This self-consciousness and self-awareness has played the pivotal role in the writing of modern Indian poetry in English. Ezekiel has strived hard to adhere to the principle of self-awareness in his famous book '*Collected poems*'. His first volume, '*A Time to Change*' most directly addresses the poet's quest for self-realization. Ezekiel's striving to become a finished man compels to the self-analysis and introspection. Many of the contemporary Indian English Poets endeavoured to express themselves, narrate their experiences through their poetry. For example, A.K. Ramanujan also reflects his self-expression in his poems, '*Breaded Fish*', '*Of Mothers Among Other Things*', '*Looking for Cousin on a Swing*', and '*Obituary*'. Ramanujan's poetry is basically poetry of subjective experience which draws from memories and impressions of a familial past. Poets like Shiv K. Kumar, R.Parthasarathy and Kamala Das in many of their poem projected quest for self-realization and self-expression in his poems

Major Contributors of Modern Indian Poetry in English:

1. Nissim Ezekiel: Ezekiel is the poet who holds an undisputed sway in is Modem Indian English poetry. He was a University Professor in English whose works have been prescribed in many Universities of India. On the scenario of contemporary Indian English poetry, as a setter of standards and as one who by his vocation as a poet has raised the prestige of the very profession of poetry. He spent three and a half

years in London. During his stay there he took a keen interest in the theatre, in the cinema and in art (namely painting). He also studied psychology and philosophy under Professor C.E.M. Joad. During his years in London, he published his first volume of poems under the heading, '*A Time to Change*' in 1952. It is very significant to note that this volume of poems was published by an English firm of publishers. Ezekiel has published several volumes of poems over the years and volumes appeared with the headings: '*Time to Change*' (1952), '*Sixty Poems*' (1953), '*The Third*' (1959), '*The Unfinished Man*' (1960), '*The Exact Name*' (1965), '*Hymns in Darkness*' (1976), '*Later-Day Psalms*' (1982). He is a widely travelled man, and has delivered lectures in the U.S.A., Australia and England, as well as conducted poetry readings in those countries. The Government of India conferred upon him the title of "Padmashri" in recognition of his service to literature; and he is also a recipient of 'Sahitya Academy Award' for literature. While talking about Ezekiel, renowned critic; K R Srinivasa Iyengar attributes his work as "an artist who is willing to take pains, to cultivate reticence, to pursue the profession of poetry with a sense of commitment. Ezekiel's poems are as a rule lucid- a merit these days- and are splendidly evocative and satisfying sensuous". Like T. S. Eliot, Ezekiel has brought everyday conversational language into the realms of poetry.

2. Kamala Das: Das, is the second important Indian English poet to appear on the poetic scene after Ezekiel with the publication of her book of verse, '*Summer in Calcutta*' (1965) in the post- colonial era. She is also the fourth Indian English poet to win Sahitya Academy Award for her book, '*Collected Poems vol. I* in 1958. Her poetic collections '*Summer in Calcutta*', '*the Descendants*' and '*The Old Play House and Other Poems*' contain a wide range of themes, yet they are largely confessional in tone. Kamala Das confesses a number of things exclusively related to her own self-herself as a woman with her strong feminine sensibilities. Self as a person with powerful proclivities and antipathies caprices and whim-whams. She reveals her soul and self in her poetry, therefore, like Sylvia Plath, she is called a confessional poet. She grapples with ideas and abstractions, images of men and women on several planes. She may be regarded as a 'renowned feminist' presenting the kaleidoscopic images of women as wife, mother beloved, street-walker, prostitute, goddess etc. in her poems.

3. P.Lal: Born in Calcutta, he emerged as a master of Modern Indian English poetry. His poetry is basically romantic in its nature and theme. His poetic works

poetry are: *'The Parrot's Death'*(1960), *'Loves the First and Other Poems'* (1963), *'Change They Said'*(1966), *'Drupadi and Jaydratha'* 1967), and *'Calcutta: A Long Poem'*. His translation of Mahabharata is a laudable which looks ten years to be completed. His other poems are *'The Golden Womb of Sun'*, Rigvedic songs in a new translation and *'Yakshi from Didarganj'*(1969). As the leader of Writers Workshop group of poets, he had started a modernist reaction against the romantic tradition of Indian poetry but he ended up as a romantic poet himself. M.K. Naik observes: "Lal's early work still remains his best, while his contribution as pioneer, popularize and effective champion of the new poetry is under undeniably substantial".

4. A. K Ramanujan: He is the poet who takes his place next to Ezekiel among the poets. He was also a translator who has translated Kannada and Tamil classics into English. He was not just a bilingual but a trilingual poet. He was writing poems not only in the English language but also in Tamil' and Kannada. Though his poetic output is meager of only three volumes *'The Striders'* (1966), *'The Relation'*(1971), *'Second Sight'* (1976) it is of enduring quality. *A Collection of the Select Ramanujan* was also brought out in 1976 by the Oxford University Press. He writes about parents, wife and children with insight and dedication. Major themes of his poetry are Indian men and women, Life and Death, Family and Relation, Family and Cultural conflicts etc. He is a minute observer of Indian Society particularly family, and even a minor incident can become a theme for his poetry.

5. Dom Moraes: is another noted poet of Indo English Poetry who had the extraordinary power of expression and perception of ideas. He received his education from Oxford University and worked on poetry under the influence of British poets, namely Eliot, Auden, Spenser etc. His famous poems are: *'Letter to My Mother'*, *'This Island'*, *'The Prophet'*, *'Kahheri Caves'*, *'Being Married'*, *'A Man Dreaming'* etc. The poetry Collections to his credit are *'The Beginning'* (1957), *'Poems'* (1960), *'John Nobody'*¹ (1965) and *'Selected Poems-1955-65.'*

6. Keki N. Daruwalla (1937): He is the third Indian English Poet to have won the central Sahitya Akademi Award for his book of verse *'The Keeper of the Dead'* in 1984. His poetry Volumes are *'Under Orion'* (1970), *'Apparition in April'* (1971), *'Crossing of Rivers'* (1976), *'Winter Poems'* (1980) and *'Landscape'*(1986). He writes poetry in the ironic mode. He is retired I.P.S. Officer and is a versatile genius. His *Decades of Indian Poetry 1960-1980* published in the year 1980 by Vikas Publishing

House, New Delhi. Contemporary life has appealed to him most and he writes on various aspects of it.

7. Prof. Shiv.K.Kumar : He is also one of the prominent contemporary Indian English Poet. He is the fifth Indian English Poet to have been honored by the Central Sahitya Akademi for his fifth book of verse '*Trappfalls in the Sky*' in 1987. Kumar began writing poetry long after he established himself as a distinguished Professor of English and critic. There are two strains in his poetry. First, he writes poetry in the confessional mode, as he articulates on the themes of love and sex. He has composed poetry on various themes: Love, Sex, Taboo, Tradition, Religion, Morality, Social Milieu etc. His poetry collection, '*Broken Columns*' is among the best known, although it is autobiographical piece of-work. Six volumes of verse published to his credit are: '*Articulate Silence*', '*Cobwebs in the Sun*', '*Subterfuges*', '*Woodpeckers*' etc. His latest publications are '*Wool Gathering*', '*Thus Spake the Buddha*' and the eighth collection of poems 'Losing My Way'. Kumar's poem 'Indian Women' is written keeping the American audience in mind. Giving American imagery Kumar here describes Indian Women who patiently sit 'like empty pitchers on the mouth of the village well' waiting for their men's return.

8. R. Parthasarathy: He more than anybody else, was instrumental in popularizing Indian English Poetry in mid-seventies. Parthasarathy's expatriate experience turned out to be of a different character, for his first visit to England in 1963 on a scholarship from British Council left him utterly disenchanted and his poetic and lyrical expectations deflated. He has not published any book of poetry after his '*Rough Passage*' in 1976. However, he has published some scattered poems in different journals and poetry magazines in the post 1980 era. One of the most striking conceptions of Parthasarathy's '*Rough Passage*' is the emotional and spiritual dilemma caused in the poet's mind as a result of being educated in a foreign language and its poetry. '*Exile*', '*Trial*' and '*Home Coming*' form a triplex group of poems interlinked under broad-based title '*Rough Passage*'.

9. Arun Kolatkar: Kolatkar is Maharashtrian poet, who is bilingual poet, writes in Marathi and English. He received his early education in Bombay where he has continued to live and he worked professionally as a commercial artist. He has also translated a number of his Marathi poems into English. His poems in English include '*The Boat Ride*' and '*Jejuri*'. The latter poem published in 1976, which won him the Common Wealth poetry prize in 1977. '*Jejuri*', is a collection of poems in thirty-one

sections. Apparently, it is about the poet's irreverent odyssey to the temple to Khandoba at Jejuri, a small town in Western Maharashtra.

10. Pritish Nandy: Is one of the most prolific Indian Poets in English. Nandy has written many poems but a quite few poems are good. He works as an executive in an advertising firm, yet spares his precious time for creative works. His published works are '*Of Gods and Olives*' ,'*On Other Side of Arrogance*' , '*I Hand You in Turn My Nebbuk Wreath*' , '*From the Outer Bank of Brahmaputra*' , '*Madness is the Second Stroke*' , '*The Poetry of Pritish Nandy*' , '*Dhritarashtra Downtown: Zero*' , '*Riding the Midnight River*' , '*Lonesome Street*' , '*In secret Anarchy*' , '*A stranger Called I*' etc. His poetry is based on variety of themes and ever-changing moods.

11. Jayantha Mahapatra: Another poet who has risen to heights of distinction among the new poets. He was born in 1928 in the city of Cuttack in Orissa. He began writing poetry in English at the age of forty. Mahapatra has lived in Orissa all his life. Naturally, therefore the Orissa landscape-with Puri and Konark occupying a conspicuous position as a strong presence in his poetry. As a poet, *Mahapatra's poetic collection is 'Cloze the Sky, Ten by Ten', 'Svayamvara and Other Poems', 'A Father's Hours', 'A Rain of Rites', 'Waiting', 'The False Start', 'Relationship', 'Burden of Waves and Fruit' 'Temple'*. It is not only Orissa landscape which stamps his poetry as Indian, but also the mental, moral and spiritual life depicted in it.

12. Dilip Chitre: Chitre has published a few collections of poems and short stories in Marathi, has also published a long poem in English, *Travelling in a Cage*' , besides a number of short poems like '*Scattered the Mind*' , '*The Felling of the Banyan Tree*' , '*Ode To Bombay*'. These poems show his typical poetic talent and genius. '*The House of My Childhood*' and '*The Felling of the Banyan Tree*' are known as memory poems. The proof of his talent and genius reflected in his Sahitya Akademi Award winning '*Says Tuka*' (1991) a translation of poetry of the Marathi saint poet Tukaram. There is a reflection of modernity in his poetry. Like Kolatkar, he too also practices experimental techniques in his poetry.

13. A. K. Mehrotra: Mehrotra is also one of the contemporary Indian English Poets, who found a place in R.Parthasarathy's *Ten Twentieth Century Poets* in 1976, He has published three volumes of poems '*Statute Miles*' (1982) '*Middle Earth*' (1984) and '*The Transfiguring Places*' (1998) in the as decade. He is an imagist poet. M.K.Naik and Shyamala Narayan while observing his later poetry comment;

"Several poems offer reflections on life and art, reality and fantasy". His collection of poems *'Middle Earth'*(O.U.P) has helped him to be among the front ranking Indian English poets of our time. Mehrotra is popular for his experimentation of surrealism in his poetry.

14. Gieve Patel: another contemporary Indian English poet a medical practitioner by profession is also known as a renowned poet. He is very familiar with pain, disease and death as a theme in his poetry. Patel has published two volumes of poems entitled as *'Poems'* and *How do you withstand Body. On a Killing Tree* is Gieve Patel's most popular poem.

15. Adil Jussawalla : Jussawalla spent a majority period of his time in England. When returned from England he published *'Land's End'*. He is considered to be one of the most authentic and promising among the new poet. His *Missing Person* is also popular collection of his poetry. The later poetry of Jussawalla shows greater social awareness.

16. Imtiaz Dharker: Dharker's two collections of poems published *Purdah*(1988) and *'Post Cards from God'*.She writes about victimized women in Indian patriarchal society. She has feminine sensibility. She explores and expresses the psyche of the exploited and victimized within the particular contexts of contemporary Indian-Socio-Political religious structure. In *'Postcards from God'* she represents a society which is on the verge of annihilating itself, as forces of religious fundamentalism.

17. Chote Lai Khatri: He is a teacher, poet and literary critic. He is working as Associate Professor in English in T.P.S College Patna, Bihar. Khatri is a bilingual poet writing in English and Hindi. He has published of two collections of poems *'Kargil'* and *'Ripples in the Lake'* in English and *'Gooler ke Phool'* 'in Hindi. He has authored/edited twenty books of criticism. His areas of interest are poetry, Indian English Literature, Tribal literature; his other books are *'Vivekanand's Speeches and Writings. A critical study'*, *'Indian Writings in English'* and *'Indian Novels in English'* .He is recipient of Michael Madhusudan Academy award.

5.3.3 Summary:

To sum up, the term "Indo-English Literature" connotes literature written in English by Indian authors. The origin of Indo-English Poetry dates back to the

twenties of the nineteenth century. For the sake of convenience, the development of Indo-English Poetry is generally divided into the following phases:

1. The Age of Pioneers (1820-1870)
2. The Era of Indian Renaissance (1870-1900)
3. The Era of Political Awakening (1900-1947)
4. The Era of Independence (1947 onwards)

In Prof. V.K.Gokak's opinion, 20th century Indo-English Poets can be divided into "Neo-Modernists" and "Neo-Symbolists". It is observed that the poetry of Indian English Literature of Post-Independence i.e., after 1960 shows much of experimental in its style, technique and themes. Ezekiel, plays the role pioneer of Post-Modern Indian English Poetry. So, in a nutshell the poetry in this period appears in a new garb and innovative form Though it is criticized as derivative and imitative, it preserves its typical Indianness which broadly highlights by all modern Indian English Poets. Modern Indian English Poetry reflects themes like search for roots, alienation, isolation, love and sex, depiction of urban life, presentation of rituals and ceremonies etc. Poems on Indian landscape are integrated with contemporary life in our society. It is also proved that by prize winning poets that modern Indian English Poetry is not merely local but it is more and more global, because it draws attention of Western critics and scholars.

5.3.4 Terms to Remember:

Imitative: marked by or given to imitation, acting as an imitative art.

Derivative: derived from, based on or imitating something else.

Indo-Anglian: the term "Indo-English Literature: connotes literature written in English by Indian authors, Prof. Gokak thinks that the term "Indo-Anglian" has been coined as kind of cousin to: Anglo-Indian".

Prude: a person excessively concerned about propriety and decorum.

Herald: something that precedes and indicates the approach of something or some one

Corruption: moral perversion, impairment of virtues and moral principles.

Modernism: genre of art and literature that makes self-conscious break with previous genres.

Superstition: an irrational belief arising from ignorance or fear.

Alienation: the feeling of being alienated from other people.

Fundamentalism: the interpretation of every word in the sacred texts as literal truth.

5.3.5. Check your Progress:

A. Answer in one sentence each.

1. In which year Derozio's first volume of poetry was published?
2. Which publication has ushered in a new era for Indian English Poetry?
3. Which volume of poems published by Ezekiel in 1952 in London?
4. By whom did the collection of poetry 'Summer in Calcutta' is published? and when?
5. By whom did the poem 'The Sun Temple of Konark' is written?
6. By whom did the poem 'My Grandmother's House' is written?
7. Name any two poets dealing with confessional technique in their poetry?

B. Complete the following statements choosing the correct alternative from the ones given below each.

1. Leads University established a chair for in 1958.
a) American literature b) Commonwealth Literature
c) Caribbean literature d) Australian literature
2. The Poem 'Small Scale Reflection on a Great House in written by
a) Arun Kolatkar b) A.K.Ramanujan
c) Nissim Ezekiel d) A.K.Mehrotra
3. The and folk beliefs that exist in Indian society became favourite themes of the new poets.
a) Superstitions b) Humble and rustic life
c) urban life d) sophisticated life

4. Jayanta Mahapatra is a poet from state.
 - a) Assam
 - b) Arunachal Pradesh
 - c) Meghalaya
 - d) Orissa
5. 'Background Casually' the autobiographical poem is written by
 - a) Nissim Ezekiel
 - b) Dilip Chitre
 - c) A.K.Ramanujan
 - d) Kamala Das
6. "A mugging Jew among the wolves..." are the lines from the poem.....
 - a) The Sunshine Cat
 - b) My Grandmother's House
 - c) Irani Restaurant Bombay
 - d) Background Casually
7. In the poem 'The River' Ramanujan describes the river is
 - a) Kaveri
 - b) Brahmaputra
 - c) Godavari
 - d) Vaikai

5.3.6 Key to check your progress

5.3.5. A.:

1. Derozio's first volume of poetry was published in 1827.
2. Some of the important publications of Writer's Workshop have ushered in a new era for Indian English poetry.
3. Ezekiel's first volume of poems entitled 'A Time to Change' published in 1952 in London.
4. Kamala Das published her collection of poetry 'Summer In Calcutta' in 1965.
5. 'The Sun Temple of Konark' is written by Shiv K.Kumar.
6. The poem 'My Grandmother's House' is written by Kamal Das.
7. Kamala Das and Gouri Deshpande are the two poets who practices confession technique in their poetry.

- 5.3.5.B.**
1. b. Common Wealth literature
 2. b. A.K.Ramanujan
 3. a. Superstitions
 4. d. Orissa
 5. a. Nissim Ezekiel
 6. d. Background Casually
 7. d. Vaikai

5.3.7 A. Answer the following question in about 250-300 words.

1. Write a critical note on the various aspects of modern Indian Poetry in English.
2. Write a critical note on the contribution made by contemporary Indian English poets to Indian English poetry.

B. Write short note in about 100-150 words each.

1. Theme of love and sex in kamala Das poetry.
2. Kamala Das as a confessional poet.
3. Ramanujan's symbolic and imagistic technique.
4. Kolatkar and Dilip Chitre as a bilingual poet.

5.3.8 Reference for Further Study:

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Module VI

Selections from Victorian Poetry

Contents:

6.0 Objectives:

After studying these poems, you will be able to:

1. understand Alfred Tennyson's mastery over poetic and literary devices.
2. explain the aesthetic beauty of the poems.
3. find relationship between emotion of love and the realistic world.
4. know Robert Browning as a writer of dramatic monologues.
5. know Christiana Rossetti as a romantic and devotional poetess.

6.1 The Lady of Shalott

- Lord Tennyson

6.1.1 Introduction:

In the previous unit, you have studied the romantic poetry of the 19th century. The Victorian era succeeded the great Romantic Age. Therefore, the emotional and lyrical hangover of the earlier age is clearly reflected in the poetry of the Victorian age. Alfred Tennyson is the representative poet of the Victorian era. He is one of the most famous poets of English Literature. He was born on August 6, 1809, in Lincolnshire, England to George and Elizabeth Tennyson. His father was a Rector and a man of violent moods. Due to his forceful nature, the childhood of Alfred was not happy. He showed signs of a poet from his childhood. He joined Trinity College, Cambridge with his two brothers and published '*Poems by Two Brothers*' in 1827 and became well-known at college, winning prizes for poetry.

In 1830, he published '*Poems Chiefly Lyrical*'. The poem, '*The Lady of Shalott*' is taken from his '*Poems*' published in 1832. His friend, Hallam's death in 1833 at the age of 22 was a devastating blow to Tennyson. Many of his most famous works of poetry were influenced by his immense grief due to the deaths of his close

relations. These included '*Ulysses*', '*Tithonus*', '*In Memorium*', '*Morte d'Arthur*', etc.

6.1.2 The Text:

Lord Tennyson: The Lady of Shalott

Part I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the world and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot;
The yellow-leaved waterlily
The green-sheathed daffodilly
Tremble in the water chilly
Round about Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens shiver.
The sunbeam showers break and quiver
In the stream that runneth ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

Underneath the bearded barley,
The reaper, reaping late and early,
Hears her ever chanting cheerly,
Like an angel, singing clearly,
O'er the stream of Camelot.

Piling the sheaves in furrows airy,
Beneath the moon, the reaper weary
Listening whispers, ' 'Tis the fairy,
Lady of Shalott.'

The little isle is all inrail'd
With a rose-fence, and overtrail'd
With roses: by the marge unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken sail'd,
Skimming down to Camelot.
A pearl garland winds her head:
She leaneth on a velvet bed,
Full royally apparelled,
The Lady of Shalott.

Part II

No time hath she to sport and play:
A charmed web she weaves away.
A curse is on her, if she stay
Her weaving, either night or day,
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be;
Therefore she weaveth steadily,
Therefore no other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

She lives with little joy or fear.
Over the water, running near,
The sheepbell tinkles in her ear.
Before her hangs a mirror clear,
Reflecting tower'd Camelot.

And as the mazy web she whirls,
She sees the surly village churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot:
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web, she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, came from Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

Part III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flam'd upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight forever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down from Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down from Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over green Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down from Camelot.
From the bank and from the river

He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
'Tirra lirra, tirra lirra:'
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom
She made three paces thro' the room
She saw the water-flower bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

Part IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale- yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot;
Outside the isle a shallow boat
Beneath a willow lay afloat,
Below the carven stern she wrote,
The Lady of Shalott.

A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight,
All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew (her zone in sight
Clasp'd with one blinding diamond bright)
Her wide eyes fix'd on Camelot,
Though the squally east-wind keenly

Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood the queenly
Lady of Shalott.

With a steady stony glance—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Beholding all his own mischance,
Mute, with a glassy countenance—
She look'd down to Camelot.
It was the closing of the day:
She loos'd the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

As when to sailors while they roam,
By creeks and outfalls far from home,
Rising and dropping with the foam,
From dying swans wild warblings come,
Blown shoreward; so to Camelot
Still as the boathead wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her chanting her deathsong,
The Lady of Shalott.

A longdrawn carol, mournful, holy,
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her eyes were darken'd wholly,
And her smooth face sharpen'd slowly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot:
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,

Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden wall and gallery,
A pale, pale corpse she floated by,
Deadcold, between the houses high,
Dead into tower'd Camelot.
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
To the planked wharfage came:
Below the stern they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

They cross'd themselves, their stars they blest,
Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire, and guest.
There lay a parchment on her breast,
That puzzled more than all the rest,
The wellfed wits at Camelot.
'The web was woven curiously,
The charm is broken utterly,
Draw near and fear not, this is I,
The Lady of Shalott.'

6.1.3 Glossary and Notes:

- Camelot- Camelot was a mythical castled city said to be located in Great Britain, where King Arthur held court.
- quiver- shiver
- barge- pleasure boat
- casement- window
- damsel- young girl

- meteor- a small piece of rock in space
- squally- stormy
- shallop- small boat
- eddy- waves
- bridle- leather straps
- tirra litta- a happy song
- furrows- plough, channel
- weary- tired
- plumes- feathers
- baldric- collar
- straining- struggling against storm
- in trance- in meditative mood
- with a glassy countenance- rigid facial expression
- burgher- rich businessmen, traders
- royal cheer- the king's party

6.1.4 Summary:

The poem '*The Lady of Shalott*' tells the charming story of a young medieval lady, mysteriously imprisoned on an island near Camelot. She is a cursed lady, who led a solitary life because of that curse. The poem is a ballad in four parts which narrates the story with graphic presentation of nature. It is a pure fantasy, a result of the poet's imagination at work on a story that interested him. The poem takes us to the medieval atmosphere.

On a quiet island, lived the mysterious Lady of Shalott whom none had ever seen. A river was flowing through the island of Shalott and on both the sides of river, there were the fields of barley and rye. Though nobody has seen the Lady of Shalott, the reapers in the field had heard her singing in the early mornings and in the moonlight evenings. She was a beautiful lady. All the time, she used to weave on her magic web. People believed that she was under a curse. There was a magic mirror in

front of her in which she observed the reflections of the outward world. She wove various colorful sights on this web. Once she saw a newly wedded couple passing by and became restless. She said to herself – “I am half-sick of shadows.”

On a fine evening, she saw in her mirror Sir Lancelot, the most handsome knight of the King of Camelot. He rode past her palace in all glittering bridle. As his reflection flashed in her mirror, she left her loom and rushed to the window to have a glimpse of the knight. As soon as she saw him directly, the mirror cracked, the loom broke and the web flew out of the window. The lady of Shalott understood the meaning- the curse was on her.

Now the sunny weather turned cloudy. She left her palace and came down to the river. She took the boat from the bank and wrote her name on the prow. She climbed in it and started her journey to Camelot. She hoped to see her love, the knight at least once before she dies. She was signing sweetly the death song. She died before she reached Camelot. People gathered towards the boat and saw her. One of the onlookers was Sir Lancelot who admired her beauty and prayed for her soul.

6.1.5 Analysis of the Poem:

Part I

In the first part of the poem, the poet describes the dwelling place of the Lady of Shalott. It was a quiet island from where the river was flowing towards Camelot. There were barley and rye fields on the banks of the river. The poet described the two high contrasting places: Camelot and Shalott. The roads to Camelot are attractive and inviting. Camelot represent a world full of life. In Shalott, there are water lilies and daffodils in the chilly water of the river. On this island, there are four grey walls and four grey towers that embowers the Lady of Shalott. The little isle is inrailed with rose fence and over trailed with roses. The Lady of Shalott is wearing a pearl garland around her head and is leaning on a velvet bed. She is clothed in royal attire.

Part II

In the second part of the poem, the poet describes the inside view of the tower. The Lady of Shalott constantly weaves beautiful pictures on her loom. It is a charmed web. She has heard from whispers of the people that there is a curse upon her and if she looks directly towards Camelot, the curse will fall upon her. There is a mirror hanging before her where she sees the images of the outside world. She sees

the road, the surface of the river, the working peasants and the red cloaks of the young girls gossiping and going to the market. Sometimes she also sees cheerful young women, curly haired shepherd boy or a long haired young knight-in-training in bright red clothing. She always happily wove the magic sights on her loom.

However, once when the moon was overhead, she saw two young lovers newly wedded and felt that now she was tired of the world of reflections (shadows).

Part III

Unexpectedly, her attention was diverted as an arrow was shot at the eve of her window. She saw a man riding through the fields. He was the brave knight, Sir Lancelot. His shield carried an image of a red-cross knight kneeling to a lady. The bells of his horse rang out cheerfully as he was riding towards Camelot. He rode past the isolated island of Shalott. He looked like a meteor passing over Shalott that passes on a dark and starry night. His handsome forehead glowed in the sun. The image of him flashed into her magic mirror as he sang to himself, 'Tirra Lirra.'

Now she left her room and saw out from her window the blooming waterlily, Lancelot's feathered helmet and Camelot. As soon as she looked out, the magic mirror cracked straight across. The curse fell upon her.

Part IV

There is a tragic turn to the story in this part. The sunny weather turned cloudy. The Lady of Shalott rushed out of her tower for the first time in her life. She took the boat, wrote her name on the prow, and started her journey towards Camelot. As her boat passed through the hills and fields, the people heard her singing the last song. She sang till her eyes were darkened wholly and reached the first house of Camelot by the waterside. Now she died during the midst of her singing.

The citizens, the knights, the town people, lords, and ladies – all came out to see her. They read her name on the prow of the boat. Sir Lancelot stopped and looked at the lady for a while and admired her beauty and prayed for her soul.

6.1.6 Check Your Progress:

A) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. How is the water round about Shalott?
2. Why did the mirror (as a result of the curse) crack?

3. What does the Lady of Shalott weave on her loom?
 4. What did Sir Lancelot do when he saw the Lady of Shalott?
 5. What type of poem is 'The Lady of Shalott'?
- B) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:
1. _____ is forbidden to the Lady of Shalott.
 - a) Singing
 - b) Marrying
 - c) Looking into the mirror
 - d) Looking down upon the town of Camelot with naked eyes.
 2. The Lady of Shalott _____ all day to be happy.
 - a) paints pictures on paper
 - b) writes a diary
 - c) bakes bread in the oven
 - d) weaves pictures on loom
 3. There are _____ fields on the sides of the river.
 - a) barley and rye
 - b) barley and wheat
 - c) wheat and corn
 - d) corn and rye.
 4. The Lady of Shalott lives
 - a) near a lake
 - b) in a tower
 - c) near a bridge
 - d) in a hut
 5. heard the Lady of Shalott singing.
 - a) Village churls
 - b) The reapers
 - c) A shepherd lad
 - d) Damsels in red
 6. ... trees grew on the river bank of Shalott.
 - a) Willow and oak
 - b) Aspens and teak
 - c) Oak and teak
 - d) Aspens and willow
 7. The hair of Sir Lancelot is....
 - a) jet-black
 - b) coal-black
 - c) ebony-black
 - d) very-black
 8. The Lady of Shalott dies _____.
 - a) in the water.
 - b) in her room of the tower.
 - c) on the loom.
 - d) in a boat travelling to Camelot.

6.1.7 Key to Check Your Progress:

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

1. Chilly
2. as a result of the curse
3. the mirror's magic sights.
4. praised the Lady of Shalott and prayed for her soul.
5. ballad.

B. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. Looking down upon the town of Camelot with naked eyes.
2. weaves pictures on loom
3. barley and rye
4. in a tower
5. the reapers
6. aspen and willow
7. coal-black

6.1.8 Exercises:

- Q.I.** 1. Write a critical appreciation of the poem 'The Lady of Shalott'.
2. Evaluate 'The Lady of Shalott' as a charming ballad of pathos and tragedy.

Q. II. Write short notes on the following.

1. Description of Nature in the Poem 'The Lady of Shalott'.
2. Imagery in the poem 'The Lady of Shalott'.
3. The Death of 'The Lady of Shalott'.

6.1.9 Further Reading:

1. Read the poem 'The Lotos-Eaters' by Tennyson.
2. Read the long poems of Tennyson like 'The Princess'.

6.2 My Last Duchess

-Robert Browning

6.2.1 Introduction:

Robert Browning was born on May 7, 1812 at Walworth, London. His father was a clerk in the bank of England who possessed 6000 books which became the real school for young Robert. When he was a teenager, he made up his mind to devote himself to a poetic career. In 1845 he met Elizabeth Barrett and married her and left for Italy. Though she died in 1861, she remained a constant source of inspiration for him.

Browning was an English poet and playwright whose dramatic monologues made him one of the foremost Victorian poets. His poems are noted for irony, characterization, dark humour, social commentary, historical setting and challenging vocabulary and syntax. Browning began his poetic career with '*Pauline*' (1832) the first poem which showed him a promising poet. Since then, he regularly went on publishing poems.

By the time of his wife's death in 1861, he had published the collection '*Men and Women*' (1855). His '*Dramatic Personae*' (1864) and book-length epic poem '*The Ring and the Book*' (1868-1869) made him a leading British poet. He died on 12th December, 1889.

The poem, 'My Last Duchess' is from the volume, '*Dramatic Lyrics*' (1842). It is a dramatic monologue spoken by the Duke of Ferrara, who tells his guest about his deceased wife, his Last Duchess. Through his speech he unfolds not the character of his wife but of himself. We see him as an egoist and selfish personality, who is inhuman as well as sadist.

6.2.2 The Text:

My Last Duchess

-Robert Browning

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now; Fra Pandolf's hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek; perhaps
Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat." Such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say? — too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed; she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favour at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame

This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
 In speech—which I have not—to make your will
 Quite clear to such a one, and say, “Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
 Or there exceed the mark”—and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse—
 E’en then would be some stooping; and I choose
 Never to stoop. Oh, sir, she smiled, no doubt,
 Whene’er I passed her; but who passed without
 Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
 Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
 As if alive. Will’t please you rise? We’ll meet
 The company below, then. I repeat,
 The Count your master’s known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretense
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
 Though his fair daughter’s self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we’ll go
 Together down, Sir. Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

6.2.3 Glossary and Notes:

- Duchess: The wife of a Duke
- Fra Pandolf: The artist who painted the portrait of the Last Duchess
- Countenance: a person’s face or expression
- Courtesy: polite and pleasant behaviour that shows respect for other people.
- Disgust: strong feeling of dislike.
- Exceed the mark: to go beyond a certain limit.

- Stoop: to yield or submit
- Neptune: Roman God of sea.
- Munificence: generosity.

6.2.4 Summary:

The Duke of Ferrara who lived in the 16th century is the speaker and the ambassador of a count is the listener in the dramatic monologue. The ambassador has come to negotiate the duke's marriage (as he has recently been widowed) to the daughter of another powerful family. As he shows the visitor through his palace, he stops before a portrait of the late Duchess, apparently a young and lovely girl. He says-

‘That alive looking portrait on the wall is my last Duchess. Fra Pandolf, the famous painter worked for a day and there she stands. The spot of joy on her face (that is the dimple on her cheeks) that you see was not necessarily due to her husband's presence. Even a casual remark from the painter such as ‘paint can never copy the blush on your face’ might have produced it. To her it was courtesy. She was easily made glad. She liked everything she looked on. My favours, the sun-set, the broken cherry-bough, her white' mule, all produced similar response. She thanked people and equated them with my family. She smiled at me and the same smile was for all, too.

So, I gave orders and the smile was stopped forever. And there she stands.’ After this again, he addressed the ambassador. ‘Come on. I know the count is generous. He would not deny my expectations of dowry. By the by, take a look at this bronze statue of Neptune, the sea God, a rare piece which Callus of Innsbruck, cast specially for me.’

6.2.5 Analysis of the Poem:

Lines 1- 13

In these lines the Duke of Ferrara describes the painting of his former wife the Duchess of Ferrara which hangs on the wall. He praised the painting for looking so lifelike and remarks that the painter, Fra Pandolf worked hard on it. The strangers always wondered at the look in the portrait with its deep, passionate and earnest glance. Today's visitor was not the first person to ask this question full of wonder.

Lines 14- 24

The duke continues by saying that it wasn't only his presence that brought that look into the painted eyes of the duchess or the blush of happiness into her painted cheek. He says that perhaps Fra Pandolf had complimented about her shawl or the faint half-blush on her cheek. Such compliments could have created the blush of happiness as she was easily made happy or impressed by anybody's comments. The duke objects that everything made her happy whether it was a gift from the duke, the sun setting in the west, a branch of cherries given to her from the garden on the white mule she rode on. The duke did not like that she would blush at the flirtations of others. He did not like that the things which called common courtesy would "call up that spot of joy" which she seemed to always have on her face.

Lines 25-35

In these lines the duke continues to explain all the flaws in the Duchess' characters. He is irritated that she seems to value the simple pleasures of life as much as she values his expensive gifts to her. According to him she should have valued only the duke as he had given her a 'nine-hundred years- old name'. In marrying her he had given her a well-known and prestigious name. She did not seem to be any more thankful for this than she was thankful to watch the sun set. This irritated the duke so much that he decided to stop her smile forever. He even did not bother to discuss with her about the matter thinking that it could be stooping to her level. It would be a sort of trifling. The thought exposed the egoist and selfish personality. He represents an egoist of the Renaissance of Italy.

Lines 36- 47

The speaker continues to tell the guest that as a proud Duke he never chose to stoop to discuss with his duchess what made him so disgusted with her. Discussing her faults with her was an effort of stooping down, as he was a high- class mighty person, a man of great rank. Further he tells the guest that the duchess used to smile at him pleasantly when he passed by. However, her smile bothered him as everyone received the same smile from her. There was nothing specific in her smile for the duke. So, one day he "gave command" and "then all smiles stopped together". The duke stopped her lovely smile forever by finishing her. This action exposed the violent and proud nature of the duke. He was certainly a narrow- minded person who was not a worthy husband for a lovely, happy and smiling wife.

Now the duke turns his attention back to the painting on the wall and says that it was really a lively portrait of the last duchess.

Lines 48-56

In these concluding lines of the dramatic monologue the identity of the silent listener of the duke is exposed. He is the servant of a Count who has brought the proposal of marriage between Duke and the count's daughter. He frankly insists on his demand of dowry from that fair daughter of the Count.

Now, the Duke brings the guest down-stairs with him and as they walk, he points out the bronze statue that was especially made for him. The statue is of Neptune taming a sea horse symbolizes the duke as a commanding god and the sea-horses symbolizes the duchess he would marry now and tame her.

6.2.6 Check Your Progress:

A. Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Who is the speaker in the poem 'My Last Duchess'?
2. Where is the last Duchess painted?
3. Who painted the picture of the last Duchess.
4. What does the Duchess have upon her cheeks?
5. What happened to the last Duchess in the poem?
6. What is the tone of Browning's 'My Last Duchess'?
7. Who is the main character in 'My Last Duchess'?

B. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct option.

1. The poem 'May Last Duchess' is a _____.
a) song
b) elegy
c) dramatic monologue
d) dramatic dialogue
2. The last Duchess looked on and her looks went _____.
a) everywhere
b) only to all men
c) only at the duke
d) nowhere
3. The last Duchess rode on the white make _____

- a) round the palace b) round her farm house
 c) round the hill d) round the terrace
4. 'All smiles stopped' means _____
 a) she stopped smiling b) she was killed
 c) she was upset d) she stopped thanking
5. 'Ferrara' is a place in _____
 a) England b) France c) Italy d) Africa

6.2.7 Key to Check Your Progress:

A. Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. The Duke of Ferrara
2. On a wall
3. Fra Pandolf
4. A spot of joy
5. She was killed
6. Ironic
7. The Duke of Ferrara.

B. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct option.

1. Dramatic monologue
2. everywhere
3. round the terrace
4. she was killed
5. Italy.

6.2.8 Exercise:

- Q.I. 1. Write a critical note on the poem 'My Last Duchess'.
 2. Discuss Robert Browning as a poet of dramatic monologue.

Q. II. Write Short- notes on the following.

1. 'Power' in the poem 'My Last Duchess'.
2. Symbolism in the poem 'My Last Duchess'.

6.2.9 FURTHER READING:

1. Read the information about Browning's wife Elizabeth Barret.
2. Read the 'Dramatic Lyrics' by Robert Browning.

6.3 Phoenix of Beauty

Saumitra Chakravarty

6.3.1 Introduction:

Dr. Saumitra Chakravarty, an alumnus of Calcutta University with a degree in English Literature, secured a gold medal in the topic “The Search for Identity in Contemporary British Fiction”. She has taught English Literature at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Bangalore and guided research students. She has presented papers in several national and international seminars both in India and abroad.

She has published a book of poems, *Cry* (2002), and co-authored a book of critical essays, ‘*Endangered Self*’ (2003). A book of translations of short stories of four major Bengali women writers on women’s issues is currently under publication with Oxford University Press. She is working on a second book of poems on issues related to tribal women and their habitat, some of which have already been broadcast over All India Radio.

6.3.2 The Text:

Phoenix of Beauty

- Saumitra Chakravarty

It was the day after.
The little bud opened
Her eyes, looked around
At the bier of elders
Long
-stemmed: dun petals
Trailing weary streamers
Across memories
Of yesterday when they shone
In fragrant loops
Over the awning
And twinkled in black braids.

She looked up
At the young sun,
Uttered her birth cry.
The pall
-bearers came:
Hidden in the heap
Of yesterday, she rode
The weary path of death
Her young gaze fastened
On the sun, older now
And wiser with the wisdom
That turns its gaze
From the longing
Of young eyes for life:
The desire of innocence
To linger in a world
With wonder long dead;
Beauty stretching skeletal arms
To the sun whose first rays
Once smiled on a new world.
Beauty dies hard; the lotus
Raises its head
From its bed of slime.
Two flowers bloom,
Splash red and yellow
Over the dust of yesterday
And torn strips of greed.
White teeth flash
In a soot
-blackened face,
Merry eyes dance

In the hunt
The dung heap
Unfolds.

6.3.3 Glossary and Notes:

- Bier– a movable frame on which a coffin or a corpse is placed before burial/cremation
- Dun petals– mud-colored petals
- Weary streamers– tired parts of the flower
- Fragrant loops– perfumed parts of the flower
- Awning – shade
- Pall- bearers– persons helping to carry a coffin to the funeral
- Weary path– an example of transferred epithet
- Slime– mud/filth
- **Phoenix** – In Greek mythology living bird otherwise born again. Associated with the Sun, a phoenix obtains new life by arising from the ashes Beauty stretching skeletal arms Once smiled on a new world. Greek mythology, a phoenix is a long - bird that cyclically regenerates or is otherwise born again. Associated with the Sun, a phoenix obtains new life by arising ashes of its predecessor. According some sources, the phoenix dies in a show of flames and combustion, although there are other sources that claim that the legendary bird dies and simply decomposes before being born again.

6.3.4 Summary:

The poetess exhibits her own view regarding the beauty of nature. All big things have their origin in small ones in the same way all beautiful things take birth from the things which we consider very ordinary or ugly. We find gold, the valuable metal in the earth. In the same way, a beautiful flower like lotus is born in the mud. Most of the valuable things in the world are found in humble sources. There are many great people in the world, who have very poor background. They have achieved great success after a lot of struggles and created their own identity.

The poet begins her poem by describing the little bud. When the little bud opened to a beautiful future, all that she saw was the death of the long stems or the tired petals which were very active and shining the previous day. There is a reference to the fact that time can destroy beauty. What was beautiful yesterday should undergo changes and become ugly tomorrow and make way for newer beautiful things. After reflecting on the destructive power of time, the bud looks at the young sun that is forever young. While she utters her birth cry, she notices the pall-bearers carrying the dead. It's a darksome picture, but it also tells her that this is the harsh truth of life. Beauty dies fast falling the pray to time.

The happiness of a person is a reflection of the beautiful mind. Beauty never dies, it comes back in different forms. Beauty is an eternal value. The poet instills hope in the readers with this line and asserts that beauty generates through its own decay. Beauty and truth are the values that never die. Here the poet connotes that time destroys external beauty, but will never dare to touch the internal beauty which is like a phoenix born out of its own ash.

6.3.5 Analysis of the Poem :

Saumitra Chakravarty's poem "*Phoenix of Beauty*" is an indication of the beauty of nature emerging from the ugly. Using the metaphor of the "Lotus" flower, the poet wants to bring home the fact that beautiful things are not always found in higher places of life or nature; instead, they can evolve from the lowest of places, too. This concept can surprise us because we usually look at the highest places for inspiration and beauty and totally overlook the lowest places; however, the lotus flower, being the most beautiful flower in the world comes from slime.

The poet begins the poem with the idea of a future. When the little bud opened to a beautiful future, all that she saw was the death of the long stems or the tired petals which were very active and shining the previous day. There is a reference to the fact that time can destroy beauty. What was beautiful yesterday should undergo changes and become ugly tomorrow and make way for newer beautiful things. After reflecting on the destructive power of time, the bud looks at the young sun that is forever young. While she utters her birth cry, she notices the pall-bearers carrying the dead. It's a dismal picture, but it also tells her that this is the harsh truth of life.

Now, after gaining this wisdom at her birth itself, the bud looks at the sun and she finds the sun very wise. The sun turns its look at the young bud that appears to

be pleading for life, innocence and also for the beauty to prevail longer. But the nature/world is no longer innocent. It has experienced the harsh truths of life. The bud wishes for innocence to prevail in the world of guilt. The first rays of the sun had initially smiled on a new world, but now it no longer smiles because the inhabitants of the world have changed their attitudes towards nature.

Finally, the poet talks about the fact that the lotus flower, though very beautiful, has risen from the bed of slime. The new flowers have shades of red and yellow, splashed across their petals making them very attractive. This bright red and yellow shines over yesterday's dirt and overshadows it. The poet moves on to human beings now from the flower. When the white teeth flash in a blackened face and the merry eyes dance in the hunt for something beautiful, the dung heap unfolds and out comes the liberated beautiful lotus bud.

“The white teeth flash”, “the blackened face” and “the merry eyes” describe the beauty of an individual who may be black and yet happy. The happiness of the person is a reflection of the beautiful mind. When the poet says “beauty dies hard,” she means that beauty never dies; it comes back in a different form. The poet instills hope in the readers with this line.

The poem, at one level, explains the beauty of nature unfolding from the ugliest of things; and on the other level, reflects the general attitude of people to disregard anything ugly. Even though dung is ugly and despicable, the lotus flower blooms in that slime. Like the phoenix rises from its ashes, the beautiful lotus bud rises from the dung. The poet also implies that time destroys external beauty, but will never dare to touch the internal beauty. By attributing beauty to the female gender, the poet perhaps tries to emphasize the fact that the female of the species is the most beautiful in the world, in different aspects, just not the external beauty, but in their behavior and their kindness, fortitude, patience and love.

6.3.6 Check Your Progress:

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

1. What happened “the day after”?
2. What did the little bud see around?
3. In the second stanza of the poem, what did the little bud utter after looking up at the sun?

4. Where did the young bud's gaze fasten?
5. The little bud raises its head from a bed of purity. True or False?

B. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives.

1. The poem 'Phoenix of Beauty' is an indication of the beauty of nature emerging from
a) the flowers b) the ugly c) the beautiful d) the birds
2. The poem 'Phoenix of Beauty' the metaphor of flower is used by the poet.
a) the rose b) the lily c) the lotus d) the jasmine
3. The phoenix rises from....
a) earth. b) east. c) slime. d) ashes.
4. The bud notices the pall-bearers carrying the
a) dead b) wind c) sun d) child
5. The general attitude of the people is to anything ugly.
a) love b) praise c) disregard d) heed

6.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress:

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

1. The little bud opened the eyes.
2. The bier of elders.
3. Her birth cry.
4. On the sun.
5. False.

B. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives.

1. b) the ugly
2. c) the lotus
3. d) ashes.

4. a) dead
5. c) disregard

6.3.8 Exercises:

Q. I. 1) Write a critical appreciation of the poem 'Phoenix of Beauty.'

- 2) Elaborate on the notion of beauty evident in the poem.

Q. II. Write short notes on the following.

- 1) Title of the Poem.
- 2) Message in the Poem, 'Phoenix of Beauty.'

6.3.9 Further Reading:

- 1) John Keats' poem 'A thing of Beauty'
- 2) John Milton's poem 'How Soon Hath Time'



Module VII

Selections from Modern English Poetry

Contents:

- 7.1.0 Objectives
- 7.1.1 Introduction
- 7.1.2 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 7.1.3 Check your progress
- 7.1.4 Notes and Glossary
- 7.1.5 Answer to check your progress
- 7.1.6 Exercise
- 7.1.7 Further Reading

7.1 No Second Troy

- W. B. Yeats

7.1.0 Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able

- to appreciate the poem as a love poem.
- to learn the use of imagery and the myth in the poem.
- to understand the use of rhetorical question for the poetic effect.

7.1.1 Introduction

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) was born to a cultured Irish family near Dublin, capital of the Republic of Ireland. He started writing poetry early in his life and became a member of the Rhymers' Club in 1881. Soon he also became a strong supporter of the Irish Nationalist Movement.

Three modes of writing are generally found in Yeats' poetry i.e., the romantic, the realistic, and mystic and spiritualistic. His early narrative and lyrical poetry is written under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and of the English Romantic poets,

especially from William Blake and P. B. Shelley. The poetry between 1900 and 1900 is seen to have the tone of the reality. Much of the poetry of later period reflects his mystical and spiritual studies. The result of these studies is seen in his prose work *A Vision* (1925) which states his new philosophical perspective.

Yeats is well-known for his drama and prose work also and considered as one of the 20th century major poets along with T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden and Ezra Pound. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923.

7.1.2 Presentation of Subject Matter

7.1.2.1 *No Second Troy*

*Why should I blame her that she filled my days
With misery, or that she would of late
Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways,
Or hurled the little streets upon the great,
Had they but courage equal to desire?
What could have made her peaceful with a mind
That nobleness made simple as a fire,
With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
That is not natural in an age like this,
Being high and solitary and most stern?
Why, what could she have done, being what she is?
Was there another Troy for her to burn?*

7.1.2.2. Summary of the poem

The poem runs through the four rhetorical questions asked and through political reference made by the lover whose love is not accepted. First, the speaker-lover wonders "why" he should blame "her" for his unhappiness and for her careless exploitation of the emotions of Irish common people to stir political violence. The poet addresses the poem to a lady whom he loved passionately and who was an Irish revolutionary. So, the poem moves on the two levels – personal and political.

Then, he says, what could make “her” a “peaceful” person having the mind “simple as fire” and “beauty”, as, her character – “solitary and stern” – does not fit to this age. It is more similar to a figure in the Greek tragedy, to which he gives

reference in the next lines. Therefore, it could not have been possible for her to be anything other than what she is.

Finally, the speaker refers to Troy, an ancient city in the Greek epic Iliad, whose destruction was caused by Helen. Because there is no "second Troy" for the beloved to destroy today, she has to destroy the speaker's happiness and the lives of Irish people. Thus, she appears nothing but a politically troublesome beauty.

7.1.2.3 Analysis of the poem

This twelve-line short poem was published in the collection *The Helmet and Other Poems* (1910) and is one of Yeats' celebrated love poems. It can be better understood when the personal and political concerns in it are clarified. The "I" in the opening line is the poet himself, while "her" refers to Maud Gonne. She was the Irish revolutionary whom Yeats loved but she rejected his proposals of marriage. Her rejection and marriage to John MacBride left the poet in great distress. Thus, the poem sets on a personal plane with rhetoric questioning that he should not blame Maud Gonne for filling his life with the sadness. In the very next line, he refers her political concerns and ways to accomplish them. He is also prepared to forget all and even does not blame her for teaching the innocent Irish people the revolutionary methods to free Ireland from the British rulers "the great". However, he scorns the lady for the pretty violence "hurled the little streets" as these violent actions are futile. Thus, the first five-line section of the poem underlines the innate destructive nature of beauty.

The second section brings forth the character of Maud Gonne with vivid imagery comparing her to Helen. It also reveals the hidden anguish of the poet who at a time admits he has no right to blame but finds faults with her character. He knows that nothing could make her "peaceful" person, even the misery released upon him, as her mind and beauty possess the quality of destructiveness. Her mind made "simple as a fire" means it comprises the unlike qualities of nobleness and naivety. It suggests her uncompromising attitude and single-mindedness and trusting nature at the same time. Her beauty is like a tightened bow meaning the innate tension that would consequently result in devastation. Therefore, her character does not belong to this age but another age of the past. The image of Helen emerges involuntarily, as like her; Maud Gonne cannot do away with her nature but to succumb to it. Since Maud Gonne has nothing to destroy, she sets his happiness on fire.

The repeated Wh-questions “Why”, “What” and “what” indicate the gusto of the poet’s feeling of anguish and dissatisfaction. It also reveals the duality of a frustrated lover’s attitude. The framework of rhetoric questions and pattern of imagery are interwoven dramatically. The four questions posed by the lover show Yeats’ use of expressive style of writing. The answer to the rhetoric questions is also provided in the penultimate line.

7.1.3 Check your progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. The poem is addressed to -----
a) Maud Gonne b) Helen c) Iseult d) Isabella
2. The “ignorant men” refers to ----- people.
a) Greek b) Indian c) Irish d) Scottish
3. Helen was eloped with -----
a) Menelaus b) Clytemnestra c) Paris d) Aegisthus
4. Maud Gonne is compared to -----
a) Isabella b) Margaret c) Jane d) Helen
5. The beloved’s mind is ----- as a fire.
a) angry b) simple c) sorrowful d) reasonable

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. Who is ‘*she*’ in the poem?
2. How is the nature of Maud Gonne?
3. How does the poet refer the British rulers?
4. Which ancient city from Iliad is referred in the last line of the poem?
5. Why is the poet in misery?

7.1.4 Notes and Glossary

Troy – an ancient city in Homer’s epic ‘*Iliad*’ destroyed in the Trojan War

Helen – Menelaus’s wife, extraordinarily beautiful, said to have eloped with Trojan prince Paris that brought the destruction and war to Troy

Maud Gonne – an Irish revolutionary, whom Yeats loved but who was married to John MacBride in 1903

Misery – distress

Hurl (ed) – thrown

Solitary – alone

Stern –strict, demanding

7.1.5 Answer to check your progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) a) 2) c) 3) c 4) d 5) b

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. ‘*she*’ in the poem is Maud Gonne.
2. The nature of Maud Gonne ‘solitary and stern’.
3. The poet refers the British rulers as ‘the great’.
4. Troy, ancient city from Iliad is referred in the last line of the poem.
5. The poet is in misery because his love and proposal of marriage is not accepted by Maud Gonne.

7.1.6 Exercise

A) Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

1. Critically appreciate *No Second Troy* as a love poem.
2. Discuss the poem having theme of beauty as an agent of destruction.

B) Write short-notes in about 100-150 words each.

1. Significance of the title of the poem
2. Use of rhetoric questions
3. Personal touch in the poem
4. Political reference in the poem

5. Frustration of the lover in the poem
6. Use of imagery in the poem

7.1.7 Further Reading

1. Albert, Edward. *History of English Literature*. 5th ed., Oxford University Press, 1979.
2. John, Underrecker. *A Reader Guide to W. B. Yeats*. Oxford University Press, 1940.
3. Wain, John, ed. *Anthology of Modern Poetry*. Hutchinson & Co L.T.D., 1963.

7.2 *The Hollow Men*

T.S. Eliot

- 7.2.0 Objectives
- 7.2.1 Introduction
- 7.2.2 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 7.2.3 Check your progress
- 7.2.4 Notes and Glossary
- 7.2.5 Answer to check your progress
- 7.2.6 Exercise
- 7.2.7 Further Reading

7.2.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able

- to understand the poem as a monologue
- to find the poem as reflection on the spiritual vacuum in modern society
- to learn the use of expressive techniques in modern poem
- to discuss the theme of faith and faithlessness in the poem

7.2.1 Introduction

Thomas Stearns Eliot (1898-1965) is an eminent poet who took modern poetry to its peak. He was an essayist, a dramatist, a critic, a journalist, an editor and a director of Faber and Faber, the publishers. He was born in Missouri (USA); however, he adopted the British citizenship in 1927. In his long rich literary career, Eliot played a several roles ranging from an experimentalist and trend-setter of new poetry to a classicist in poetry, from practicing and theorizing modern poetry to reviving verse drama.

Eliot's poetry portrays the modern life paralyzed by the disillusionment, hollowness, the barrenness and absence of spirituality. In his budding period of literary life, his friend Ezra Pound, an iconoclast poet himself, encouraged him to experiment with the style and subject matter of the poetry. His poems *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1915), *Portrait of a Lady* (1915), *The Waste Land* (1922), *Gerontion* (1920), and *The Hollow Men* (1925) are the documents of the empty and hopeless age. These poems figure out Eliot's artistic achievement – the stylistic innovation, thematic and linguistic complexity and variety, and the presentation of mental conflicts. Written in the later phase, his poem *Ash Wednesday* (1930) shows some signs of hope in the Christian religion.

Some characteristics of Eliot's poetry

- His poetry expresses the broken psychological state of modern man
- In his poetry, there is often use of the myths, the canonical literary texts and scripture through quotation, allusions, footnotes and epigraphs.
- Fragmentation in his poetry demonstrates the chaotic state of modern life as a result, his poetry appears like collage, as a patchwork
- Musical pieces and songs are part of his larger thematic concerns in poetry
- His poetry employs irony, satire, “Objective Correlative” (that keeps the poet's personality away from the artistic creation) as a literary device
- There is experimentation with the use of voices within the form of dramatic monologue
- Erudite, elevated diction

7.2.2 Presentation of subject matter

7.2.2.1. *The Hollow Men*

Mistah Kurtz – he dead
A penny for the Old Guy

I

*We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quite and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar*

*Shape without form, shade without colour,
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;*

*Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
Remember us – if at all – not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men.*

II

*Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream Kingdom
These do not appear:
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing*

*More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star.*

*Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer –*

*Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom*

III

*This is the dead land
This is cactus land
Here the stone images
Are raised, here they receive
The supplication of a dead man's hand
Under the twinkle of a fading star.*

*Is it line this
In death's other kingdom
Walking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
From prayers to broken stone.*

IV

*The eyes are not here
There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdom*

*In this last of meeting places
We grope together
And avoid speech
Gathered on this beach of the tumid river*

*Sightless, unless
The eyes reappear
As the perpetual star
Multifoliate rose
Of death's twilight kingdom
The hope only
Of empty men.*

V

Here we go round the prickly pear
Prickly pear prickly pear
Here we go round the prickly pear
At five o'clock in the morning.

*Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow*

For Thine is the Kingdom

*Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow*

Life is very long

*Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence*

And the descent

Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is

Life is

For Thine is the

This is the way the world ends

This is the way the world ends

This is the way the world ends

Not with a bang but a whimper.

7.2.2.2 Summary of the poem

There are two epigraphs in the beginning of the poem. The first is a piece of dialogue from Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness*. It informs the death of Kurtz, a central character. The second epigraph is the children's cry used to collect money for the firecrackers with which the effigies on Guy Fawkes Day are burnt. The epigraphs hint the resonance of 'death' and 'hollowness'.

The poem presents a group of men who live in a desert world. The speaker, a collective voice of them, calls themselves "hollow men", "stuffed men". They are waiting for a change in their deathlike condition on the deceased land. They are neither dead nor alive. Their existence is like effigies. As the poem progresses their condition becomes more horrible.

A dreadful description of their surrounding "dead land" and "cactus land" appears in the third section of the poem. Their prayers to broken stone in this dead land are futile. The place is full of false images and symbols.

Only hope of these empty men is the eyes, possible of the God or of those who are in the heaven now, those reappear as the perpetual star in "the death's twilight kingdom" referring the place somewhere between heaven and hell. However, the speaker says, he dares not meet these eyes because they are devoid of moral and spirituality. They can enter neither the heaven nor hell.

At the end of the poem, they sing a nursery song. Even at this moment, they are incapable to complete the song. They are far from death's other kingdom i.e., heaven.

The repeated line “this is the way the world ends” voiced by them anticipates the end of the world not with a big explosion but with whimper.

7.2.2.3 Analysis of the poem

The Hollow Men was published in *Poems 1909 -1925*(1925). The reader gets baffled whether to read it as a unified poem, or a sequence of fragments. Edward Albert writes that Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) and *The Hollow Men* (1925) are ‘supreme expression(s)’ of ‘disillusionment and despair’ of the Post-War period. This becomes clearer when one analyses the epigraphs that connect the poem to theme of ‘death’, ‘salvation’ and ‘emptiness of modern life’.

Section I

It begins with the stanza in which the speaker, a collective voice of ‘Hollow Men’, announces “We are the stuffed men / Leaning together”. They are like scarecrows; look like men but with a “Headpiece filled with straw”. Their voice is dry like their lives and place. They can speak but only ‘meaningless’ words. Their state represents the predicament of modern man.

In the last stanza, the Men mention that they have crossed to ‘death’s other Kingdom’. But they could not enter it. Dr. Manju Jain, a critic, notes “‘Death’s other Kingdom’ implies a higher moral and spiritual state than that of ‘death’s dream kingdom’ of a death-in-life existence inhabited by the hollow men. The ‘direct eyes’ signify the self-scrutiny required to attain this higher state. They lack ‘direct eyes’ ” (205). Thus, they would be remembered only as “hollow Men”, not as “lost violent souls” since they could have no other identity.

Section II

In the stanza first of this section, the representative voice “P” continues to describe their predicament as he cannot meet the “Eyes” perhaps of the God or a resident of the heaven, possibly because the hollow men do not possess the moral and spiritual character. Also, it may be because they are still far from the heaven. ‘Eyes’ has also reference to the eyes of Beatrice, Dante’s beloved, whom he has deceived earlier, and therefore, cannot look into, from the epic poem *The Divine Comedy*.

The stanza is full of images and symbols – ‘a broken column’, ‘a tree swinging’, ‘a fading star’ – that can produce several interpretations. The poet wants to aware the

reader of the purgatorial visualization in these phrases or to bring forth the fearful state of the hollow men as they are incapable to face the reality of their state.

The couplet in the end of the section, however, indicates towards the ‘final meeting’ in the ‘twilight kingdom’ that could bring a change for them. Here, the ‘twilight kingdom’ refers the gateway of heaven where they have to wait.

Section III

The section presents their aggravated state. They are in the dead land where they worship false gods. They do not get purged of their sins. The lines evoke a scattered image of the waste land. The resounding use of the demonstrative ‘this’ and ‘here’ their painful condition. They pray but to stony gods and therefore have not the slightest possibility of salvation.

Section IV

The speaker returns to the image of ‘the Eyes’ representatives of divine light and the only hope of salvation. Here, they are in the valley of darkness (dying stars) therefore cannot walk with assurance. They speechlessly stand on the bank of the swollen river. On the other side of the river, there is Paradise “multifoliate rose”. The protagonists can glimpse but not attain. The lines also allude to Dante’s *The Divine Comedy*. Now, the focus is shifted from the eyes of Beatrice (see section II) to those of Virgin Mary. As Dr. Jain mentions, “Dante refers to her as ‘the Rose’ and as ‘the living star’ in the third part (*Paradiso*)” of *The Divine Comedy* (208). The phrase “tumid river” corresponds to the river Acheron in Dante’s *Inferno*.

Section V

The sections begin with a parody of the children’s song-game, ‘Here we go round the mulberry bush, on a cold and frosty morning’. The phrase ‘the mulberry bush’ is substituted by the phrase ‘the prickly pear’ which is associated with the ‘cactus land’ in the section III. The poet makes parody of the nursery rhyme to suggest the existence of the hollow men is like a futile round repeating itself without end. Perhaps, they would never attain the salvation or would never enter the Paradise. Their circular movement is symbolic of their endless predicament.

The parody continues in the last stanza of the section, now, it combines a line from children’s song ‘Here we go round the mulberry bush’ – ‘this is the way we clap our hands’ – with the phrase ‘world without end’ from the prayer: ‘Glory be to

the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.’ This blending takes the form of self-mockery only way left to the speaker.

Title of the poem:

Eliot got the title by combining that of ‘*The Hollow Land*’ with that of ‘*The Broken Men*’. The first is a romance by William Morris. The second is the poem by Rudyard Kipling. The poem presents the predicament of English men exiled to the colonies. They loiter by the shore waiting to speak to the passengers of ships from home. The broken men of Kipling’s poem and Eliot’s hollow men have a sense of failure and exile in common.

Epigraphs:

The epigraphs to the poems in the beginning imply the thematic import. The first epigraph is words spoken by an African servant in Conrad’s *Heart of Novel*. He reports the death of Kurtz, a doomed character, to Marlow, the narrator. During his voyage up the Congo River, Marlow meets Europeans who, he feels, are ‘hollow’. He thinks that Kurtz is also ‘a hollow sham’, ‘hollow at the core’. However, finally when he listens Kurtz’ final words ‘The horror! The horror!’ he interprets them as ‘an affirmation, a moral victory’.

The second epigraph is a shout of children. It is used to beg money to buy firecrackers on the public festival of Guy Fawkes Day. The home-made effigies are burnt with the firecrackers on the evening of the Day. The Day refers to an historical event named as The Gunpowder Plot of 1605. It was conspiracy plotted by certain English Catholics to blow up Parliament and King James I and his family on 5 November 1605. However, the plot was discovered and the conspirators, one of them was Fawkes, sentenced to death. Later, the parliament established 5 November as a day of public thanksgiving. The Day is known as Guy Fawkes Day. The event is celebrated with bonfires, fireworks, and the taking ‘guys’ – effigies of old clothes, straw and old rags – through the streets and the effigies are burnt on the top of a bonfire and fireworks are let off.

The epigraphs relate the hollow men in the poem with those of Conrad’s novel and the effigy of the Day. The similarity of spiritual vacuum is clearly seen between them. They are added to the poem with the purpose to unify the content by giving it a controlling narrative voice and a historical background.

Thematic import in the poem

'*The Hollow Men*' is a modern poem. The characteristic of modern poetry is its difficulty. On this question of difficulty, Eliot himself wrote: "Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity, – playing upon a refined sensibility, (therefore it) must produce various and complex results" (Albert 35). He expected the modern poet to be more comprehensive, more allusive, and more indirect in order to "dislocate language into his meaning". In a nutshell, the poem cannot have a single interpretation, but the multiple interpretations. Yet, if focused the central argument, the poem can be treated as a statement on faith and faithlessness. The poem depicts that the hollow men, the protagonists seen mere as effigies, are waiting eternally for the salvation in a purgatory-like place. They are 'hollow' means they lack essentially the spirituality and faith in true God. They cannot be purged of their sins. The poem is an expression of their perpetual painful condition.

Other view is to analyze the poem as an extended metaphor on the disintegration of the modern civilization. In this sense, the hollow men are representatives of modern man. The modern society is devoid of moral and spiritual values. Modern man is surrounded by "dead land" and "cactus land". He is after the material happiness worshipping false gods (stone gods). His words are meaningless. His action is futile. He carries the curse of wanting the eternal true peace. This refers also to the post-war European society burned in the holocaust of the war, facing decadence of culture and moral values.

The resonance of guilt, remorse and anguish is found in the poem. The hollow suffers the death-in-life existence. They are guilty of worshipping false gods. They are not allowed to enter either hell or heaven. Even if they would be "lost / violent souls", they could have some hope, but their anguish is that they have no identity, save "*The stuffed Men*".

Poetic techniques in *The Hollow Men*:

Eliot looked for newer forms and styles in his poetry. However, *The Hollow Men* is not radical departure in style and theme from his masterpiece *The Waste Land*. The use of epigraph, imagery, allusion, parody and shifting voice are some of the recurring techniques in his poetry. *The Hollow Men* is a dramatization of mental state presented in the speech. One of them speaks for them. The poem takes the form of monologue. What makes the poem distinct is its form influenced by Eliot's increased

interest in ritual and drama. Dr. Jain comments, “The choral chants of *The Hollow Men* are stylized in a ritual – like manner” (198). Eliot uses the nursery rhyme to parody ritual itself.

The poem is in *verse libre* having stanzas of uneven length grouped together into five distinct sections. The complex state of the hollow men could only be rendered through the freedom of free verse. There is no rhyming pattern; however, Eliot employs many devices such as anaphora, symbols, meaningful images that unify the poem. For example, Eliot uses “We” to begin three of ten lines in the first stanza. In last stanza of the fifth section, there is repetition of the same line.

7.2.3. Check Your Progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. The poem is a ----
 - a) ode
 - b) sonnet
 - c) monologue
 - d) ballad
2. ---- men are the protagonists of the poem.
 - a) The hollow
 - b) The travelling
 - c) The Irish
 - d) The religious
3. “Multifoliate rose” is a symbol of ---.
 - a) Hell
 - b) Paradise
 - c) Purgatory
 - d) Satan’s kingdom
4. Shape without ---, shade without colour.
 - a) force
 - b) motion
 - c) size
 - d) form
5. The hollow men appeal to be remembered as the --- men.
 - a) stuffed
 - b) travelling
 - c) the sorrowful
 - d) reasonable

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. Which is the novel referred to in the epigraph of the poem?
2. What does “The Eyes” indicate?
3. What is the title of Dante’s poem often alluded in *The Hollow Men*?
4. What does the phrase “tumid river” correspond to?
5. How will the world end according to the hollow men?

7.2.4 Notes and Glossary

- *The Divine Comedy* - a 14th century long Italian narrative poem by Dante Alighieri
- **Hollow** – vacant, empty
- **Stuffed** – filled, packed
- **Solemn** – somber, serious
- **Stone images** – false gods
- **Supplication** – earnest begging
- **Grope** – search blindly
- **Spasm** – shudder, ripple
- **Shadow** – ignorance, sin
- **Whimper** – a low painful sound, moaning

7.2.5 Answer to check your progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) c 2) a 3) b 4) d 5) a

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* is the novel referred to in the epigraph of the poem.
2. "The Eyes" indicate hope for the hollow men.
3. *The Divine Comedy* is the title of Dante's poem often alluded in *The Hollow Men*.
4. The phrase "tumid river" corresponds to the river Acheron in Dante's Inferno.
5. According to the hollow men, the world will end with a whimper.

7.2.6 Exercise

A) Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

1. Critically appreciate *The Hollow Men* as an expression on the modern society.
2. Consider the poem as a typical modern poem.
3. Comment on the theme of faith and faithlessness in the poem.

B) Write short-notes in about 100-150 words each.

1. The title of the poem
2. Use of allusion in the poem
3. The purpose of epigraphs
4. Ending of the poem
5. Description of the cactus land
6. Use of imagery in the poem

7.2.7 Further Reading

1. Wain, John, ed. *Anthology of Modern Poetry*. Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1963.
2. Eliot, T.S. *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*. Faber and Faber Ltd., 1964.
3. Titus, T.K. *A Critical Study of T.S. Eliot's Works*. Atlantic Publishers, 1999.
4. Jain, Manju, *A Critical Reading of the Selected Poems of T.S. Eliot*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

7.3 *Tonight I can write*

Pablo Neruda

- 7.3.0 Objectives
- 7.3.1 Introduction
- 7.3.2 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 7.3.3 Check your progress
- 7.3.4 Notes and Glossary
- 7.3.5 Answer to check your progress
- 7.3.6 Exercise
- 7.3.7 Further Reading

7.3.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able

- to understand the poem as a love song
- to find the frank and open tone of the poem
- to learn the use of sensual imagery in the poem

7.3.1 Introduction

Pablo Neruda (1904 -1973) was a Chilean poet, diplomat and politician. His original name is Ricardo Eliécer Neftalí Reyes Basoalto. He began writing at the age of thirteen and employed a variety of styles in his writing including prose and drama. His best known works are *Book of Twilights* (1923, original Spanish title *Crepusculario*) and *Twenty Love Poems and A Song of Despair* (1924, original Spanish title *Veintepoemas de amor y una canción desesperada*) a collection of passionate love poems that created controversy for its sensuality. These works have been translated into many languages. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1971. In present heart-breaking poem, the poet describes how easy and complicated as well to write the saddest lines as he struggles to cope up with the loss of his girl-friend after a break-up.

7.3.2 Presentation of Subject Matter

7.3.2.1 *Tonight I can write*

*Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
Write, for example, "The night is starry
and the blue stars shiver in the distance."
The night wind revolves in the sky and sings.
Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
I loved her, and sometimes she loved me too.
Through nights like this one I held her in my arms.
I kissed her again and again under the endless sky.
She loved me sometimes, and I loved her too.
How could one not have loved her great still eyes.
Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
To think that I do not have her. To feel that I have lost her.
To hear the immense night, still more immense without her.
And the verse falls to the soul like dew to the pasture.
What does it matter that my love could not keep her.
The night is starry and she is not with me.
This is all. In the distance someone is singing. In the distance.
My soul is not satisfied that it has lost her.
My sight tries to find her as though to bring her closer.
My heart looks for her, and she is not with me.
The same night whitening the same trees.
We, of that time, are no longer the same.
I no longer love her, that's certain, but how I loved her.
My voice tried to find the wind to touch her hearing.
Another's. She will be another's. As she was before my kisses.
Her voice, her bright body. Her infinite eyes.
I no longer love her, that's certain, but maybe I love her.
Love is so short, forgetting is so long.
Because through nights like this one I held her in my arms
My soul is not satisfied that it has lost her.
Though this be the last pain that she makes me suffer
and these the last verses that I write for her.(Trans. W. S. Merwin)*

7.3.2.2 Summary of the poem

'*Tonight I can write*' is a love poem. It is an emotional expression of the lover's suffering and loneliness. His beloved has left him. He is in the utter despair and says that he can write the saddest verse of all about his love and suffering. He loved her so passionately that his soul is not ready to lose her. He is not ready to forget her, though he says, "I no longer love her". He is surrounded by the moments of the sweet memories that are alive in his mind and visit him especially in starry sky like that of the tonight. Moreover, she has left him for someone. That has caused the intense feeling of deception and dejection to him. In the end, he says that this is last poem that he is writing about her.

7.3.2.3 Analysis of *Tonight I can write*

The poem presents the theme of deception and despair in love. The lover, who is likely to be the poet himself, is in agony and remembers the starry nights earlier spent in love-making with the beloved. The starry sky of the tonight reminds him of her company and becomes the symbol of his frustration in love. The poem naturally springs in his mind as the night turns more vast and void in her absence. He is sure that he can write the saddest lines of all.

His love is a rare combination of sensuality and truthfulness. The line "*I kissed her again and again under the endless sky*" portrays their passionate sensual acts of love. His description of her "bright body" and "infinite eyes" also indicates the corporal side of his love. His soul is deep in love and not prepared to lose her permanently.

The line "*I no longer love her, that's certain,*" is added with "*but how I loved her*" first place and later with "*but maybe I love her*" show the dilemma of his mind. Does he want to forget her? Not at all as the sweet memories let not him do so. So his unwillingness to forget generates a condition of self-pity. He experiences a sweet pain. His suffering deepens as she finds a new love. The only way to release his pain is to take the refuge in writing poem.

The notable quality of the poem is its simplicity of expression and the openness of sentiment. The poem is full of the emotional content. Least use of figures of speech and poetic devices make the poem embellishment-free. The honesty of the lover is expressed through the frankness of tone and the sensual images. The natural

background – the sky, the night, the trees, the stars, the wind – corresponds to the loneliness and suffering of the poet.

7.3.3 Check Your Progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. --- is a notable quality of the poem.
a) simplicity b) vagueness c) decoration d) adornment
2. ---- is the protagonist of the poem.
a) The beloved b) The new lover c) The poet d) None of them
3. The starry sky is a symbol of ---.
a) cheerfulness b) loneliness c) revenge d) deception
4. The word ‘immense’ in the phrase “immense night” suggests ---.
a) honesty b) narrowness c) agony d) vastness
5. The poet is going to write ---- for his beloved.
a) the last verse b) a drama c) a novel d) a biography

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. Who has deserted the poet?
2. Why does the poet want to write the saddest lines tonight?
3. Why is not the poet’s soul satisfied?
4. How is forgetting according to the poet?
5. Which is the language the poem is originally written in?

7.3.4 Notes and Glossary

- **revolve** – move round
- **immense** – extremely large, “vast and void”
- **whitening** – in the poem “trees are moonlighted”
- **infinite** – deep and big in the poem

7.3.5 Answers to Check Your Progress

A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) a 2) c 3) b 4) d 5) a

B) Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each.

1. The poet's beloved has deserted the poet.
2. The poet wants to write the saddest lines tonight because he is deserted and lonely.
3. The poet's soul is not satisfied because he has lost the beloved.
4. According to the poet, forgetting is so long.
5. The poem is originally written in Spanish.

7.3.5 Exercise

A) Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

1. Critically appreciate *Tonight I can write* as an expression of the lover's frustration in love.
2. Comment on the simplicity and openness in *Tonight I can write*.

B) Write short-notes in about 100-150 words each.

1. Character of the beloved
2. Frankness in tone in *Tonight I can write*
3. Sensual imagery in the poem
4. Ending of the poem

7.3.6 Further Reading

Prakashchandra, Vyas Yatin. *A K Ramanujan And Pablo Neruda A Comparative Study Of Their Poetry*. Thesis. Veer Narmad South Gujarat University. 2019.

<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/10603/269613>. Accessed 01 Mar. 2021.

Listen the poem at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3TfQMbK8ks&t=73s>



Module VIII

Selections from Modern Indian English Poetry

8.1 The Professor

- Nissim Ezekiel

STRUCTURE:

- 8.1.1 Objectives
- 8.1.2 Introduction
- 8.1.3 The Text
- 8.1.4 Summary
- 8.1.5 Analysis of the Poem
- 8.1.6 Glossary & Notes
- 8.1.7 Check Your Progress
- 8.1.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 8.1.9 Exercises
- 8.1.10 Further Reading

8.1.1 Objectives

After reading this poem students will be able to

- Discuss the use of Indianized English language in the present poem
- Analyse the feelings expressed by the poet in the poem
- Understand the depiction of Indianness in satiric tone

8.1.2 Introduction

Nissim Ezekiel was an Indian Jewish poet, playwright, editor and art-critic. He was a foundational figure in postcolonial India's literary history, specifically for Indian writing in English. He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1983 for his Poetry collection, "*Latter-Day Psalms*".

Ezekiel was born on 16 December 1924 in Bombay (Maharashtra). His father, Moses Ezekiel, was a professor of Botany at Wilson College, and his mother was principal of her own school. The family of Ezekiel belonged to Mumbai's Jewish community, known as the 'Bene Israel'. Ezekiel did his B.A. in Literature in 1947 from Wilson College, Mumbai, University of Mumbai. In 1947-48, he taught English literature and published literary articles. Next stage of his life came when he departed in November 1948 to England for his higher studies where he stayed for three and half years and studied Philosophy and Psychology at Birbeck College, London under professor C.E.M. Joad. However, he showed greater inclination towards literature. It was during his stay in London that Fortune Press, London published his first poetic collection *A Time to Change* in 1952.

He married Daisy Jacob in 1952. In the same year, Fortune Press published his first collection of poetry, *The Bad Day*. He joined *The Illustrated Weekly of India* as an assistant editor in 1953 and stayed there for two years. Soon after his return from London, he published his second book of verse *Ten Poems*. For the next 10 years, he also worked as a broadcaster on Art and literature for All India Radio.

The year 1952 is a remarkable date for him also because the same year he returned from London and married a Jewish girl Daisy Jacob. Similarly the year 1953 too was an important year in Ezekiel's life because the same year his second poetic collection *Sixty Poems* was published and he joined the well-known periodical *The Illustrated Weekly of India* as an assistant editor. For the next ten years, he broadcasted articles on art and literature for All India Radio. From 1954 to 59 he worked as an advertising copywriter and general manager of Shilping advertising company. His third collection of poems *The Third* was published in 1959 and the fourth *The Unfinished Man*, a year after. From 1961 to 1972, he headed the department of English of Mithibai College, Bombay. During this period his sixth poetic collection *The Exact Name* was published in 1965. He also worked as an art critic of *The Times of India* from 1966 to 67. For short period he also served as visiting professor at the University of Leeds (1964) and the university of Chicago (1964).

In 1976 he wrote *Hymns of Darkness* and also translated Marathi poems into English. His *Latter-Day Psalms* (1982) was selected for the Sahitya Akademi Award of 1983. He was also awarded the Padma Shri in 1988. He edited Indian P.E.N, Quest, Imprint and Poetry India. Ezekiel has also written plays, art criticism and

reviews. His play *Don't Call it Suicide* (1993) was published more than two decades after his *Three Plays* (1969). His selected prose edited by Adil Jussawalla in 1992 shows that he was not only a poet but also one of the best literary critics India has ever produced. Ezekiel's prose is a model of clarity and lucidity enlivened by touches of wit. After a prolonged battle with a serious disease Alzheimer, Nissim Ezekiel finally passed away in Mumbai in January 9, 2004 at the age of seventy- nine.

8.1.3 The Text:

The Professor

Remember me? I am Professor Sheth.
Once I taught you geography. Now
I am retired, though my health is good.
My wife died some years back.
By God's grace, all my children
Are well settled in life.
One is Sales Manager,
One is Bank Manager,
Both have cars.
Other also doing well,
though not so well.
Every family must have black sheep.
Sarala and Tarala are married,
Their husbands are very nice boys.
You won't believe but I have eleven grandchildren.
How many issues you have? Three?
That is good. These are days of family planning.
I am not against. We have to change with times.
Whole world is changing. In India also

We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.
Old values are going, new values are coming.
Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.
I am going out rarely, now and then
Only, this is price of old age
But my health is O.K. Usual aches and pains.
No diabetes, no blood pressure, no heart attack.
This is because of sound habits in youth.
How is your health keeping?
Nicely? I am happy for that.
This year I am sixty-nine
and hope to score a century.
You were so thin, like stick,
Now you are man of weight and consequence.
That is good joke.
If you are coming again this side by chance,
Visit please my humble residence also.
I am living just on opposite house's backside.

- Nissim Ezekiel

8.1.4 Glossary & notes:

Professor (N): A university teacher

Retired (V): Past tense of the word “retire,” that is, to leave one’s job and cease to work, typically on reaching the normal age for leaving service.

Settled (V): Past participle form of the word “settle,” that is, to adopt a more steady or secure style of life, especially in a permanent job and home

Black sheep: A member of a family or group who is regarded as a disgrace to it

Issues (N): Plural form of the word “issue,” that is, children of one’s own

Progress (N): Development towards an improved or more advanced condition

Values (N): Plural form of the word “value,” that is, principles or standards of behavior; one’s judgment of what is important in life

Leaps (N): Plural form of the word “leap,” that is, a forceful jump or quick movement

Bounds (N): Plural form of the word “bound,” that is, a leaping movement towards or over something

Rarely (Adv): Not often; seldom

Price (N): An unwelcome experience or action undergone or done as a condition of achieving an objective

Aches (N): Plural form of the word “ache,” that is, a continuous or prolonged dull pain in a part of one’s body

Diabetes (N): A disorder of the metabolism causing excessive thirst and the production of large amounts of urine

Sound (Adj): Based on a valid reason or good judgment

Weight (N): i) The heaviness of a person or thing
ii) The ability of someone or something to influence decisions or actions

Consequence (N): Social distinction

Humble (Adj): (Of a thing) of modest pretensions or dimensions

Residence (N): A person’s home, especially a large and impressive one

8.1.5 Summary:

*Remember me? I am Professor Sheth.
Once I taught you geography. Now
I am retired, though my health is good.
My wife died some years back.*

The poem begins with the professor’s question: “Remember me?” Then he himself gives the identity that he is Professor Sheth. It is clear from his speech that he is talking to one of his past students whom he taught geography. He goes on to tell

his student that he is now retired but his health is still good at this age. He also mentions that his wife is no more.

*By God's grace, all my children
Are well settled in life.
One is Sales Manager,
One is Bank Manager,
Both have cars.*

The professor is thankful to God that all his children are well-established in their life. One of his sons is a Bank Manager, and another one is a Sales Manager. Both his sons own cars.

*Other also doing well, though not so well.
Every family must have black sheep.*

He now talks about his third son who is not doing so well as the other two. He regards him as the 'black sheep' of the family. "Black sheep" here means that the son is probably immoral, unprofessional and somewhat reckless. Even then, the professor protects his son by saying that every family generally has such a member.

*Sarala and Tarala are married,
Their husbands are very nice boys.*

Now it is his daughters' turn. Professor Sheth says that his two daughters Sarala and Tarala are married to good husbands. They are 'very nice boys' according to him.

*You won't believe but I have eleven grandchildren.
How many issues you have? Three?
That is good. These are days of family planning.
I am not against. We have to change with times.*

The professor also proudly declares the unbelievable fact that he has eleven grandchildren. And for the first time, he now gives his student a chance to speak. He asks his student how many issues he has. It seems that the professor is mocking at his student on hearing that he has only three children. He also assures his student that this is not so bad. Nowadays people are more conscious about family planning. And he is not against family planning. He accepts the change that time brings.

*Whole world is changing. In India also
We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.
Old values are going, new values are coming.
Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.*

The professor now speaks of the changes that the whole world is facing. He feels that the Indians are also keeping up with the change. We are progressing with time. Old conceptions are going and new ideas are coming. Everything is changing at a fast pace.

*I am going out rarely, now and then
Only, this is price of old age
But my health is O.K. Usual aches and pains.
No diabetes, no blood pressure, no heart attack.*

Now the professor says that he rarely goes out, as he is a retire person. This is also due to the old age that he can no longer walk or travel much. But he is proud that he is keeping good health with only occasional aches and pain. He has no diabetes, no blood pressure, and no heart attack.

*This is because of sound habits in youth.
How is your health keeping?
Nicely? I am happy for that.*

The professor continues to speak of his health. He is still keeping his good health because of his good habits in youth. He then asks the student about his health and he is happy to hear that he is keeping it up well.

*This year I am sixty-nine
and hope to score a century.*

Mr. Sheth then talks about his age. He is sixty-nine years old now, and hope to live for a hundred years.

*You were so thin, like stick,
Now you are man of weight and consequence.
That is good joke.*

Now, the professor reminds the student that he was so thin, comparing him to a stick. But now he (the student) has gained some weight and power. The professor perhaps indicates the social position of the student, as well as his physical growth.

And he also mentions that it is a good joke, in case the student doesn't get it properly.

If you are coming again this side by chance,

Visit please my humble residence also.

I am living just on opposite house's backside.

In these lines the professor requests his student to visit his residence if he comes this way again in future. He also tries to point out the location of his house, that is, the back side of the house on the opposite side of the road.

8.1.6 Analysis

Central Idea:

Professor Sheth, who had once taught geography and has now retired, encounters a former student of his on the road and stops to have a pleasant conversation with him. He tells the student about his own health and inquires about the student's health as well. He speaks about both their children. He reminisces about how thin the student had been and how he has gained weight and importance since then. Finally, Professor Sheth invites his former student to visit his house one day.

Theme:

Satire on Indian English: Ezekiel satirizes the way in which Indians speak in English through this poem. This is noticeable in the use of present continuous tense, where simple present tense should be the norm. For example, the professor says, "I am going out rarely," when he could have just said, "I go out rarely." The professor also often omits certain parts of speech while speaking. That is why he says "I am not against" instead of saying "I am not against it" or "Every family must have black sheep" instead of "Every family must have a black sheep." His phrases are repetitive, as in "Our progress is also progressing," and he uses such formal and outdated words as "issues" in place of "children." Even his puns are centered on the use of language, such as when he compares reaching the age of 100 with scoring a century or when he uses the double meaning of the word "weight" to make a joke. Ezekiel is masterful in observing these peculiarities of Indian English and transferring them effortlessly into his poetry. They make his poems humorous and enjoyable to read.

Generation gap: Professor Sheth realizes that many changes have happened since he was a young man and after his retirement. In his generation, it was quite common to have a large number of children. However, in subsequent generations, that number had reduced as a result of the use of birth control. Moreover, India has become more and more advanced in terms of technological and scientific innovations. All this is happening so fast that he cannot even keep track of all the progress. This does not sadden him, though. He does not seem to be especially affected by it. He accepts it as a fact of life that is out of his control, and so he is indifferent to it.

Tone

The tone of the professor's voice is mostly cheerful and optimistic throughout this poem. Only at one point does it lose its cheer slightly, and that is when he is talking about his third son, whom he calls the black sheep of the family. There is also a note of passive resignation with respect to the changes that are happening in the world. He knows that the values that had been cherished in his own time are losing currency now, but that cannot be helped, so he accepts it. Otherwise, the professor is glad that both he and his student are in sound health and that their children are doing well. In the end, when he invites his former student to his house, we can, in fact, imagine him doing so with a smile on his face. Even though the professor mentioned in the title of this poem speaks in such a strange dialect of English, and he seems to be rather old-fashioned, readers cannot help but love him. They admire him for his indomitable spirit, which has kept up his health, as well as his love for his students that makes him stop to talk to one, and that, in fact, is what gives rise to this poem itself. Ezekiel is known for creating such essentially Indian and loveable characters, and Professor Sheth is no exception.

The Professor by Nissim Ezekiel is particularly remarkable for its depiction of Indianness in a satirical tone. The poem is written in very simple language and in prose-poem *style*. No particular metre or rhyme scheme has been followed in writing the poem *The Professor*.

The poem *The Professor* can be classified as a **dramatic monologue**. In its abrupt beginning, one-way conversation and the presence of a silent listener, *The Professor* qualifies the basic requirements of a monologue.

8.1.7 Check Your Progress:

Q. I. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) The Professor once taught -----.
a) Maths b) English c) Geography d) Science
- 2) Every family must have -----.
a) black dog b) black sheep c) black horse d) black cat
- 3) The professor has ----- grandchildren.
a) three b) ten c) eleven d) five
- 4) How many issues you have? Here 'issues' means -----.
a) wives b) children c) friends d) affairs

Q. II. Writer answers in one word/phrase/ sentence.

1. What is the name of the professor in the poem?
2. Who is the black sheep of Professor's family?
3. What type of poem The Professor is?
4. How many sons did the Professor have in the poem?

8.1.8. Answers to Check Your Progress:

Q. I 1) c 2) b 3) c 4) b

- Q. II**
1. Professor Sheth
 2. the third son
 3. both a conversational and satiric
 4. three

8.2 A Hot Noon in Malabar

- Kamala Das

STRUCTURE:

- 8.2.1 Objectives
- 8.2.2 About the Poet
- 8.2.3 Introduction to the poem
- 8.2.4 The Text
- 8.2.5 Glossary & Notes
- 8.2.6 Critical Appreciation
- 8.2.7 Check Your Progress
- 8.2.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 8.2.9 Exercises

8.2.1 Objectives:

After reading this poem students will be able to

- Discuss the use of imagery and language in A Hot Noon in Malabar
- Analyse the feelings expressed by the poet-narrator in the poem
- Explain the structure of the poem

8.2.2 About the Poet:

Kamala Das was born in Malabar in 1934. She was educated privately at home and at schools in Bengal and Kerala and belonged to a writers' family. Her mother *Padma Bhushan* Nalapat Balamani Amma was a prolific Malayalam poet and winner of the *Sahitya Akademi Award* and the *Saraswati Samman* and her father the editor and Managing Director of *Mathrabhumi*, a leading Malayalam language newspaper. She was only fifteen when she was married to K. Madhava Das, who rose to become an R.B.I. Officer.

Kamala Das began writing poetry at the age of six. She was only fourteen when P.E.N. India, edited by Sophia Wadia, published her first poem. But her poetry got recognition when she was awarded the Asian Poetry Prize instituted by P.E.N. Philippines in 1963. From 1971 to 72 and again from 1978 to 79, she was the poetry editor of *The Illustrated Weekly of India*. Her poems were published in *Opinion, New Writing in India* (penguin Books, 1974), and *Young Commonwealth Poets* (Heinemann, 1965).

Kamala Das was a writer of versatile genius. She handled essays, fictions, short stories, criticism and journalistic features very successfully in both the languages, Malayalam and English. Her writings in English is as varied as in Malayalam. She published seven volumes of poetry, two novels, *Manas* (1975) and *The Alphabet of Lust* (1976), a collection of short fictions (*A Doll for the Child Prostitute*) and an autobiography called *My Story*. Her well-known books included *Summer in Calcutta* (1965) and *The Descendants* (1967), *The Old Playhouse and Other Stories* (1973). When the first volume of her Collected Poems was published in 1984, it won her *Sahitya Akademi Award* for 1985. Her other collection *The Soul Knows How to Sing: Selections From Kamala Das* was published in 1997. She made a new experiment in Indian English poetry. She succeeded in exploring those labyrinths which inhibit many a brave poets even today. In her poetry she points to certain biological matters so bluntly and openly that readers frequently feel scandalized and shocked. It appears Kamala Das allowed the poetic impulse to flow into poetry before the social conventions came to arrest the flow.

The poet is noted also for her direct public commitments. She involved herself in a number of public responsibilities. She was not only a great votary of vegetarianism but she also initiated the Bodhiyatra Movement for environmental protection. She played active roles as a Chairman in the Forestry Board of Kerala and as the President in the Film Society of Kerala besides entering into politics in order to help the poor and teaching deaf and dumb in a school. Suffering from pneumonia on 30th May, 2009 she breathed her last at Jahangir Hospital, Pune.

8.2.3 Introduction to the Poem:

In this poem the poet reminiscences about the landscape, the climate and the vendors of Malabar in the summer season. In this intensely personal and emotional poem Kamala Das traces her sweet childhood memories which still remains so

deeply etched in her heart. The poet chooses words carefully to create and pour out the same feelings which had made her those days memorable. A Hot Noon in Malabar celebrates and longs for the hot noon in Malabar because the poet associates it with wild men, 'wild thoughts and wild love'. The theme of this poem is different from those of the other two poems you have read. Unlike them the theme of this poem is the sweet memory of childhood and adolescence which refreshes all human beings especially in moments of crisis. Autobiographical in tone, the poem is full of realistic imagery and marked by verbal felicities. Written in condensed and compact style, the poem shows Kamala Das's talent in writing rhythmic lines though she does not use any rhyme.

8.2.4 The Text –

This is a noon for beggars with whining
Voices, a noon for men who come from hills
With parrots in a cage and fortune-cards,
All stained with time, for kurava girls
With old eyes, who read palm in light singsong
Voices, for bangle-sellers who spread
On the cool black floor those red and green and blue
Bangles, all covered with dust of roads,
For all of them, whose feet devouring rough,
Miles, grow cracks on the heels, so that when they
Clambered up our porch, the noise was grating,
Strange. This is noon for strangers who part
The window-drapes and peer in, their hot eyes
Brimming with the sun, not seeing a thing in
Shadowy rooms and turn away and look
So yearningly at the brick-ledged well. This
Is a noon for strangers with mistrust in

Their eyes, dark, silent ones who rarely speak
At all, so that when they speak, their voices
Run wild, like jungle voices. Yes, this is
A noon for wild men, wild thoughts, wild love. To
Be here, far away, is torture. Wild feet
Stirring up the dust; this hot noon, at my
Home in Malabar, and I so far away...

8.2.5 Glossary and notes -

Whining : complaining, grumbling and long drawn-out.

Stained with time : turned yellow with dust and frequent use.

Kuruba : a tribe of bird-catchers, basket-makers & fortune tellers.

Singsong : rising and falling, monotonous.

Clambered : climbed with difficulty .

Grating : harsh, jarring.

The Window-drapers : the window curtains.

Peer : peep

Brimming with the sun : filled with the sunlight

Yearningly : with great desire, longing.

8.2.6 Critical Appreciation -

A Hot Noon in Malabar is an autobiographical poem in which Kamala Das recalls some of her experiences in her home in Malabar. This is a nostalgic poem. Kamala Das seems to be fascinated by time 'at noon' with which the poem shows her obsession. The sun and its heat represent the glow and burning of passion for the poet and thus the external nature is brought in close association with her inner nature marked by a consuming carnal desire.

The title is not about what happens to the people, animals, plants and things inanimate during a hot summer noon in Malabar. Its meaning becomes clear only when we understand it in terms of the background of the poet's past memories. The word 'noon' is repeated six times in the poem to create the atmosphere of noon. Noon is the dominant rhythm of the poem. The memory tags associated with noon are noon for the beggars, 'a noon for men carrying parrots in cage and fortune-cards', 'a noon for strangers who part the window-drapes and peer in', 'a noon for strangers who speak in', wild jungle-voice and above all, it was 'a noon for wild men, wild thought and wild love'. "The last use of noon is prefixed with hot and the poet regrets for its loss: "this hot noon, at my home in Malabar and I so far away...". The phrase "Jungle-voices" which adequately conveys the poet's emotion, enacts a real drama and imparts to the poem its peculiar tone. Every epithet used in the poem is effective and grows with emotion. There is a perfect fusion of sound and sense. This can be further illustrated when we observe in the poem the speech habits of characters. The use of the words "whining voice, singsong, grating noise and jungle-voices' create beautiful sound imagery".

A Hot Noon in Malabar is not about a temporary experience of an hour or a day. It refers to the whole summer season recurring year after year. The scene created of the past is realistic. The mood of the poem is sad and tone somber. The theme of the poem is the loss of the poet's sweet experiences at Malabar home. The dominant rhythm of the poem meanders around noon. Kamala Das successfully creates the atmosphere of her Malabar home through the imagery depicting the men and women who passed her home in the summer noon. Those men and women included men from hills with parrots in cage and fortune cards, kuruba girls who read palm in light singsong, bangle-sellers with red and green and blue bangles and strangers who part the window drapes and peer in for shelter and other things. It is to be noted that because the imagery is realistic, they impart authenticity to the poem. The realism of the imagery is enhanced by such details as the colourful bangles were covered with dust of roads and growth of cracks on the heels of bangle-sellers feet and strangers deluded with the sparkle of sun not seeing a thing in shadowy rooms, turn away.

Some of the phrases including a couple of similes show the verbal felicities which Kamala Das is capable of devising in her poetry. The bangle-sellers' feet 'devouring rough miles', the hot eyes of the bangle-sellers 'brimming with the sun' and the strangers who rarely spoke so that when they did speak, their voice ran 'wild

like jungle-voices' are among the verbal felicities. In the phrase 'devouring rough miles' the word devour has been used metaphorically to convey the idea of the travellers covering miles and miles of dusty road. 'Brimming with the sun' is another expressive phrase. It means filled with sun light. In the hot sun the eyes of the travellers seem to have been filled to the brim with the heat of the sun. Similarly the poet was the most appropriate simile like jungle-voices which means like the sounds which are heard in jungle.

Through these imagery, the poet creates quite a realistic scene and contrasts it with her personal experience of loneliness which give rise to wild men, wild thoughts and wild love experienced at the summer season in Malabar. The feeling of homesickness has effectively been expressed in the words; "to be here, far away, is torture". The effect is further enhanced by the lines which follow:

*...Wild feet
Stirring up the dust this hot noon, at my
Home in Malabar, and I so far away...*

Although this poem does not use any rhyming scheme, the poet used at places some rhythmic lines. For example, beggars with 'whining voices', 'stained with time' and 'home in Malabar, and I so far away...' reflect some internal rhythms. Kamala Das's poetry does not have much music or any melodic quality. This poem resembles prose more than it resembles poetry. Unlike other poems, this poem, through proper use of comma and semi-colon, adds the quality of clarity and lucidity. The language used in the poem is condensed. The poem is also marked for its maximum possible economy in the use of words.

8.2.7 Check your progress

A) Complete the following sentence by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. The noon in the poem is repeated ----- times in the poem.
a) four b) five c) six d) seven
2. a noon for men who come from hills With ----- in a cage and fortune-cards,
a) parrots b) sparrow c) eagle d) crow

3. She is ----- with her present life.
a) very happy b) not happy c) excited d) confused
4. All the bangles were covered with -----.
a) cloth b) hands c) dust d) papers
5. The present poem is a vivid description of a noon of ----- season.
a) winter b) summer c) autumn d) rainy

B) Answer the following in one word, phrase or sentence each:

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. How many times the poet repeats the word 'noon' in the poem?
3. What does the cracked heel of bangle seller indicate?
4. Why would strangers peep through the glass windows of the house of the poet?

8.2.8 Key to Check your progress

A. 1. C 2. A 3. B 4. C

- B.**
1. The theme of the poem is the loss of the poet's sweet experiences at Malabar home
 2. Six
 3. the hardship of bangle seller, he travels long distances to reach these homes on foot to earn their livelihood by selling bangles.
 4. they would invariably peep through the glass windows of the house of the poet-narrator to figure out if any one stayed there.

8.2.9 Exercises:

- Critically appreciate the poem A Hot Noon in Malabar.
- What is the narrator nostalgic about?
- Explain the autobiographical aspects delineated in the poem.

8.3 A River

- A. K. Ramanujan

Structure

- 8.3.1 Objectives
- 8.3.2 Introduction to the poet
- 8.3.3 The Text
- 8.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 8.3.5 Glossary & Notes
- 8.3.6 Check Your Progress
- 8.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress
- 8.3.8 Exercises

8.3.1 Objectives:

After reading this poem students will be able to

- Understand A K Ramanujan as an Indian English poet
- Critically appreciate the major themes and the peculiarities of writing of A K Ramanujan

8.3.2 Introduction:

Attipat Krishnaswami Ramanujan (A K Ramanujan) was born in Mysore, Karnataka, on 16 March 1929. He received educational degrees in English literature from the University of Mysore and migrated to the United States in the late 1950s to pursue a doctorate in folklore and linguistics at Indiana University, an institution renowned for strong scholarly programs in both these disciplines. Ramanujan started teaching at the University of Chicago in 1963, where eventually he held joint appointments in the Departments of South Asian Languages & Civilizations and Linguistics, and in the Committee on Social Thought, until his untimely death, on 13 July 1993. In those three decades, Ramanujan came to acquire an unsurpassed reputation as a scholar, writer, poet, folklorist, and translator, and his intellectual gifts did not go unnoticed. Ramanujan was a recipient of the Padma Shri Award in

1976. He would also become one of the earliest recipients, in 1983, of a MacArthur ‘genius’ grant.

Raman, as he was known to his friends and colleagues, was a man of unusual intellectual perspicacity, poetic sensitivity, immense erudition., and prolific output. Though he published poetry in English, Kannada, and Tamil, he became rather more renowned for his translations from Kannada and Tamil.

Speaking of Siva (Penguin Books, 1973), which is the most widely read of Ramanujan’s works, introduced readers to Virasaiva literature, while *Hymns for the Drowning* (Princeton UP, 1981) offered brilliant translations of poems to Vishnu by the ninth-century poet, Nammalvar. *The Collected Essays*, published posthumously in 2000 (Oxford UP, Delhi), are nothing short of a dazzling demonstration of Ramanujan’s wide reading in Indian and European literature, his ease with structuralism, psychoanalysis, hermeneutics, and semiotics, and the nuanced understanding that he brought to bear upon texts. Among the most celebrated essays included in that collection is one entitled, “Is There An Indian Way of Thinking?” Folklore had been Raman’s first love, and in a score of essays and two collections — *Folktales from India: A Selection of Oral Tales from Twenty-two Languages* (Pantheon Books, 1991) and *A Flowering Tree and Other Tales from India* (U. of California Press, 1997), he breathed new life into the study of folktales. The ‘same’ story told by a man and a woman, to take only one of the many arguments advanced by Ramanujan, could appear to be anything but same. Though perhaps not widely known outside academic, intellectual, and literary circles, Ramanujan became a legend to those who had the good fortune to know him, as well as a mentor to countless students and scholars.

The poem “A River” appeared in *The Striders* in 1966. The poem is about the river Vaikai which flows through the city of Madurai, a city of poets and temples, which has for long been the seat of Tamil Culture. In this poem the poet has compared and contrasted the attitude of the old poets and those of the new poets to human indifference. Ramanujan feels that both the groups of the poets are indifferent to human sorrow and suffering and their poetry does not assess the miseries of the fellow living beings.

8.3.3 The Text:

A River

In Madurai,
city of temples and poets,
who sang of cities and temples,
every summer
a river dries to a trickle
in the sand,
baring the sand ribs,
straw and women's hair c
logging the watergates
at the rusty bars
under the bridges with patches
of repair all over them
the wet stones glistening like sleepy
crocodiles, the dry ones
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun
The poets only sang of the floods

He was there for a day
when they had the floods.
People everywhere talked
of the inches rising,
of the precise number of cobbled steps
run over by the water, rising
on the bathing places,
and the way it carried off three village houses,
one pregnant woman
and a couple of cows

named Gopi and Brinda as usual.

The new poets still quoted
the old poets, but no one spoke
in verse
of the pregnant woman
drowned, with perhaps twins in her,
kicking at blank walls
even before birth.

He said:
the river has water enough
to be poetic
about only once a year
and then
it carries away
in the first half-hour
three village houses,
a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda
and one pregnant woman
expecting identical twins
with no moles on their bodies,
with different coloured diapers
to tell them apart.

8.3.4 Glossary & Notes:

Trickle : to flow in a thin line.

Glistening : to shine

Cobbled : rounded stones used on the surface of an old-fashioned road

Identical twins : one of two children born at the same time from the same mother, and who are of the same sex and look very similar.

8.3.5 Analysis of the poem:

It turns to a dry trickle, uncovering ‘sand ribs’. He details the underbelly of the river that stays hidden. Visible now, are the bits of straw and women’s hair that chokes the rusty gates of the dam and the bridges that are plastered over with ‘patches of repair’.

The narrator remarks wryly that the poets who sang and they, who now imitate them, see only the symbolism of vitality when the river is in flood. With a few stark images, the poet completes the picture of the river and its complexities which have been glossed over and ignored. Yet not to stress the merely the grim, unlovely angle, the poet brings alive the beauty too, which lies open in the summer. This has been lost on the sensibilities of the past poets:

*the wet stones glistening like sleepy
crocodiles, the dry ones
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun.... (13-15)*

Using vivid similes, he refers to a lack of imagination of the old poets who ‘only sang of the floods’.

In stanza two, the poet speaks of the river in flood in the rains. He was there once and saw what happened. The river in spate destroys everything in its wake from live-stock to houses to human life. This happens once a year and has been continuing for years in the same pattern.

He notes the casual approach of the of the towns people. Anxiously they talk of the rising level of water and enumerate mechanically the ‘precise’ number of steps as the water brims over the bathing places.

*The river carries off:
‘three village houses,
one pregnant woman
and a couple of cows
named Gopi and Brinda as usual.’*

These are itemized, mentioned cursorily as in a list—three, one, two. The early poets and their successors tick off the losses as mere statistics, unheeding of the destruction, suffering and human pain left in the wake of the flood. Their aim, according to the speaker, is simply to record a sensational event to arrest the momentary attention of the people. He finds this attitude shocking and callous.

Between the village houses and Gopi and Brinda, the two cows is remarked one pregnant woman. No one knows what her name is and she is glossed over peremptorily. Yet the poet imagines that she may have drowned with not one life in her but two—‘twins in her’ which kicked at blank walls even before birth.

Continuing with the analysis of a river by Ramanujan, the poets deemed it enough to versify and exalt the river only when it flooded once a year. While they sang of the river as a creative force giving birth to new life, the paradox of the pregnant woman who drowned with twins in her eludes them. Embracing only the glory of the floods, they fail to realize its more complex repercussions on human life. The narrator gives us a more complete impression of the river as destroyer as well as preserver. He is sarcastic about the poets of yore who seize only the floods to write about and that too merely once a year.

*‘the river has water enough
to be poetic
about only once a year’*

Theme

The above lines satirize and debunk the traditional romantic view of the river Vaikai in Madurai, by the ancient poets. He is derisive too, of the new poets who have no wit but to blindly copy their predecessors.

Humor is presented in the names of the cows and the colored diapers of the twins to help tell them apart. Yet this too, is an attack on the orthodoxy of Hinduism. While cows are given names, no one knows who the pregnant woman is nor are they concerned. Human sacrifices were performed to appease the gods because of droughts in Tamil Nadu, and the drowned twin babies may be a reference to such cruel and orthodox rituals.

This is an unusual poem with many layers of meaning and is a commentary on the indifference of the old and modern poets to the ravages caused by the river in flood and the pain and suffering caused to humans.

With a few stark images, the poet completes the picture of the river and its complexities which have been glossed over and ignored. Yet not to stress the merely the grim, unlovely angle, the poet brings alive the beauty too, which lies open in the summer. The opening line immediately presents the main physical setting of the poem by mentioning the city of “Madurai.” By the end of the work, however, the relevance of the poem will transcend its relevance to this particular place. The speaker uses Madurai as his setting so that he can present detailed, concrete specifics rather than broad abstractions or generalizations. By the time the poem concludes, however, it will be obvious that the significance of his words transcends their significance for any specific city. This is ultimately a poem about the differences between writing that is realistic, conventional, and/or highly imaginative.

In line 2, Madurai is described as a “city of temples and poets,” making it sound like a place of great spiritual significance and associating it also with creativity and beauty. Its poets, indeed, have often sung of “cities and temples” (3), thereby celebrating places of great importance. Yet no sooner does the speaker make Madurai sound like a mythic, magnificent location than he immediately complicates (or even undercuts) this impression. He reports that each summer the city’s river—a river that might itself symbolize power, vitality, and energy—“dries to a trickle” (5), so that many of its normally hidden imperfections and unappealing aspects are suddenly visible, such as:

straw and women’s hair
clogging the water gates
at the rusty bars
under the bridges with patches
of repair all over them....(8-12)

Part of the function of the present poem, then, is to reveal what is normally unseen and thereby deal with the full complexities of the river. The poet doesn’t hesitate to describe aspects of Madurai that conflict with the simplistic, romantic imagery with which the poem opened. This speaker and this poem present some of

the full facts about Madurai, whereas other poets have tended merely to celebrate merely the beautiful, mystical aspects of the place.

To say this, however, is not to say that the speaker of this poem dwells only on the uglier aspects of the city or its river. Indeed, his descriptions of details that are not usually mentioned in other poems about Madurai are themselves sometimes beautiful. Thus he mentions the

*the wet stones glistening like sleepy
crocodiles, the dry ones
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun....(13-15)*

Here his imagery is vivid and his similes (comparisons using “like” or “as”) are inventive.

8.3.6 Check Your Progress:

Q. I. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1) ----- is the city of temples.
a) Delhi b) Madurai c) Pune d) Chennai
- 2) In every ----- the river dries up.
a) winter b) autumn c) rain d) summer
- 3) The pregnant woman was expecting -----.
a) a girl b) a boy
c) identical twins d) none of the above
- 4) The wet stones glistening like sleepy -----.
a) sharks b) turtles
c) crocodiles d) dolphins

Q. II. Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

- 1) What is the name of the river, the poet is describing about in the present poem?
- 2) For what, the city of Madurai is famous for?

- 3) When (in which season) were many of the poets attracted towards the river?
- 4) What are the names of the cows which were carried away in the flood?
- 5) What is meant by the phrase 'as usual' in the poem?

8.3.7 Key To Check your Progress:

Q. I. 1) b 2) d 3) c 4) c

- Q II. 1) river Vaikai
 2) poets and temples
 3) in summer
 4) Gopi and Brinda

8.3.8 Exercise:

- 1) Write a critical note on the poem A River.
- 2) Why is the central theme of the poem.

