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INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY STUDIES

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E-mail: ddceprinting@col.du.ac.in
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Unit-I(1)

READING THE NOVEL

K. Ojha

STRUCTURE

1. *Pride and Prejudice*: A General Introduction

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After having gone through the study material in hand, you would be:

a) Familiarized with the author and her milieu.

b) Get a brief overview of the genre of the novel particularly as it existed before the author's time.

c) Get a perspective on the novel in hand through a detailed critical summary.

d) Be introduced to the main issues and themes in the novel.

e) Understand how character is portrayed and developed.

f) Get an idea of the society as it existed in Jane Austen's time.

1.2 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jane Austen was born on 16th December 1775 at Steventon. Her father was the rector of the place. Jane - was the youngest of seven children, and her life was singularly tranquil and uneventful. Occasional visits to a theatre and rare visit to Bath and London broke the monotony of her home life. She was a great reader, knew something of modern languages, and was an excellent needle woman, "especially in satin stitch". Little, however, is known of her inner life.

In person she was "a tall, slender, clear-brunette," with hazel eyes, good features, and curly brown hair in temperament cool, detached, reserved and keenly humorous. We have no evidence of any emotional crisis in her life. She never went beyond the mild flirtations of the countryside that accompanied dancing and tea-making and theatricals. She died in 1817 of consumption and was buried at Winchester.

Miss Austen's range was narrow and as she never ventured beyond her own experience and powers, she achieved, as no other English novelist has ever achieved, an even level of perfection. Her books are composed of the most commonplace materials and are wholly lacking in all the elements of great passion and powerful action. They are therefore slight in texture. But her touch was so sure, her humor so subtle, her characterization so life-like that all competent critics regard her as one of the finest English novelists.

In all she wrote six novels: *Pride and Prejudice* (1796-97); *Northanger Abbey* (1798); *Sense and Sensibility* (1797); *Mansfield Park* (1814); *Emma* (1816), and *Persuasion* (1817).

1.3 THE NOVEL BEFORE JANE AUSTEN

The faculty for telling stories is the oldest faculty in the world. All early poetry is simply storytelling in verse. Stories are the first literary interest of a child. The drama dates from the pre-historic times, so does the epic, the ballad, and the lyric. The novel as we know it dates, practically speaking, from 1740, though there was literary storytelling long before that. There were medieval romances in prose and verse. None of these however, approaches the essence of the novel as we know it. They are all just strings of incidents; they take no account of character, without which we cannot have a successful novel.

This interest in character was first awakened in the 17th century. The age began to take a deep and curious interest in men's lives: biography was written for the first time and so was autobiography. This has a direct bearing on the birth of the novel, but Character is an

ancestor in the direct line. At the heels of the Character came the periodical essays of Addison and Steele. They introduce you to Sir Roger de Coverley and to several other stereotyped characters. You are made aware of different traits in his character and those of his friends one by one. Each trait is illustrated by some incident. You get to know them gradually (as Sir Roger passes from one incident to another), as you would in life. They are not all at once described as is the way of the character writers. The character thus grows before the reader's eye and is not merely described. With the Coverley Essays therefore, the novel takes another stride forward.

The autobiographical form of writing had already been invented. People took interest and showed curiosity in reading the tales of voyages which the discoverers wrote and published on their return from the adventures. Bunyan and Defoe established this form of writing and gave it a secure place in literature.

Defoe told stories of adventure, incidents modelled on real life as many tellers of tales had done before him, but to the form as he found it, he superadded a "psychological interest"—the interest of the character of the narrator. Defoe might also be said to have fixed the form of the historical novel. In his "Memories of a Cavalier", the narrative of an imaginary person's adventures is interspersed with the entrance of actual historical personages. This method was brought to perfection by Sir Walter Scott.

In the eighteenth century came the decline of the drama, for which the novel had been waiting. When Richardson and Fielding published their novels no other form of literature posed a challenge to them. With Defore, Richardson and Fielding the realistic prose fiction emerged as a dominant literary form and Horace Walpole and Mrs. Radcliffe wrote romance. Novels by minor authors were published in thousands. The whole market was flooded with fiction. Next in the line of the great realistic novelists is the famous novelist Jane Austen whose novel is prescribed in your course. After her in the nineteenth century came Dickens, Thackeray. Meredith and Hardy.

1.4 INTRODUCING THE NOVEL

Pride and Prejudice was published in 1813, but the first draft was written as early as 1796, thus it is one of the earliest novels of Jane Austen. It remains a great favourite with most readers, although it is in *Emma* and *Persuasion* that the novelist attains the maturity of her art. *Pride and Prejudice* defines the limits within which this subtle and keen observer of social manners was to make social behaviour the touchstone of human worth. All her later novels were to be patterned on the dramatic method of character portrayal.

In a way this early novel is already representative of Austen's mature art. The social background is provided by late eighteenth-century country life which the novelist knew through the window of a country parsonage. The men and women, greatly varying in their talents and inclinations, all belong to the middle classes. Their code of conduct is derived from traditional morality, although subtly modified by their economic standing. Austen remains an unruffled and amused spectator of the comedy played out by parsons, solicitors, tradesmen, the landed gentry, and their womenfolk. Austen employs the dramatic manner of Fielding in laying bare the follies and foibles of these characters through dialogue which is at once real and amusing. It is through conversation that the dramatis personae reveal themselves. But even the worst offenders are treated with nothing worse than amused contempt in this delightful comedy of manners.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE PLOT

Mr. Bennet with his wife and five daughters, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia, lives at Longbourn in Hertfordshire. The entire neighbourhood is excited by the arrival, on the scene, of Charles Bingley, an eligible bachelor of ample means who rents Netherfield, a house intriguingly near the Bennets' seat. He brings with him his two somewhat proud sisters and his friend Darcy, nephew of a rich lady, Lady Catherine. She is the patron of William Collins to whom the Bennet estate is to pass, for Mr. Bennet has no male heir. Bingley and Jane, cunningly thrown into each other's company by the designing Mrs. Bennet, fall in love. Darcy is attracted by the lively wit of Elizabeth, but she is repelled by his superior airs. This dislike is fanned by the artfully distorted account of Darcy given by George Wickham, a young subaltern and son of the late steward of the Darcy estate. Wickham paints a far from flattering picture of Lady Catherine and the proud and unjust aristocrat, Darcy. Elizabeth's aversion is further intensified when she suspects Darcy's hand in alienating Bingley and Jane. In fact, Mrs. Bennet and her younger daughters by their flagrant improprieties had made it evident that they were socially unacceptable to the Bingley sisters and Darcy.

Mr. Collins, a distant cousin of the Bennet sisters, under pressure of his patron Lady Catherine, proposes to Elizabeth in a most pompous manner and is refused. Losing no time, he starts courting Elizabeth's friend Charlotte Lucas who accepts him. Charlotte invites Elizabeth to spend a few weeks in her new home. Staying with the married couple at the rectory near Rosings, the country seat of Lady Catherine, Elizabeth again encounters Darcy who is visiting his aunt. He now feels greatly attracted towards her and, taking little care to conceal how his pride was being compromised, proposes to her. Elizabeth turns down the proposal and makes no secret of what she thinks of him for being responsible for alienating

Bingley from Jane and his dastardly treatment of Wickham. Darcy in a letter, owns to the first charge but disproves the latter by revealing that Wickham is utterly unscrupulous.

Elizabeth goes with her witty and sensible aunt Mrs. Gardiner to the north of England. While with the Gradiners, she visits Pemberley, Darcy's seat in Derbyshire, believing that Darcy is not in residence. But as they are coming out of his house, they encounter Darcy who has unexpectedly returned from London a day earlier. Darcy receives them with warmth and even his sister is very polite and cordial. News reaches Elizabeth while at Pemberley that the bright scamp Wickham has eloped with her scatterbrained sister Lydia. Darcy's initiative in tracing the fugitives and uniting them in holy wedlock brings him closer to Elizabeth. Bingley resumes his suit and eventually Jane and Bingley are engaged. Lady Catherine attempts to thwart Darcy's romantic fondness for Elizabeth, but this only helps Darcy to make up his mind. By this time Darcy's pride and Elizbeth's prejudice are reconciled, and the novel closes with the promise of wedding bells and a hint of virtuous domestic bliss. In keeping with this note of genial happiness even Lady Catherine condescends to accept Elizabeth as Darcy's bride.

Check Your Progress

Please put the tick mark against the correct answer.

1. Jane Austen was born in
   (a) 1770.
   (b) 1775.
   (c) 1850.
2. Jane Austen wrote
   (a) War and Peace.
   (b) Crime and Punishment.
   (c) Sense and Sensibility
3. The main story revolves round
   (a) Bingley and Jane.
   (b) Elizabeth and Darcy.
   (c) Lydia and Wickham.

4. "Pride and Prejudice" is
   (a) a novel of manners.
   (b) a Historical novel.
   (c) a novel of adventure.
5. Jane Austen follows the
   (a) autobiographical method.
   (b) epistolary method.
   (c) dramatic method.
6. Mr. Bennet lives at
   (a) Longdourn.
   (b) Pemberley
   (c) London.

II. Give in your own words the story of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

2. DETAILED SUMMARY WITH EXPLANATION

Section I Chapters 1-8

A. Summaries

i. Mr. Bingley arrives

The renting of Netherfield Park excites Mrs. Bennet's curiosity to such an extent that she must share her knowledge of the tenant with her husband. Mr. Bennet, being a man, is **hardly** curious; but his wife, a mother of five daughters, must think of getting them off her hands, and a young bachelor with ample means is almost like an answer to her secret prayers. She tries to persuade her husband to call on this neighbour, Mr. Bingley. Mr. Bennet affects indifference and irritates her by declaring a partiality for Lizzy. Mrs. Bennet's 'nerves' only draw from her husband a caustic comment that he has heard of them much too often for at least twenty years. (Ch. 1).

ii. Mr. Bennet calls on Bingley

Contrary to his declaration, Mr. Bennet calls on Mr. Bingley shortly after his arrival, but keeps this information from his family. The worried Mrs. Bennet who is hardly

able to find an excuse for being introduced to Mr. Bingley, is a prey to her nerves again, being distracted by her daughter Kitty's cough, which, the father points out mischievously, is ill-timed. After Mrs. Bennet has exhausted her fears that Mrs. Long may not come back early enough to introduce Mr. Bingley before the next ball, and the father has had a dig at Mary's heavy wits, Mr. Bennet admits that he has already made a call. This has the effect of leaving Mrs. Bennet loudly appreciative of her husband's wisdom. The latter disappears to escape her gush. Mrs. Bennet plans to invite Mr. Bingley to dinner. (Ch. 2).

iii. The Meryton Ball

Failing in her attempt to get any satisfactory description of Bingley from her husband Mrs. Bennet and her five daughters fall back on the report of Lady Lucas, according to which the gentleman is young, handsome, agreeable and sociable. Mrs. Bennet can hardly ask for more. Mr. Bingley returns Mr. Bennet's call, is promptly invited to dinner, but declines it as he would be in London the next day.

At the ball, Mr. Bingley's party is found to consist of five: himself, his two sisters, a brother-in-law, and his friend Mr. Darcy. At the end of the ball where Mr. Bingley had danced twice with Jane, the young man is warmly voted charming. Mr. Darcy, however, for all his good looks and his reported income of ten thousand pounds a year, leaves a poor impression, as he appears to be too proud to feel at ease in the company of his inferiors. Darcy, at this first meeting, is certainly not interested in Elizabeth. In fact, he slights her by declining to dance with her. (Ch. 3).

iv. How the Bingleys and the Bennets react to one another

When Jane and Lizzy review the ball and exchange their impressions about the Bingleys, Lizzy agrees with her sister's enthusiastic admiration for Mr. Bingley's fine traits, while reserving her judgment on his sisters whom she finds proud and conceited; for all that they were fine ladies who could be quite agreeable when they chose.

Between Bingley and Darcy there is a strong bond of friendship, Darcy being drawn by the openness and warmth of Bingley's nature, while the latter had the greatest respect for Darcy's astuteness of judgment. Being so wide apart in their ways, they differ widely in their views of the Bennets: Bingley finds them all kind and charming; Darcy is almost repelled by their commonness. Bingley's sisters, however, concede that Jane is sweet. (Ch. 4).

v. Darcy is disliked

Sir William Lucas is a neighbour of considerable social status and has, amongst several other children, a daughter Charlotte who is Lizzy's intimate friend. Charlotte comes to meet the Bennets. Seemingly complimenting the girl on her being chosen by Bingley as his dancing partner, Mrs. Bennet inevitably makes much of Jane, who has been asked twice. Apart from Charlotte no one else seems to have a good opinion of Darcy. Elizabeth is quite frank about being piqued by Darcy's cold contempt. Mary, in keeping with her empty pompousness, makes a lengthy but trite observation on the distinction between pride and vanity. (Ch. 5).

vi. Eliza's revenge

After the ladies of Longbourn and Netherfield have exchanged visits, it becomes evident that Bingley's sisters are somewhat pleased with Jane. Elizabeth, however, finds the sisters offensively patronizing even to Jane. Perceiving that Jane was taking obvious pleasure in the attentions of Bingley, Lizzy takes Charlote into her confidence, and they discuss this budding romance. Charlotte disagrees with Elizabeth's view that Jane was wise enough to avert the suspicions of the world regarding her feelings for Bingley. According to her, a woman must take the initiative. Elizabeth points out that Jane was not acting by design, and in any case, a fortnight was too short a time for two young persons to get to know each other.

Meanwhile Darcy is being drawn, despite himself, towards Elizabeth's bright lively-eyes, and at a party thrown by Sir William Lucas where Elizabeth entertains the company with her song, Sir William, unconscious of Darcy's affront in ignoring Elizabeth's presence at Meryton, asks Darcy to seek Elizabeth's hand for a dance. Darcy readily consents; but Elizabeth has her revenge by turning down the offer. Darcy is amused when Miss Bingley accosts him. When she finds that Darcy, far from being bored, is actually interested in Elizabeth, she displays her cattish nature by complimenting him on his choice and his prospects of having such a charming mother-in-law as Mrs. Bennet. (Ch. 6).

vii. Jane falls ill at Netherfield

At Meryton, within a convenient walking distance of a mile from Longbourn lived Mrs. Philips, a sister of Mrs. Bennet. The place held a particular attraction for the two empty-headed Bennet sisters, Catherine and Lydia, who could not resist the charms of soldiers. While the parents are exchanging contrary views on these two, a footman arrives from Netherfield with a letter of invitation for Jane from the Bingley sisters.

Mrs. Bennet is delighted and contrives to send her on horse-back in the hope that the bad weather would force the hostess to keep Jane for the night. The plan succeeds a little too well; for when the Bennets are at breakfast next morning, a messenger comes from Netherfield with a note from Jane to say that she was down with cold through getting wet on her way. Elizabeth walks down to see her sister, and Darcy is at first impressed by her anxious concern for Jane. Elizabeth proposes going back home, and is offered a carriage, but Jane who has been feeling feverish requests her sister to stay on. (Ch. 7).

viii. The Bingley Sisters Ridicule Eliza and her Family

Dinner over; when Elizabeth goes back to her sick sister, she is extensively discussed. Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst find fault with her taste and manners, and severely disapprove of her walking, although Mr. Bingley finds the solicitude pleasing. Later in the evening Elizabeth comes down into the drawing room after Jane has gone to sleep. Finding the stakes at cards too high, Elizabeth takes up a book only to excite Miss Bingley into paying her a malicious compliment. When the conversation centers around accomplishment in women Eliza points out that she has hardly found one woman to measure up to Darcy's demands. When the door closes on Eliza, as she goes back to Jane, Miss Bingley, not very generously, finds, in Eliza's belittling of her own kind, a paltry device to rise in Darcy's estimation. Darcy, not much to Miss Bingley's liking, expresses his disapproval of every form of feminine cunning. Eliza comes down to report that Jane is worse, and it is decided that Dr. Jones should be sent for, the following morning. (Ch. 8).

B. The Principal Events

You must have noticed in going through these chapters that the action so far hinges on three principal incidents:

- The arrival of the Bingleys at Netherfield. (Ch.1)
- The ball at Meryton. (Ch. 3)
- Jane's ride on horseback to Netherfield. (Ch. 7)

We shall now examine each of them separately.

i. The Arrival of the Bingleys

(a) In a way, the development of the plot depends almost entirely on Mr. Bingley's settling at Netherfield. This throws the Bingleys and the Bennets together. Out of this meeting springs

(i) The attachment between Jane and Bingley.

(ii) the attraction through hostility between Elizabeth and Darcy.

(iii) the unfortunate episode of Lydia and Wickham, this being associated with Darcy.

(b) You will notice also that the arrival of Mr. Bingley who is a 'single man in possession of a good fortune' gives the best excuse for Mrs. Bennet to assume that he 'must be in want of a wife'. Thus, the very famous opening lines of the novel are made to strike a key-note with reference to Mrs. Bennet's designs. That she has very concrete hopes for one of her five girls is brought home to us from her numerous observations and her actions:

(i) "But it is very likely that he may fall in love with one of them", she tells her husband (p. 2, L 13 bottom, (Ch. 1).*

(ii) "The business of her life was to get her daughters married" says the novelist of her (P.4, L I, Ch. 1).

(iii) "I was sure you loved your girls too well to neglect such an acquaintance", she congratulates her husband on paying a call to Bingley (P.6, LL.10-11, Ch. 2).

(iv) A prompt invitation to dinner was dispatched soon after Bingley's courtesy call. (P. 7, L 27, Ch. 3).

(v) Her intense delight at Bingley's attentions to Jane at the Meryton ball: "he actually danced with her twice and she was the only creature in the room that he asked a second time." (P. 17, LL, 4-5, Ch. 5).

(vi) Her deliberately hesitant manner of conceding artfully that Bingley may have liked Jane, during her conversation with Charlotte: "Upon may word ... that does seem as if-but, however, it may all come to nothing." (P. 17, LL. 4-5, Ch. 5).

(vii) She contrives to send Jane on horse-back to dine with the Bingley sisters. She makes no bones about her intentions: "No, my dear, you had better go on horse-back, because it seems likely to rain, and then you must stay all night. (P. 29, LL 14-16, Ch. 7).

* All references are to *Pride and Prejudice* edited by A.C. Ward, (Orient Longmans).

(viii) She is hardly put out to learn that Jane was ill due to her having got wet on her way to Netherfield. When Mr. Bennet upbraids her, she dismisses his fears by saying tartly, "People do not die of trifling clods." (P. 30, LL 24-25, Ch. 7)

ii. The Ball at Meryton

The ball (dance) is a social event of great importance, particularly in the country, where men and women have a narrower range of acquaintance than in the town. The ball at Meryton, organized by Mrs. Long, serves the following chief purposes:

(a) It stimulates Mrs. Bennet's and Lady Lucas' matrimonial hopes about their daughters.

(b) It throws Jane and Bingley together.

(c) It introduces Darcy and opens the delightful battle of wits between him and Elizabeth.

(d) It serves to throw the characters into two distinct groups (i) the smart set with affiliations to London, represented by the Bingleys and Darcy (ii) the country gentlemen with smaller incomes and less refinement of manners, represented by the Bennets and the Lucases.

iii. Reactions of the First Group

❖ **Mr. Bingley**

(a) "He was lively and unreserved, danced every dance, was angry that the ball closed so early." (P. 9, LL 2-4, Ch.3).

(ii) "I never met with so many pleasant girls in my life as I have this evening," says Bingley to Darcy who stands aloof in obvious disdain. (P.9, LL 33-34, Ch. 3).

(iii) "Bingley had never met with pleasanter people or prettier girls in his life; everybody had been most kind and attentive to him." (P. 15, KK 6-8, Ch. 4).

(iv) He appears to be the only person at Netherfield who is genuinely concerned when Jane is taken ill. "His anxiety for Jane was evident, and his attentions to herself (Eliza) most pleasing." (P. 33, LL 17-18, Ch. 8).

Mr. Darcy

(b) "There is not another woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with", –Darcy complains to Bingley at the ball. (P. 9, LL 29-30, Ch. 3).

(ii) "Darcy had seen a collection of people in whom there was little beauty and no fashion, for none of whom he had felt the smallest interest." (P. 15, LL 11-14, Ch. 4).

(iii) "Mr. Darcy stood near them in silent indignation at such a mode of passing the evening, to the exclusion of all conversation." (P. 23, LL 29-31, Ch. 6).

(iv) Despite himself, Darcy is drawn by the liveliness of Eliza's disposition: "I have been meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow", he confides to Miss Bingley. (P. 25, LL 29-31, Ch. 6). You will notice that this is a long way from his earlier comment, "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me". (P. 10, LL 10-11, Ch. 3).

(v) Darcy unexpectedly fails to chime in with Miss Bingley's disparagement of Elizabeth's 'paltry device', of undervaluing the worth of women. "Whatever bears affinity to cunning is despicable", he blurts out obviously hinting at Miss Bingley's mean innuendo. (P. 39, L6, Ch. 8).

❖ **Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst**

(c) They pronounced Jane to be a sweet girl. (P. 4, LL 18, Ch. 4)

(ii) "Miss Bennet's pleasing manners grew on the goodwill of Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley," "though the mother was found intolerable" (P. 19, LL 2-5, Ch. 6).

(iii) Miss Bingley feels jealous of Elizabeth as soon as she perceives Darcy's interest in her. She asks Darcy archly, "How long has she been such a favourite? –and pray, when am I to wish you joy?"

(iv) "Elizabeth was convinced that they (Binglely sisters) held her in contempt" for walking down to see Jane. (p. 31, LL 32-33, Ch. 7).

(v) Elizabeth noticed their indifference towards Jane when not immediately before them'. (P. 33, end of para 1, Ch. 8).

(vi) Stung by Darcy's admiration for Eliza, Miss Bingley becomes openly hostile to her. "Her manners were pronounced to be very bad indeed, a mixture of pride and impertinence." (P. 34, LL 1-2, Ch. 8).

iv. Reactions of the Second Group

❖ **Mrs. Bennet**

(d) Flushed with the triumph of Jane at having been chosen twice by Bingley, Mamma Bennet is effusive in her praise for the Bingleys, "He is so excessively handsome! And his sisters are charming women." (P. 11, LL 27-28, Ch. 3).

(ii) Mrs. Bennet finds the slight shown to Eliza by Darcy highly offensive to her pride. "He is such a disagreeable man that it would be quite a misfortune to be liked by him." (P. 17, LL 11-12, Ch. 5).

(iii) Highly sensitive to the good opinion of the Bingleys, Mrs. Bennet disapproves of Eliza's plan to walk to Netherfield through sodden fields to be near Jane who has been taken ill. "How can you be so silly as to think of such a thing in all this dirt! You will not be fit to be seen when you get there." (P. 31, LL 1-2, Ch. 7).

❖ **Jane Bennet**

(e) Jane is obviously delighted with Bingley. "He is just what a young man ought to be, sensible, good humoured, lively." (P. 12, LL 12-13, Ch. 4).

(ii) She likes the sisters, a preference not shared by Eliza. "They are very pleasing women when you converse with them." (P. 13, LL 12-13, Ch. 4).

(iii) She is disposed to accept Miss Bingley's estimate of Darcy's character. "He never speaks much unless among his intimate acquaintances". (P. 17, LL 21-22, Ch. 5).

❖ **Elizabeth Bennet**

(f) Too sensible to be mortally offended by Darcy's refusal to dance with her at the ball, Elizabeth was slighted enough to have not very cordial feelings towards him! (P. 10, LL 17-18 Ch.3) Later, she says to her mother, "I believe, ma'am I may safely promise you never to dance with him". (P. 17 bottom, Ch. 5).

(ii) She finds Bingley 'very agreeable' (P.12, LL 26 Ch. 4), although she finds no reason to consider him gallant as Jane was 'about five times as pretty as every other woman in the room'. (P. 12 LL 24-25, Ch. 4).

(iii) For all her shrewdness, she is too blinded by her **prejudice** against Darcy to perceive that she was herself becoming an object of some interest to him. (P.21, LL 25-27. Ch. 6) (note this point carefully).

(iv) She takes revenge on Darcy at the Lucas party by drawing back, when Darcy requests to be allowed the honour of her hand, with these words, addressed to Sir William, "Indeed, Sir, I have not the least intention of dancing". (P. 24, last line, Ch. 6).

(v) She does not share her sister's opinion of the Bingley sisters. "their manners are not equal to his", she tells Jane after the ball. (P. 13, LL 15-16, Ch. 4). She finds, on riper acquaintance, that their admiration for Jane is superficial. While nursing Jane at Netherfield, Elizabeth discovers "their indifference towards Jane when not immediately before them", and it "restored Elizabeth to the enjoyment of all her original dislike" for them. (P. 33 LL 13-15, Ch. 3)

❖ **Charlotte Lucas**

(g) She is evidently impressed by Bingley's partiality for Jane at the ball, "Yes, but he seemed to like his second better", she says in reply to Mrs. Bennet's compliment, "You were Mr. Bingley's first choice". (P. 16. LL 22-24, Ch. 5).

(ii) Although friendly with Eliza she is womanly enough to tease the latter at Darcy's neglecting her at the ball: "Poor Eliza!—to be only just tolerable." (P. 17, LL 8-9, Ch. 5).

(iii) She is more tolerant of Darcy than any other woman of her set: "If I may so express it, he has a right to be proud." (P. 18, LL 5-6, Ch. 5).

(iv) In her conversation with Eliza discussing Jane's growing fascination for Bingley she displays more worldly wisdom than her friend when she expands on the theme, "Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance". (P. 21, LL 12-13, Ch. 6).

v. Jane's Ride to Netherfield

(a) This incident, deliberately contrived by Mrs. Bennet, shows how far a match-making mamma is prepared to go to advance her schemes. When Eliza points out that Jane may well be sent back in a carriage, Mrs. Bennet reveals her calculating nature: "Oh! But the gentlemen will have Mr. Bingley's chaise to go to Meryton and the Hursts have no horses to theirs." (P. 29, LL 19-21, Ch. 7).

(b) It gives Elizabeth, who had gone to look after sick Jane, a better opportunity to observe the Bingley sisters.

(c) It hardens Miss Bingley's dislike for Eliza. "Why must she be scampering about the country because her sister has a cold?" is her first reaction at the sight of the bedraggled Eliza. (P. 34, LL 8-10, Ch. 8). This is an instance of Jane Austen's caustic irony, for Miss Bingley is hardly aware that her sentiment does little credit to a womanly heart. The dislike deepens into hatred when she perceives that Darcy is getting attracted towards Eliza.

(d) It brings Darcy and Eliza into closer contact. He begins to find greater charm in her "fine blue eyes".

C. Check Your Progress

I Please tick off the correct answers:

1. Caroline Bingley's opinion of Elizabeth is inspired by
   (a) understanding
   (b) love.
   (c) jealousy.
2. Mr. Darcy is all politeness" (Ch. 7), says Elizabeth at the Lucas' party. This is
   (a) an invitation to dance with Darcy.
   (b) a snub.
   (c) a formal compliment.
3. Mary's observations, on 'Pride and Vanity, towards the end of Chapter 5 are
   (a) common place.

(b) profound

(c) ironical.

4. Mr. Bennet is (Tick off three correct phrases)

(a) full of sarcastic humour

(b) loquacious

(c) reserved

(d) whimsical

(e) a hen-pecked husband

(f) dull-witted.

II. By whom to whom and about whom are the following lines said? *(Also mention the chapter): 24*

(h) She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me; and I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men.

.....

(i) With your good sense, to be so honestly blind to the follies and nonsense of others. Affectation of candour is common enough—one meets it everywhere. But to be candid without ostentation or design—to make the good of everybody's character and make it still better, and say nothing of the bad—belongs to you alone.

.....

(j) We can all begin freely-a slight preference is natural enough; but there are very few of us who have heart enough to be really in love without encouragement. In nine cases out of ten a woman had better show more affection than she feels.

.....

(k) Your conjecture is totally wrong, I assure you. My mind was more agreeably engaged. I have been meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow.

.....

© I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine.

.....

(f) I am no longer surprised at your knowing only six accomplished women. I rather wonder now at your knowing any.

.....

(g) When they get to our age, I dare say they will not think about officers any more than we do. I remember the time when I liked a red coat myself very well—and, so I do still at my heart.

.....

(h) "But I can assure you", she added, "that Lizzy does not lose much by not suiting his fancy: for he is most disagreeable, horrid man, not at all worth pleasing. So high and so conceited that there was no enduring him: He walked here and he walked there, fancying himself so very great".

III About whom are the following lines? *(Also mention the chapter where they occur)*:

(l) He was at the same time haughty, reserved, and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting.

.....

(m) Her mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous.

.....

(n) he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased; and not all his large estate in Derbyshire could then save him from having a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance, and being unworthy to be compared with his friend.

.....

(o) they were in fact fine ladies; not deficient in good humour when they were pleased, nor in the power of being agreeable when they chose it, but proud and conceited.

.....

(p) ©But no sooner had he made it clear to himself and his friends that she had hardly a good feature in her face than he began to find it was rendered uncommonly intelligent by the beautiful expressions of her dark eyes. To this discovery succeeded some others equally mortifying.

IV What impressions do Darcy and Elizabeth form of each other at their first meeting? Are there any changes later in Darcy's attitude towards her?

V Write a paragraph of about 10 lines on Mrs. Bennet, bringing out some of the chief traits of her character.

Section II Chapters 9-16

A. Summaries

i. Mother Visits Her Sick Child

On Friday morning Elizabeth requests a note to be sent home, and on receiving it Mrs. Bennet, accompanied by her two youngest daughters, comes to Netherfield to see Jane. Finding that her daughter's illness was not serious, she decides to keep her where she is. This she does somewhat clumsily by suggesting that Jane is too ill to be removed, a reflection on her host's hospitality. In course of the conversation in the breakfast parlour, Mrs. Bennet starts dropping bricks by failing to understand Darcy's comment on the want of variety in rural life and then somewhat childishly pointing to the 'four-and twenty families' with whom they dine. Elizabeth is alarmed lest her mother should expose herself again and artfully turns the conversation towards generalities. Before Mrs. Bennet takes her leave, Lydia, a little pertly for a girl of fifteen, extracts a promise from Bingley that on Jane's recovery he will give a ball. Lydia's head has room only for balls and gay army officers. (Ch.9).

ii. Mr. Darcy reveals his acuteness of judgment

The same evening, Jane having partially recovered, the party assembles in the drawing-room. Hurst and Bingley play piquet, watched by Mrs. Hurst. Darcy writes a letter to his sister, with Caroline making a running commentary to assert her hold over Darcy. A chance remark of Bingley's eliciting Elizabeth's praise, 'your humility disarms reproof', seems to draw out Dracy into a lucid if not kindly interpretation of such humility as an intended boast Darcy has apparently no opinion of rash

impulsiveness in conduct even between friends, and on perceiving that Bingley dislikes arguments, Darcy desists from further dissecting his friend's conduct. The letter, interrupted by Caroline's ceaseless patter, is at last finished. After a musical interval in which the Bingley sisters employ a repertoire of Italian and Scottish songs, Darcy fails to interest Elizabeth in dancing a reel. This solicitousness is not missed by Caroline who next morning, while taking a walk in the garden with Darcy, twits him mercilessly as much on the vulgarity of Elizabeth's relations as on the impertinence of Elizabeth herself. They suddenly come upon Elizabeth and Mrs. Hurst, the latter abruptly leaves Elizabeth alone and takes Darcy's free arm. The path is too narrow for more than three. Darcy, to make amends for the crude incivility of the Bingley sisters, suggests moving into a wider path, but Elizabeth takes her leave. (Ch.10).

iii. Jane recovers from her cold

After dinner Jane is well enough to come down to the drawing room where the Bingley sisters display a great deal of warmth until the arrival of the gentlemen. Miss Bingley at once turns her attention to Darcy. Bingley is genuinely pleased to find Jane recovered and is full of attention to her. Hurst, failing to get anyone interested in cards, goes to sleep. Darcy takes up a book. Caroline picks up the second volume of the same book and pretends to read until her brother's conversation with Jane raises his promise of a ball. Caroline tries to quash it as Darcy did not like such balls, but Bingley is committed to it. Failing to attract Darcy's attention Caroline walks about the room and persuades Elizabeth to do the same. This amuses Darcy who looks up and is invited to join the ladies. Darcy declines and declares that he can better admire their figure from his chair by the fire. This opens a gambit of conversation between Elizabeth and Darcy. The latter admits that he has faults. Elizabeth mischievously suggests that this may be 'a propensity to hate everybody'. Darcy counters it with the suggestion that hers was 'willfully to misunderstand them'. (Ch. 11)

iv. Jane and Elizabeth return

The next morning (Saturday) Elizabeth writes to her mother asking her to send a carriage to take them home. Mrs. Bennet, bent on Jane's spending a week with the Bingleys, advises them to stay on till Tuesday. This Elizabeth would not do. She persuades Jane to request the loan of the Bingley carriage and, mostly at Jane's insistence, consents to stay on until Sunday morning when the parting takes place. Bingley apart, everyone is pleased, particularly Caroline, "for her jealousy and dislike

of one sister much exceeded her affection for the other". At home, Mrs. Bennet is none too pleased at her plans being upset. (Ch. 12)

v. Mr. Collins arrives

Next morning Mr. Bennet announces an addition to the family party for dinner. Mrs. Bennet is excited at the prospect of Bingley's visit, but it turns out to be the unwelcome Mr. Collins to whom the family estate is entailed. This distant cousin has written to Mr. Bennet asking him not to reject the offered olive branch although his father had been openly hostile to the Bennets. He makes much of his patron, Lady Catherine, and offers to spend a week at Longbourn. The letter strikes Mr. Bennet as a mixture of servility and self-importance'. Mr. Collins proves to be as interesting as his epistolary style. However, he is warm in praising the beauty of Mrs. Bennet's daughters. This has the effect of mollifying Mrs. Bennet's earlier resentment. (Ch.13)

vi. Father and daughter enjoy Mr. Collins' pompousness

Dinner over, Mr. Bennet draws out his guest by praising Lady Catherine. The fulsome praise that Mr. Collins bestows on her, the reverential awe with which he speaks of her daughter, and the © manner in which he admits his attempts to please her, all fulfil the keenest expectations of Mr. Bennet and confirm his opinion of the absurdity of Mr. Collins' character. The seriousness of the clergyman is revealed when, on being called upon to read aloud, he puts aside a novel and reads out three pages from Fordyce's Sermons before the light-hearted Lydia interrupts him with some yearly irresponsible Meryton gossip. When the clerical anger is smothered by apologies from the mother and her more responsible daughters, Mr. Collins settles down to a game of backgammon with his host. (Ch. 14).

vii. Mr. Collins chaperons the Bennet sisters to Meryton

Mr. Collins, whose character Mr. Bennet had read correctly from his style, has invited himself to Longbourn to examine firsthand the truth of the general report of the beauty of the Bennet sisters so that he may pick one of them as his bride. This, he has no doubt, will be most generous of him: giving with one hand (at least to one) what he was taking away with the other. Learning from his hostess that Jane was almost engaged, he promptly fixes upon Elizabeth. Mrs. Bennet looks forward to seeing her two daughters happily disposed of. As Lydia is dying to visit her aunt at Meryton for more acquaintance with military high life there, all her sisters except Mary offer to visit Mrs. Philips, the aunt living at Meryton. To get rid of the obstinate Mr. Collins who breaks into Mr. Bennet's privacy in his library, Mr. Collins is persuaded to

accompany his young cousins. At Meryton, Lydia is intrigued by the presence of a handsome young subaltern in the company of Mr. Denny. Mr. Denny has just introduced Mr. Wickham, a stranger to the ladies, when Darcy and Bingley on horseback come upon them. Bingley tells Jane that he was on his way to look her up. Darcy bows, but suddenly stiffens at the sight of Wickham whose civility he barely acknowledges. Elizabeth does not miss this. When Darcy and Bingley ride back, the company walks to Mrs. Philips' house where the aunt is pleased to meet her nieces. Mr. Denny and Mr. Wickham refuse an invitation to come in but accept an invitation to supper next night. Mr. Collins is charmingly polite to Mrs. Philips. (Ch. 15).

viii. Wickham's version of Darcy's character

Mr. Collins' scruples in leaving Mr. Bennet and his wife alone having been overcome, he chaperons his five young cousins to the supper party at Meryton. To the delight of Lydia, Wickham is already there. Mr. Collins is warm in his admiration of the drawing-room furniture without ignoring his moral obligation to pass around the information that Lady Catherine's chimneypiece alone was worth eight hundred pounds. When the others sit down to whist. Wickham, who does not play whist, shares the same table with Lydia and Elizabeth to play a game of lotteries. He has ample opportunity to fall into conversation with Elizabeth once the fickle Lydia turns her attention to the prizes. Elizabeth's curiosity about the strange behaviour of Darcy at the mere sight of Wickham is satisfied by the eagerness with which he discusses Darcy. Encouraged by Elizabeth's report that Darcy is widely disliked because of his pride, Wickham proceeds, at first haltingly, to reveal how Darcy, prompted by jealous dislike, had done him great damage by going back on his (Darcy's) father's promise to secure him a living. Wickham shows how he has been driven into the army by Darcy's vindictiveness, although he should have belonged to the Church. As Wickham puts it, Darcy's father wanted to do a good turn to Wickham's father, a solicitor who looked after the extensive Darcy estate. Elizabeth wonders how an amiable gentleman like Mr. Bingley can put up with such an odious person, and Wickham admits that Darcy can make himself agreeable in suitable company. The whist party having broken up, we find that Mr. Collins making light of his losses (five shillings!), attributes the indifference to the generosity of Lady Catherine. From Wickham Elizabeth learns that Lady Catherine is Darcy's aunt. As to her character, Elizabeth's estimate, based on Collins' enthusiastic praise, that she is arrogant and conceited, is unreservedly supported by Wickham. (Ch. 16)

B. The Principal Incidents

Having reached this stage in the development of the story you could not have failed to notice that the action centers round three outstanding incidents:

(1) The illness of Jane.

(2) The arrival of Mr. Collins.

(3) The meeting between Elizabeth and Wickham at the supper-party at Meryton.

i. Jane's Illness

In a way Jane's illness is the doing of her mother, who had sent her on horseback to Netherfield in threatening weather. Apart from providing Mrs. Bennet with some satisfaction that Jane has been thrown into Bingley's company for at least five days, the forced stay, with Elizabeth looking after her, throws a great deal of light on the character of the Bingley sisters. The opportunity to observe them at close quarters for four days confirms Elizabeth's earlier estimate. The presence of Darcy at Netherfield leads to the beginning of Darcy's lively interest in Elizabeth's. We shall now take up the reactions of the principal characters to Jane's illness.

ii. The parents

Mr. Bennet vents his irritation when Jane reports her illness to Lizzy. He is exasperated at his wife's thoughtlessness and blurts out: "If your daughter should have a dangerous fit of illness-if she should die, it would be a comfort to know that it was all in pursuit of Mr. Bingley and under your orders" (P. 30, LL 2124, Ch. 7). His wife, on the other hand, very far from being put out, is so pleased with the success of her designs, that she declares "as long as she stays there it is all very well". (P. 30, L 26.Ch. 7). Her concern for her daughter's condition, when she goes to visit her, takes the concrete shape of a fear that she may return before the contemplated week is over. "She is a great deal too ill to be removed" (P. 40, L 21-22, Ch. 9), she says in reply to Bingley's enquiry about how she has found her daughter. Nor is she keen to have the daughters back and refuses to send the carriage to bring them home, even suggesting that they may extend their stay; "if Mr. Bingley and his sister pressed them to stay longer, she could spare them very well". (P. 58, LL 101. Ch. 12). Eventually when the sisters return, they were not welcomed very cordially by their mother'. (P59, LL 19-20, Ch. 2). All this shows that although the mother was not indifferent to Jane's suffering, she was much more concerned about Jane's prospects of engagement.

iii. Mr. Bingley

1. When Elizabeth goes to Netherfield 'she had the pleasure of distinguishing the much superior solicitude of Mr. Bingley's'. (p. 39, LL 3-5, Ch. 8). Elizabeth with her mental clarity perceives that this anxiety for Jane was evident' (ibid, LL. 4-15).
2. Bingley sends an inquiry early next morning through a housemaid (P. 39, LL 25-26, Ch. 9).
3. Unlike his sisters, he is genuinely shocked at the idea of having her removed. "Removed!", he says deprecatingly, "it must not be thought of". (P. 40, L 35, Ch. 9).
4. When Elizabeth decides to take her sister back home in Bingleys' carriage, her mother having refused to send hers, 'the master of the house heard with real sorrow that they were to go so soon'. (P. 58, LL 26-27, Ch. 12).

iv. The Bingley Sisters

1. When Elizabeth goes to visit Jane 'she saw how much affection and solicitude they showed for Jane'. (P. 32, LL 18-9, Ch. 7).
2. Shortly afterwards Elizabeth discovers their indifference towards Jane when not immediately before them'. (P. 33, LL 3-14, Ch. 8).
3. When Mrs. Bennet in her anxiety to keep Jane for as long as possible at Netherfield palpably exaggerates her condition, Miss Bingley is more sensitive to her hospitality than to Jane's illness: "you may depend upon it, madam", said Miss Bingley with cold civility, "that Miss Bennet shall receive every possible attention while she remains with us". (P. 40, LL 7-29, Ch. 9).
4. Miss Bingley's anxiety for the recovery of her dear friend Jane received some assistance from her desire of getting rid of Elizabeth'. (p. 5, LL 13-15, Ch. 10). The dislike for Elizabeth was fanned by her incipient jealousy.
5. Having persuaded Jane to stay one more day after her recovery, she regrets her civility "for her jealousy and dislike of one sister much exceeded her affection for the other'. (P. 58, LL 23-25, Ch. 12).

v. The Arrival of Mr. Collins

You are expected to notice from the very absurdity of Collins' letter to Mr. Bennet the kind of man he may prove to be. Father and daughter (Elizabeth) have little difficulty in seeing through the man. His chief importance lies in the fact that he links up with Darcy through his aunt Lady Catherine, his patron. It is at Rosings, Lady Catherine's country-house, that a great deal of action later takes place. We shall also find that Charlotte Lucas, whom he chooses as his bride, links up with Elizabeth, her intimate friend. Meanwhile, apart from unconsciously entertaining Mr. Bennet with the pompousness of his behaviour, he serves to accentuate the difference between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, a difference that comes to surface when Elizabeth, accentuate the difference between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, a difference that comes to surface when Elizabeth, a little later, rejects Mr. Collins' proposal of marriage. You cannot fail to perceive that while Mr. Bennet is confirmed in his dislike, his wife gets over her initial resentment of Mr. Collins intrusion.

vi. Mrs. Bennet's reactions to Mr. Collins

1. Mrs. Bennet like most women does not understand the intricacies of law. She therefore bitterly resents the entailing and, considering Collins an interloper, she says, 'Pray do not talk of that odious man.' (P. 61, L 4. Ch. 13).
2. Collins' admiration for the beauty of his cousins, and the excellence of the hall and the dining-room softens Mrs. Bennet's dislike: "His commendation of everything would have touched Mrs. Bennet's heart, but for the mortifying supposition of his viewing it all as his own future property". (P. 65, LL 1-4, Ch. 13).
3. On hearing that Collins was bent on choosing the mistress of his house from a girl at Longbourn, Mrs. Bennet overcomes her original dislike sufficiently to approve of Collins' designs on Elizabeth. Mrs. Bennet trusted that she might soon have two daughters married; and the man whom she could not bear to speak of the day before was now high in her good graces'. (P. 70, LL 26-29, Ch. 15).

vii. Mr. Bennet's estimate of Collins

1. Unlike his wife, Mr. Bennet has no unreasoning spite against Collins on the score of the entail, but he is greatly intrigued by the revelation of his nature in his letter. "There is a mixture of servility and self-importance in his letter which

promises well", he confides to his favourite daughter, Elizabeth (P. 63, LL 23-24, Ch. 13).

2. Mr. Bennet praises Lady Catherine to draw Collins out, and when the latter rushes into fulsome praise, 'Mr. Bennet's expectations were fully answered. His cousin was as absurd as he had hoped, and he listened to him with the keenest enjoyment'. (P. 67, LL. Ch. 14).

3. It is at Mr. Bennet's instance that Collins has to accompany his cousins (except Mary) to Meryton. Fearing that Collins would go on talking 'with little cessation of his house and garden at Hunsford', he 'was most prompt in inviting Mr. Collins to join his daughters in their walk'. (P. 71, LL 2-3, 9 10, Ch. 15).

4. Mr. Bennet overrides Mr. Collins' objection to leaving husband and wife at home while the others go to attend the supper-party of Mrs. Philips at Meryton. 'All Mr. Collins's scruples of leaving Mrs. Bennet for a single evening during his visit were most steadily resisted'. (P. 74. LL 19-21. Ch. 16). The resistance must have come mostly from Mr. Bennet who would dread to be left alone in Collins's company.

viii. Wickham's Disparagement of Darcy

The appearance of Wickham on the scene has an immediate effect on Elizabeth. Like others, she is impressed by the handsome looks and the easy address of this engaging young man. Later, when Wickham unveils a far from pleasing portrait of a proud and vindictive young aristocrat, Elizabeth, already prejudiced against Darcy, finds her dislike deepen into hatred. This is marked by the following stages:

1. She is at first only curious to know what lay between the two when at that chance meeting both changed colour. "What could be the meaning of it? It was impossible not to long to know". (P. 72, LL 20, 23 25. Ch. 5). As yet, it is just feminine curiosity.

2. At the supper party she is immediately impressed by Wickham's, conversational ability which makes her feel that the commonest, dullest, most threadbare topic might be rendered interesting by the skill of the speaker'. (P. 76, LL 3-5, Ch. 6).

3. She admits her dislike of Darcy with unusual promptness before a stranger: "I think him very disagreeable". (P. 77, LL 15-16, Ch. 16)

4. Learning from Wickham that Darcy had done him great harm out of a determined dislike, Elizabeth confesses that she has never suspected Darcy 'of descending to

such malicious revenge, such injustice, such inhumanity as this'. (P. 65, LL 24-25, Ch. 16).

5. On her way home from the party, Elizabeth, for all that she is so level-headed, is woman enough to find her head full of him. 'She could think of nothing but of Mr. Wickham.' (P. 84, LL 29-30, Ch. 16).

C. Check Your Progress

I Please tick off the correct answers:

1. Mrs. Bennet's manners when she goes out to visit Jane are
   (a) admirable.
   (b) absurd.
   (c) charming.
2. Mrs. Bennet's design to keep Jane at Netherfield for a week proves that she is
   (a) unfeeling
   (b) selfish
   (c) scheming for her daughter's engagement.
3. The person to read correctly Mr. Collins' nature from his letter is
   (a) Lydia.
   (b) Mary
   (c) Mr. Bennet.
4. Wickham's conversation with Elizabeth at the supper-party appears to be
   (a) frank.
   (b) reserved.
   (c) cynical.

II. State by whom, to whom and about whom are the following lines said:

(q) Yes, but intricate characters are the most amusing. They have at least that advantage.

By..... To ..... About .....

(b) No, no; stay where you are. You are charmingly grouped and appear to uncommon advantage. The picturesque would be spoilt by admitting a fourth. Goodbye.

By..... To ..... About .....

(c) I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, do divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can—But these I suppose, are precisely what you are without.

By..... To .....About.....

(r) My feelings are not puffed about with every attempt to move them. My temper could perhaps be called resentful. My good opinion once lost, is lost forever.

By..... To .....About.....

(s) No, my dear; I think not. I have great hopes of finding him quite the reverse. There is a mixture of servility and self-importance.....

By.....To..... About.....

(t) Her indifferent state of health unhappily prevents her being in Town; and by that means, as I told her myself one day, has deprived the British court of its brightest ornament.

By..... To ..... About . .....

(g) I have often observed how little young ladies are interested by books of a serious stamp, though written solely for their benefit.

By..... To ..... About.....

(h) The world is blinded by his fortune and consequence, or frightened by his high and imposing manners and sees him only as he chooses to be seen.

By..... .....To .... About.....

III. How does Elizabeth react to Darcy's request for a dance at Netherfield? On what previous occasion had she refused to dance with him? Why?

IV. What was Mr. Collins' plan of atonement for disinheriting the Bennet girls?

V. Why does Elizabeth feel ashamed of her family at Netherfield?

C. STUDY NOTES

1. "I have been used to consider poetry as the food of love" said Darcy. (P. 43, L 30, Ch. 9). This is a reminiscence of the Duke of Illyria's opening speech in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: 'If music be the food of love, play on'. (1.1.1.)
2. Elizabeth's observation on this view of Darcy's: "I am convinced that one good sonnet will starve it entirely away" (P. 34, LL 34-35, Ch. 9), is a veiled allusion to Jacque's cynical speech in Act II, Sc. Vii. Of Shakespeare's *As you like it*:

And then the lover,

Sighing like furnaces, with a woeful ballad,

Made to his mistress' eyebrow.

Section III Chapters 17-26

A. Summaries

i. Bingley invites the Bennets to the Ball

While Jane and Elizabeth are engaged in discussing Darcy's vindictive treatment of Wickham, Jane is greatly disinclined to take it as evidence of Darcy's guilt, both out of her good nature and out of consideration that Bingley could not have a friend so unworthy of him. Bingley with his sisters visits them to invite them to the ball at Netherfield. This leaves Mrs. Bennet highly pleased as she takes it to be a compliment to Jane. Elizabeth looks forward to the renewal of her acquaintance with Wickham. The two younger Bennet sisters are positively excited, and even the high-minded Mary consents to go; while the inimitable Mr. Collins dreading no rebuke either from the Archbishop or his patron, books his cousin Elizabeth for the first two dances which makes Elizabeth suspect that he was considering her for his matrimonial plans. But she decides to appear ignorant of his interest. Mrs. Bennet approves of Collins' attentions to her second daughter. (Ch. 17).

ii. The Ball at Netherfield

Elizabeth overhears Mr. Denny in conversation with Lydia at the ball on the following Tuesday—saying that although invited, Wickham had gone to town on business ostensibly to avoid meeting a certain gentleman. At this, Elizabeth finds it difficult to avoid a certain rudeness towards Bingley for having been influenced by Darcy. Having gone through the torture of dancing with Mr. Collins, who was an awkward

dancer, Elizabeth finds herself accepting Darcy's offer for a dance. Her rankling resentment against Darcy for his shabby treatment of Wickham makes conversation with him difficult and as soon as the talks of Wickham, Darcy can ill-conceal his disgust. When they part at the end of the dance, Elizabeth is accosted by Miss Bingley who says that Wickham was not worthy of Darcy's consideration, adding maliciously that one could hardly expect anything better from a steward's son. Though Jane passes on to Elizabeth Bingley's view that Wickham was no gentleman, Elizabeth remains rooted in her dislike for Darcy because after all Bingley did not know Wickham personally.

Meanwhile Mr. Collins, despite Elizabeth's advice to the contrary, thrusts himself on Darcy as soon as he gets to know that Darcy was the nephew of Lady Catherine. The cold politeness with which Darcy answers him is vainly interpreted by Mr. Collins as a warm reception. To Elizabeth the bearing of her family is a sore trial. First her mother, seated next to Lady Charlotte at supper, starts an animated monologue on the excellent prospects of Jane's marriage, which is overheard by Darcy with unforeseeable results and Elizabeth's warnings only serve to make Mrs. Bennet audibly rude to Darcy. Then Mary, an indifferent singer, too readily offers to sing, and while the Bingley sisters exchange derisive glances at her expense, Mary has to be stopped by Mr. Bennet from going on singing indefinitely. Finally, Mr. Collins delivers a characteristic speech in his pompous manner on the duties of the clergy and bows obsequiously to Darcy because he was his patron's nephew. When the Longbourn family finally take their leave, delayed ingeniously by Mrs. Bennet, apart from Bingley, the others are bored and make to attempt to conceal their feelings. (Ch. 18).

iii. Mr. Collins' proposal

The next day Mr. Collins in the presence of Mrs. Bennet and Kitty seeks Mrs. Bennet's permission to have a private interview with his fair cousin Elizabeth. The delighted Mrs. Bennet offers immediately to take Kitty upstairs, and ignoring Elizabeth's appeal to her to stay on, leaves her with Mr. Collins. The dreaded proposal comes, but love plays little part in it. Mr. Collins admits that (1) as a clergyman he should set an example to his parish. (2) the marriage will make him happy and (3) that in preparing to marry he was acting upon the advice of Lady Catherine. He does not even conceal his magnanimity in choosing a bride without much dowry. Elizabeth's refusal draws Mr. Collins into greater and greater absurdity and convinced that he is far from being unworthy of Miss Elizabeth puts down her

refusal to maidenly bashfulness according to the usual practice of elegant females'. Elizabeth contemplates applying to her father in case of further insistence. (Ch. 19).

iv. Mr. Collins resigns himself to the inevitable

The sight of Elizabeth's withdrawal from the room, brings her mother, confident of the successful outcome of the tete-a-tete, bursting into the room. Mr. Collins' report of Elizabeth's refusal, in spite of his optimistic gloss on it, fails to reassure Mrs. Bennet who promises to make her daughter see reason. She storms into Mr. Bennet's library and demands that he make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins. Mr. Bennet summons Elizabeth and tells her that while her mother has threatened to cut her off if she rejected Mr. Collins, he would have nothing to do with her if she accepted him. This throws Mrs. Bennet into her usual fit of nerves, and when Charlotte Lucas comes to spend the day with them, she upbraids Elizabeth in Charlotte's presence for her undutiful conduct and even asks Charlotte to try to persuade her friend into accepting the offer. However, Mr. Collins who is suffering from nothing worse than a blow to his vanity delivers another sermon and reveals his decision to withdraw his suit. (Ch. 20).

v. The Bingleys leave Netherfield

While the consequences of refusing Mr. Collins are such as to make Elizabeth quite uncomfortable, the injured Mr. Collins maintains a resentful silence, and transfers his attention to Charlotte Lucas who listens to him with admirable civility. After breakfast the Bennet sisters walk to Meryton and come across Wickham who is easily persuaded to visit their parents. As soon as Wickham and his companion take their leave, Elizabeth joins Jane who has received a letter from Miss Bingley. Jane is upset by the announcement that the Bingleys propose to spend the winter in London. This is serious enough, but Miss Bingley has gone further to express a hope that her brother would eventually marry Darcy's sister of whom he would see a great deal in London. Disagreeing with Jane's fears, Elizabeth interprets the letters as nothing more serious than Caroline's attempt to persuade Jane that Bingley did not care for her, precisely because Miss Bingley was not such a simpleton as not to perceive that her brother was deeply in love with her. Elizabeth dismisses with contempt the idea that Bingley would not return and Jane, not being gloomy by nature, feels encouraged. But the sisters though they inform their mother of the departure of the Bingleys keep from her the information that the Bingleys would stay away from Netherfield all winter. (Ch. 21).

vi. Charlotte catches Collins on the rebound

The night the Bennets dine with the Lucases, Charlotte goes on engaging the attention of Mr. Collins earning thus the gratitude of her friend Elizabeth. But she keeps her own counsel and when Mr. Collins surreptitiously leaves Longbourn next morning to pay her a call she goes out to meet him by design in the lane. A lightning proposal follows and the worldly-wise Charlotte promptly accepts it. The approval of the parents is sought and obtained. Utterly unlike Elizabeth in her sensibilities, Charlotte argues that marriage even without love is not to be despised by a plain dowerless woman of twenty-seven. Extracting a promise of secrecy from Mr. Collins, Charlotte proposes to break it to Elizabeth whose friendship she esteems.

Mr. Collins takes his leave overnight prior to his departure early next morning. His promise to return early raises hopes in Mamma Bennet's heart about the prospects of Mary, but Mr. Bennet cautions him against the possible disapprobation of Lady Catherine arising from frequent absence from duty. The real reason of his coming back soon, however, is revealed when Charlotte comes next morning to tell her of her engagement. Elizabeth's regard for her friend receives a rude jolt when she finds that Charlotte could sacrifice every delicate sentiment to worldly advantage. (Ch. 22).

vii. More confirmation of the engagement

Later in the day Sir William Lucas himself visits the Bennets to pass on the glad tidings and is rudely challenged by Mrs. Bennet until Elizabeth confirms it. Mr. Bennet is amused by the stupidity of Charlotte while his wife is disconsolate with jealousy. She is deeply enraged with Elizabeth and cannot forgive the Lucases for this affront to her pride. Lady Lucas makes several unwelcome calls, each visit causing Mrs. Bennet more pain.

Meanwhile Elizabeth is disturbed by the fact that Jane's prompt reply to Miss Bingley's letter remained unanswered. She cannot underestimate the influence of the sisters and Darcy on Bingley's relation with Jane. While Elizabeth spares Jane's feelings, her mother intensifies her misery by worrying over Bingley's conduct. Mr. Collins returns a fortnight later to Longbourn and is too happy in his felicity to resent the coldness of his reception, and in any case he spends most of his time at the Lucas Lodge. Mrs. Bennet is infuriated at the thought of Collins eventually driving Charlotte away from Longbourn and fulminates against the iniquitous law of entail. (Ch. 23).

viii. Jane Bennet's good sense

Jane receives a second letter from Caroline Bingley which announces their final decision to spend the winter in London. While Elizabeth admits that her confidence in human nature has been rudely shocked by Charlotte's acceptance of Mr. Collins and Mr. Bingley's coldness towards Jane, Jane reveals both a more charitable and a shrewder understanding of life. She points out to still sceptical Elizabeth that Charlotte might have genuine regard and esteem for Mr. Collins, and that the acceptance was in accord with her steady prudent character. With regard to Elizabeth's insinuation that Bingley was open to his sisters influence Jane dismisses it and attributes his apparent coldness to her mistake in assuming that Bingley was ever in love with her. Rather than think ill of anybody and make herself miserable Jane is prepared to admit that women are apt to overestimate the admiration of men. Elizabeth is not convinced by her sister's arguments but refrains from further wounding her feelings. While the Bennet family, excepting its head, are all nursing their resentment against the Bingleys, Wickham comes close to them and fans their dislike for Darcy. Jane alone feels that there may be extenuating circumstances in Darcy's favour. (Ch. 24).

ix. The Gardiners spend their Christmas at Longbourn

Mr. Collins after fixing up his day for being united in holy wedlock to Charlotte, takes his leave of the Bennets. Shortly after, the Gardiners pay their annual Christmas visit to Longbourn. Mr. Gardiner, a successful tradesman in London, is unlike both his sisters Mrs. Bennet and Mrs. Philips. His wife, considerably younger than her sister-in-law, is popular with her nieces and particularly fond of Jane and Eliza. After Mrs. Bennet has expressed her disappointment at the failure of both her elder daughters to get husbands, Mrs. Gardiner tries to probe the situation in an intimate conversation with Elizabeth. Because of her greater experience of life, she is not quite convinced of Bingley's intensity of love for Jane although Elizabeth vouches for it. However, she suggests that a change of scene may help Jane to get over her pain and offers to take her to London. Elizabeth still hopes that Bingley's interest in Jane may be revived. The presence of the Gardiners gives Mrs. Bennet an excuse for a round of social engagements and the officers at Meryton and particularly Wickham, are very much to be seen. Mrs. Gardiner is intrigued by Elizabeth's partiality for Wickham's dashing personality. (Ch. 25)

x. Caroline Bingley stands revealed before Jane

At the earliest opportunity Mrs. Gardiner opens her mind to Elizabeth and cautions her against being swept off her feet by Wickham who for all his obvious charms, has no fortune. Elizabeth denies that she is in love with Wickham and promises not to lose her head.

Soon after the departure of the Gardiners for London together with Jane, the irrepressible Mr. Collins comes back to Hertfordshire to claim his bride but now stays with Sir William Lucas. When Charlotte comes to pay a farewell visit to the Bennets on the day before the weddings Mrs. Bennet remains cold if not hostile. But Elizabeth promises to keep up some correspondence with her friend and accepts her invitation to visit her new home in Kent in company with Charlotte's father and sister during the coming March. When the bride starts her correspondence with Elizabeth the latter replies promptly although she feels that real intimacy between the two would never be possible again.

Meanwhile, Jane reports her safe arrival in London, but Elizabeth's curiosity about how Jane would be received by Caroline is not satisfied till a week later when Elizabeth learns that Jane had paid a visit to the Bingley sisters at Grosvenor Street. The visit is brief as the sisters were going out, but Caroline is reported to be glad to see Jane. Jane's third letter from London reveals that Bingley had not looked up Jane even in a month's time and Caroline's second belated call on Jane had been very brief and had revealed such a change in Carloine's attitude to Jane that the latter could no longer deny that Elizabeth's estimate of the insincerity of the Bingley sisters was correct. But Jane does not find it in her to be violent in her outbursts, and charitably ascribes this coldness towards the sisters' legitimate interest in the happiness of their brother. Although she knows that every attempt at intimacy had proceeded from the Bingley sisters and she could not accuse herself of being presumptuous, it is only her good nature which prevents her from being bitter. This enlightenment hurts Elizabeth but also leaves her relieved that Jane would be free from further illusions.

As to her own affairs Elizabeth, true to her promise, has to report to her aunt that Wickham's attentions had been transferred to a young lady, Miss King, with a substantial fortune. As this hardly leaves her heartbroken she argues that she could not have been much in love with Wickham. Strangely enough Elizabeth does not feel like condemning Mr. Wickham for being materialistic though she had disapproved of Charlotte for this very reason. (Ch. 26).

B. Principal Events

Having reached this stage in the development of the plot you cannot have failed to notice that the present section chiefly centres round Mr. Collins who with remarkable alacrity proposes to Elizabeth and Charlotte in quick succession. In a way, although he is absurd, his very absurdity helps him to hold the centre of the stage. The other character to engage our attention is Jane, who in complete contrast to her more vivacious sister, displays a good nature and an optimistic trust illustrated by:

1. her view that Darcy's' treatment of Wickham might have some other explanation than the one readily accepted by Elizabeth;
2. her more charitable and understanding attitude to Charlotte for having accepted Mr. Collins;
3. her refusal to fall in with Elizabeth's suggestion that Bingley was open to his sister's influence in the matter of spending the winter in London;

We thus find that the cardinal events are:

(u) Mr. Collins' proposal to Elizabeth, and on her refusal, to Charlotte.

(ii) Bingley's departure for London.

i. The effects of Mr. Collins' Proposals

❖ **On Mrs. Bennet**

1. Mrs. Bennet encourages Mr. Collins in his attentions to Elizabeth soon after his arrival at Longbourn, "Mrs. Bennet...trusted that she might soon have two daughters married; and the man whom she could not bear to speak of the day before was now high in her good graces." (P. 70; LL 26-29; Ch. 15).
2. When Mr. Collins pompously seeks a private audience with Elizabeth Mrs. Bennet is very quick to respond. She dismisses Elizabeth's request to her to stay on; "Lizzy, I insist upon you staying and hearing Mr. Collins". (P. 106; LL 1-2; Ch. 19).
3. She rushes to Mr. Bennet on hearing that Elizabeth had refused Mr. Collins and asks him to force Elizabeth into marrying Collins: "You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins." (P. 112; LL 11-12; Ch. 20).
4. She is sore with Elizabeth and ticks her off for her ungratefulness: "I have done with you from this very day." (P. 114; LL 29-30; Ch. 20).

5. When Mr. Collins announces his intention to come back to Netherfield to continue his wooing of Charlotte Lucas, Mrs. Bennet completely in the dark about his intentions, characteristically hopes that one of the younger daughters, probably Mary, would receive his addresses: "Mrs. Bennet wished to understand by it that he thought of paying his addresses to one of her younger girls, and Mary might have been prevailed on to accept him." (P. 126; LL 13-15; Ch 22).

6. On being enlightened that Charlotte had accepted Mr. Collins' proposal she is furious both with Elizabeth for her folly and with Charlotte for her impudence. "A week elapsed before she could see Elizabeth without scolding her, a month passed away before she could speak to Sir William or Lady Lucas without being rude." (P. 129; LL 20-22; Ch. 23).

7. Shortly before Charlotte's wedding she confides in Mrs. Gardiner her resentment against Lizzy's 'perverseness': "The consequence of it is that Lady Lucas will have a daughter married before I have." (P. 140; LL 20-22; Ch. 25).

❖ **On Mr. Collins*:***

1. In making his proposal to Elizabeth Mr. Collins wastes no words on false sentiments and is too gloriously absorbed in himself to enquire whether the young lady felt any interest in him at all. His chief thought is of his own happiness: "I am convinced it will add very greatly to my own happiness." (P. 106; LL 34-35; Ch. 19).

2. When Elizabeth turns down his offer of marriage, he is still too egotistic to fear that she does not care for him. He is absurdly confident of his own worth: "It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy of your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable." (P. 109; last line; P. 110; L 11; Ch. 19).

3. When Mrs. Bennet in her anxiety attributes her refusal to youthful impulsiveness, Mr. Collins, still completely unconcerned with Elizabeth's happiness seizes this as an excuse for losing his interest "it were better not to force her into accepting me" says he with delightful vanity, "because if liable to such defects of temper, she could not contribute much to my felicity". (P.111; last line; P. 112; L 1; Ch. 20).

4. Far from feelings distraught as a disappointed lover he pompously admires his own clerical trait of resignation: "Resignation to inevitable evils is the duty of us

all: The peculiar duty of a young man who has been so unfortunate as I have been in early preferment; and I trust I am resigned". (P. 115; LL 24-27; Ch. 20).

5. He starts paying court to Charlotte Lucas with an unbecoming promptitude and after a lightning proposal is accepted by the realistic Charlotte who "felt no inclination to trifle with his happiness". (P. 123; LL 29-30; Ch. 22).

❖ **On Mr. Bennet*:***

1. Lizzy being his favourite daughter, her father is much more concerned with his daughter's happiness, and when appealed to by his wife to reason with her and persuade her into accepting Mr. Collins' hand, turns the tables with his characteristic announcement: "Your mother will not see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do". (P, 113; LL 7-9 Ch. 20).

2. Far from feeling unhappy at Charlotte's triumph in securing her match, he is intrigued by her foolishness: "it gratified him he said, to discover that Charlotte Lucas, whom he had been used to think tolerably sensible, was as foolish as his wife, and more foolish than his daughter." (P. 129; LL 27-30; Ch. 23).

❖ **On Charlotte Lucas:**

1. We cannot ascertain her earliest reactions, for when Mrs. Bennet bewails Lizzy's folly, "Charlotte's reply was spared by the entrance of Jane and Elizabeth". (P. 114; LL 20-21; Ch. 20).

2. When Elizabeth appeals to her to engage Mr. Collins with her civility she readily agrees, but her "kindness extended farther than Elizabeth had any conception of: its object was nothing less than to secure her from any return of Mr. Collins' addresses: by engaging them towards herself." (P. 123; LL 1-4; Ch. 22).

3. "When she accepts Mr. Collins, her reflections were in general satisfactory'. (P. 124; L 20; Ch. 22).

4. Conscious of 'the surprise it must occasion to Elizabeth Bennet, whose friendship she valued beyond that of any other person'. (P. 123; LL 31-33; Ch. 22), she confesses to Elizabeth: "I am not romantic you know; I never was, I ask only a comfortable home." (P. 127; LL 17-18; Ch. 22).

ii. Bingley's Sudden Departure for London

❖ **Jane's Reactions:**

1. When Jane hears from Caroline that they had no intention of coming back to Netherfield and that her brother was cultivating the acquaintance of Darcy's sister, unlike Elizabeth who suspects the hand of the scheming Bingley sisters, Jane feels that "Caroline is incapable of willfully deceiving anyone; and all that I can hope in this case is, that she is deceived herself." (P. 121; LL 9-11; Ch. 21).
2. When Bingley had been gone a week and Caroline had not sent a reply to Jane's letter, "As for Jane, her anxiety under this suspense was, of course, more painful that Elizabeth's". (P. 131; LL 28-29; Ch. 23).
3. On receipt of Caroline's second letter which removed all doubt about the Bingley's return, while Elizabeth seethed with resentment, Jane is prepared to admit that she may have been mistaken in interpreting Bingley's attentions. In any case she does not lose faith in human nature: "If they (the Bingley sisters) believed him attached to me, they would not try to part us; if he were so, they could not succeed." (P. 137; LL 27-29; Ch. 24).
4. Desirous of a change of scene after Bingley's apparent defection "Miss Bennet accepted her aunt's invitation with pleasure." (P. 124, L 30; Ch. 25).
5. She realizes, while in London, with considerable pain that her earlier estimate of Caroline's sincerity was entirely mistaken, and confesses in her letter to Lizzy that Caroline "was in every respect so altered a creature, that when she went away, I was perfectly resolved to continue the acquaintance no longer". (P. 148; LL 30-32; Ch. 26).

❖ **Elizabeth's Reactions:**

1. When Jane receives Caroline's first letter, she interprets the announcement of staying in London as part of Caroline's scheme: "She follows him to town in the hope of keeping him there, and tries to persuade you that he does not care about you." (P. 120; LL 21-23; Ch. 21).
2. The long-awaited reply to Jane's letter to Caroline left her sister uneasy: "Even Elizabeth began to fear—not that Bingley was indifferent—but that his sisters would be successful in keeping him away." (P. 131; LL 18-20; Ch. 23).

3. When Caroline's second letter had made it obvious that the Bingleys had no intention of returning to Netherfield, Elizabeth confesses to Jane: "every day confirms my belief the inconsistency of all human characters, and of the little dependence that can be placed on the appearance of either merit or sense." (P. 135; LL 62-28; Ch. 24).

4. Elizabeth approves of her aunt Mrs. Gardiner's plan to take Jane to London in the hope that it might lead to Jane's rehabilitation: "She thought it probable that his affection might be re-animated, and the influence of his friends successfully combated by the more natural influence of Jane's attractions." (P. 142; LL 26-29; Ch. 25).

5. On receiving Jane's letter from London revealing the growing coldness of Caroline towards Jane, Elizabeth is relieved to find that Jane had lost her illusions: "The letter gave Elizabeth some pain; but her spirits returned as she considered that Jane would no longer be duped, by the sisters at least." (P. 149; LL 29-31; Ch. 26).

❖ **Mrs. Bennet's Reactions:**

1. On being apprised that the Bingley sisters had joined their brother in London she is greatly concerned, "and she bewailed it as exceedingly unlucky that the ladies should happen to go away, just as they were all getting so intimate together." (P. 122; LL 3-15; Ch. 21).

2. The report gaining currency in the neighbourhood that Bingley would not return to Netherfield during the winter "highly incensed Mrs. Bennet, and which she never failed to contradict as a most scandalous falsehood". (P. 131; LL 15-17; Ch. 23).

3. She is so critical of Bingley's coldness that even Jane cannot help speaking out to Elizabeth: "She can have no idea of the pain she gives me by her continual reflections on him." (P. 134; LL 30-31; Ch. 24).

4. When Mrs. Gardiner comes to spend her Christmas at Longbourn Mrs. Bennet is loud in her lamentations on her daughters having failed to secure a husband: "I do not blame Jane", she continued, "for Jane would have got Mr. Bingley, if she could". (P. 140; LL 17-18; Ch. 25).

C. Check Your Progress

I. Answer the following questions.

1. "The prospect of the Netherfield ball was extremely agreeable to every female of the family". (P. 87; LL 1-2). Elucidate.
2. Why did Elizabeth feel ashamed of her mother and Mr. Collins at the Netherfield ball?
3. hy did Charlotte Lucas accept Mr. Collins?
4. How did Mrs. Bennet react to the announcement of Charlotte's engagement to Mr. Collins?
5. Show how Jane's letter from London reveals her realization of the insincerity of the Bingley sisters.
6. Show how Mr. Collins request to Elizabeth to dance the first two dances with him was the prelude to his proposal.
7. How does Elizabeth accept Jane's account of Bingley's impression of the Darcy Wickham affair?
8. Why did Mr. Bennet approve of Elizabeth's rejection of Mr. Collins?

II. Tick off the correct statements

1. Elizabeth's conviction that Darcy had been vindictive to Wickham is
   (a) shaken.
   (b) rudely shattered.
   (c) confirmed.

   By Darcy's and Caroline Bingley's accounts at the Ball.
2. Charlotte Lucas accepted Mr. Collins because she was
   (a) in love.
   (b) jealous of Elizabeth.
   (c) ambitious.
3. Caroline Bingley decided to leave Netherfield because
   (a) she wanted to keep her brother away from Jane.

(b) Bingley was in love with Darcy's sister.

(c) they had pressing business in London.

(d) Darcy was in love with her.

4. Mr. Collins proposal to Elizabeth is prompted by

(a) love.

(b) fascination for Elizabeth's beauty.

(c) vanity.

5. Mr. Wickham did not attend the Netherfield ball because

(a) he was ill.

(b) he wanted to avoid Darcy.

(c) he was called away by business.

6. Mrs. Gardiner was

(a) Mr. Bennet's sister.

(b) Mrs. Bennet's sister.

(c) Mrs. Philip's sister.

(d) wife of Mrs. Bennet's brother.

7. When Wickham turns his attention to Miss King, Elizabeth is

(a) heart broken.

(b) relieved.

(c) hurt.

(d) jubilant

8. When Elizabeth learns that Charlotte has accepted Mr. Collins she is

(a) pleased.

(b) hurt.

(c) critical.

(d) indifferent

III What light does Mr. Collins' proposal to Elizabeth throw on his character?

IV Analyze the shrewdness of Mrs. Gardiner in the light of

(a) her judgment of Bingley's attachment

(b) her correct reading of Elizabeth's interest in Wickham.

V Account for the contrast between the attitudes of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet regarding Elizabeth's refusal of Mr. Collins' proposal.

Section III Chapters 27-38

A. Summaries

i. Elizabeth visits her aunt enroute Kent

With hardly anything happening to excite the Bennets, the winter slowly passes away and in March Elizabeth accompanies Sir William and his daughter Maria to visit Charlotte at Hunsford. Elizabeth spends a day in London with her aunt Mrs. Gardiner who takes her to a play where, between scenes, they discuss Jane's affair and Wickham's somewhat sudden interest in Miss King. Elizabeth, however, is without any bitterness against Wickham. Before resuming her journey to Kent, Elizabeth is delighted with her aunt's invitation to accompany them the following summer on a pleasure tour to the Lake District in the North. (Ch. 27).

ii. Elizabeth reaches Hunsford

Relieved to find Jane, if not in good spirits, at least in good health, Elizabeth is pleased with what she sees on the way to Kent. As soon as they reach the Parsonage, Collins and Charlotte come out to receive them at the door. Elizabeth is moved by her friend's warmth and finds Mr. Collins his usual self, as deliciously pompous and ostentatiously formal as ever. The guests are taken around the house and then on to the garden, working in which was one of Collins' most respectable pleasures. Collins talks of his garden more out of pride than out of real feeling. Through an opening in the trees, they have a brief and satisfying glimpse of the splendours of Rosings, Lady Catherine's countryseat. At dinner, Mr. Collins preens himself on dining twice a week with Lady Catherine and assures Elizabeth that she and Maria would certainly be graciously invited by his patron. The evening is spent in relating Hertfordshire gossip. The next day afternoon the entire household is in a flutter, and Maria runs excitedly upstairs asking Elizabeth to hurry downstairs. Expecting, at least, that pigs may have strayed into the garden, she is disappointed to find an elderly lady, whom she mistakenly takes to be Lady Catherine, and her daughter, seated in a low phaeton at

the garden gate. The elderly lady turns out to be Mrs. Jenkinson. Elizabeth thinks it uncommonly rude of them to keep the Collinses out in such wintry cold; but everyone seem overwhelmed by this attention from Rosings, and Elizabeth is greatly amused at the spectacle of the speechless Sir William bowing repeatedly to the ladies. However, Elizabeth learns that the whole party had been invited to dine in the distinguished company at Rosings the next day. (Ch. 28).

iii. The dinner at Rosings

The promptness with which Lady Catherine had extended her invitation gives the gratified Mr. Collins an opportunity to sing her praises, and he assures Elizabeth that she need not worry about her dress, as Lady Catherine would expect her to be simply rigged out. As the party walks across the park to Rosings, Elizabeth is the only one to approach the house without any trepidation. On meeting Lady Catherine, Elizabeth feels that Wickham's estimate of her character is essentially sound: she is self-centered and domineering. After a sumptuous dinner, in ©h the dishes, the service and the mistress of the house are at their spectacular best, the ladies withdraw for coffee into the drawing room. Lady Catherine displays a most lively curiosity in the minutest details of Charlotte's domestic arrangements, offering critical advice on almost everything, and then turns her attention to Maria and more pointedly to Elizabeth. Not in the least overwhelmed, unlike Maria who is too confused to be coherent, Elizabeth converses freely with Lady Catherine, until exasperated by her condescending air and her officious comments on the accomplishments of her sisters, and her mother's carelessness in not employing a governess for their instruction, she speaks bluntly which draws a sharp censure from the hostess who is not used to hear anyone speak up to her. After the coffee, they sit down to play cards, and Lady Cartherine remains as domineering at the cards table as at the dinner, finding fault with others. When the mother and the daughter have had enough, the game abruptly stops, and they are offered a lift in her ladyships carriage as Collins had so portentously promised to Elizabeth. Collins continues to praise Lady Catherine on the drive back to Hunsford. (Ch. 29).

iv. Mr. Darcy visits his aunt at Easter

Sir William after spending a week with his daughter goes back and Elizabeth is relieved to find Mr. Collins too preoccupied with reading and gardening to pay more attention to his guests. The routine of dining twice a week at Rosings continues. Elizabeth observes that Lady Catherine had made herself a kind of unofficial Justice

of the Peace, administering both advice and chastisement to most people living in Collins' parish. After spending a quiet fortnight at Hunsford, she finds the Parsonage humming with excitement at the expected visit of Darcy. The day he arrives together with another cousin, Col. Fitzwilliam, Lady Catherine's brother's son, Collins stands on the road to bow to them and goes out to Rosings to pay his respects the following morning. Highly to the delectation of the parson and his wife, her ladyship's distinguished nephews visit them. The colonel is soon at his ease with his free and easy manners. Darcy is constrained and aloof. Elizabeth, keen on watching his reactions, asks him whether he had met Jane in London. Darcy looks somewhat confused when he admits that he had not. (Ch. 30).

v. Fitzwilliam exercises his charms

With guests of an equal social standing to look after, Lady Catherine is none too eager for the company of the Collinses, and it is not till Easter-day that the Parsonage is asked to spend the evening, but not to dine. Col. Fitzwilliam had paid several calls during the week, and when the parson and his relations call at Rosings, the colonel becomes particularly agreeable to Elizabeth who had caught his fancy. As they seem to be enjoying their conversation, Lady Catherine, feeling left out, intervenes with well-worn cliches on music and boasts how both she and her daughter might have been adepts at playing the piano. Observing tritely on the necessity of practice, she condescendingly invites Elizabeth to play on Mrs. Jenkinson's pianoforte as she will not be in the way, in that part of the house. This makes Darcy wince. During intervals of playing, she playfully chaffs Darcy in the presence of his cousin on his pride and exclusiveness. When Lady Catherine deigns to comment on Elizaeth's playing, she finds her inferior to her daughter in taste, but Elizabeth is intrigued to find that praises of Anne leave Darcy completely cold. Elizabeth tolerates Lady Catherine's spate of uncalled for advice, out of politeness. (Ch. 31).

vi. Charlotte wonders if Darcy was partial to Lizzy

The following morning, Elizabeth, alone at the Parsonage, receives Darcy who was unaccompanied by his cousin. Somewhat surprised by this unexpected tete-a-tete, Elizabeth feels constrained by the privacy. She cultches at the first straw to keep conversation going: an enquiry whether the Bingleys intended to come back to Netherfield at all. The awkwardness is relieved by the return of Charlotte and Maria. Shortly afterwards Darcy takes his leave. Charlotte speculates on Darcy's attentions to Elizabeth but finds it difficult from Darcy's far from animated behaviour to conclude

whether he was really in love with her. Col. Fitzwilliam, according to her estimate, would make a suitable match, but Darcy had an overpowering consideration in his favour: his fortune. (Ch. 32).

vii. Elizabeth meets Fitzwilliam on her walk

Elizabeth has her favourite walk, a ramble through the Park. She encounters Darcy during one of these jaunts, and to keep him away warns him that it was one of her haunts. Evidently by design rather than by accident, Darcy meets her twice again. They talk little, and Elizabeth is embarrassed when at a third meeting, Darcy plies her with unconnected questions. Still later, one morning when Elizabeth rambles along her favourite beat, she chances upon Col. Fitzwilliam. Together, they wend their way back to the Parsonage. Starting from the announcement that they intended to leave Kent on Saturday unless Darcy chose to put it off, the conversation turns around Darcy's willfulness, as an instance of which Fitzwilliam cites the case of a friend of Darcy's whom he had deliberately kept away from making an unsuitable match by exerting his personal influence. Although no names are mentioned, Elizabeth has no difficulty in realizing that Darcy had been responsible for breaking Jane's heart. Naturally it deepens her dislike for Darcy. She makes herself ill by her strong feeling for her sister's happiness, and despite Collins' warning that her absence would not be condoned by Lady Catherine, stays at home while the rest of the household hastens to Rosings to keep in good humour the exacting hostess. (Ch. 33).

viii. Darcy proposes to Elizabeth who speaks out her mind

While Elizabeth nurses her grievances against Darcy for causing so much misery to Jane, she is surprised to receive a visit from Darcy, who abruptly startles her with a declaration of love and a proposal of marriage which he admits ran counter to all considerations of social propriety. In turning down the proposal Elizabeth admits that she had felt a dislike for him from the first meeting at the Meryton ball, a dislike of his pride and superciliousness. She charges him with complicity in effecting an estrangement between Bingley and her sister and with vindictive malice in deliberately ruining the career of Wickham. Honesty compels Darcy to own up his responsibility in preventing what he considers socially a most undesirable match for his friend, an objection equally valid in his own case, which his heart had prompted him to override. In the case of Wickham, he only makes it plain that he had felt hurt at Elizabeth's estimate of his conduct, but he takes no pains to justify himself. Darcy accepts the dismissal of his suit with admirable dignity, and leaves Elizabeth in a

confused state. As a woman, she can hardly be insensible of having moved the heart of such proud and exclusive a man, but she can hardly forgive his cold and contemptuous manner. When Charlotte returns, Elizabeth keeps away from her. (Ch. 34).

ix. Darcy hands a letter of explanation to Elizabeth

Elizabeth still perturbed by her stormy refusal of Darcy's suit, goes out for a walk next morning, and is accosted by Darcy who hands her a letter and immediately withdraws himself. Opening the letter, Elizabeth finds two closely written sheets. Without containing a single comment on what had passed between them, the letter tries to vindicate his deliberate attempt to prevent Bingley from marrying Jane, and also to lay bare the real character of Wickham. Regarding the former, Darcy admits that he had always disapproved of the match not only because the Bennets were socially inferior, but also because Mrs. Bennet and her three younger daughters had little to recommend them as relations by marriage. Moreover, he had never felt convinced from Jane's behaviour that she was really in love with his friend. The only duplicity that he regrets in this sorry affair is that although he knew that Jane was in town, he had kept this information from Bingley. Darcy generously admits that Elizabeth and Jane were the only exception to the objection against their family, but disowns any responsibility in consciously causing any pain to Jane. With regard to the charge of having ruined the career of Wickham out of spite, Darcy unfolds the story of this attractive reprobate who had won the affections of his father and the promise of a living, but on his (Darcy's) father's death and declared his disinclination to taking holy orders and taken three thousand pounds to cover the expenses of a legal training. Wickham had never been called to the bar and had run through the amount in idleness and dissipation. His final act of disloyalty to the Darcys was to try to elope with Darcy's young sister, Georgiana, who had been sent to Ramsgate under the care of a Mrs. Younge, whom Wickham had known and whose aid he obtained. Georgiana had consented to elope with Wickham but Darcy had providentially come to visit his sister who confided in him and the catastrophe was averted. Darcy finally invites Elizabeth to have his version corroborated by Col. Fitzwilliam whom she did not mistrust and who was the joint guardian of Georgiana. (Ch. 35)

x. Elizabeth's reactions to the letter

Blinded by her passionate resentment against Darcy's cold hauteur, Elizabeth is little disposed towards accepting his explanations, but on re-reading Darcy's account of

Wickham she 46ealized that although it was his version against Wikham's, it agreed in every particular with what Wickham had claimed, although Wickham had been completely reticent about the three thousand pounds, let alone the Georgiana episode. With enough intelligence to perceive that Dacy would not idly invite corroboration from Fitzwilliam, Elizabeth discovers that her dislike for Darcy, chiefly based on Darcy's alleged iniquitous treatment of Wickham had little ground to stand on. In this frame of mind, she recalls that Wickham had confided in her when she was a total stranger, a conduct certainly dubious. She also recalls that she had known nothing of Wickham before meeting him at Meryton, and that with all his vaunted courage, Wickham had avoided meeting Darcy at the ball. Nor does she recall anything that Darcy had done which was not virtuous. This put a new construction on everything and presented Darcy in a new light. Elizabeth is now prepared to admit that since Jane had contrived to hide her feelings, Darcy might well have been justified in assuming that Jane was not in love with Bingley. In this softened mood. Elizabeth admits that if her mother and younger sisters made her feel ashamed, their conduct must have appeared highly unfavourable to a gentleman of darcy's refinement. Cogitating on her blind and unreasoning dislike for Darcy in her lonely ramble through the lane, she comes back to the parsonage to be told that Darcy and Fitzwilliam had called to bid them adieu; Elizabeth is engrossed in the contents of Darcy's letter. (Ch. 36).

xi. Elizabeth announces her departure at Rosings

The nephews having left, Lady Catherine invites the Parsonage to dine with her to beguile her loneliness. After dinner Elizabeth's listlessness was diagnosed by Lady Catherine as her reluctance to leave Hunsford so soon, and she asks Elizabeth to write to her mother asking her to spare her a little longer. Finding her advice unavailing, she enjoins upon Charlotte to send a male escort with the young ladies, and is relieved to learn that Lizzy's uncle would send a servant. During this last week at Hunsford, Elizabeth and Maria find themselves invited to Rosings frequently. The last evening, when they part, Lady Catherine graciously wishes them a good journey and Miss de Bourgh curtseys to them. Meanwhile, Elizabeth is in a fair way of knowing Darcy's letter almost by heart. Still resenting Darcy's pride, she cannot deny that she had been grossly unfair in estimating his character. Nor can she blind herself to the many faults of her mother and sisters, who between them had robbed Jane of her happiness, for Darcy had admitted that his friend Bingley had developed a strong attachment to Miss Bennet. (Ch. 37).

xii. Elizabeth leaves for Longbourn

At breakfast, the morning Elizabeth leaves Hunsford, Collins with his inimitable formality thanks Elizabeth for her kindness in visiting them, and while stressing their humbleness and the unexciting nature of the rural surroundings, proudly basks in the warmth of Lady Catherine's attentions to them. He even asks Elizabeth to spread around Longbourn an eye-witness account of Lady Catherine's regard for him. At the very moment of parting, he reminds them of their lamentable om©ssion: they had left no message for Rosings. However, he gives himself the commission of conveying, on their behalf, their thanks for the many civilities of the gracious Lady at Rosings. Within four hours they reach Mrs. Gardiner's house in London. She eagerly waits for the moment, when together at Longbourn, she may spring a surprise on Jane by revealing to her the state of Darcy's feelings for her. (Ch. 38).

B. Principal Events

When you read these dozen chapters with care, you cannot fail to notice that practically all the action springs from Elizabeth's visit to her friend Charlotte at Hunsford in Kent. Besides giving her an opportunity of observing how Charlotte had adapted herself to the companionship of such a trying husband as the absurd Mr. Collins, and tutelage of a domineering lady like Lady Catherine, her accidental presence eggs on the proud Darcy to propose to Elizabeth and to suffer the mortification of her refusal. This again, leads to the necessity of writing in a letter something that Darcy is loath to speak to Elizabeth. The incidents, therefore, around which the action revolves, are:

(1) Elizabeth's visit to Hunsford.

(2) Darcy's visit to his aunt.

(3) Darcy's letter to Elizabeth.

i. **Elizabeth At Hunsford:** Its significance.

(a) The change of scene affords a welcome relief to her disappointment resulting from Jane's estrangement and Wickham's defection.

(b) It gives her an opportunity of closely watching her friend Charlotte as the mistress of Hunsford:

(i) Elizabeth finds her a competent mistress; the small house was very spick and span, "and everything was fitted up and arranged with a neatness and

consistency of which Elizabeth gave Charlotte all the credit". (P. 157, LL 21-23; Ch. 28).

(ii) Elizabeth is incensed at Miss de Bourgh for staying in her phaeton and keeping Charlotte out of doors in chilly weather: "She is abominably rude to keep Charlotte out of doors in all this wind." (P. 159; LL 12-13; Ch. 28)

(iii) She finds Lady Catherine officious in her generous advice to Charlotte. "Elizabeth found that nothing was beneath this great lady's attention, which could furnish her with an occasion of dictating to others". (P. 164; LL 3-5; C.h. 29).

(iv) She confides in Darcy that Charlotte seemed to have made a happy marriage: "She seems perfectly happy, however, and in a prudential light, it is certainly a very good match for her." (P. 178; LL 18-19; Ch. 32).

(c) It is, however, neither her friend, nor the transparent Mr. Collins, but the formidable mistress of Rosings who engages Elizabeth's close attention. She finds her well worth a study.

(i) She finds the husband and the wife in complete accord about the graciousness of Lady Catherine: "She is the sort of woman whom one cannot regard with too much deference," gushes Collins. (P. 158; LL 10-12; Ch. 28).

(ii) Her haughty self-consciousness is unconsciously revealed by Collins when he reassures Elizabeth that she need not worry about her dress: "Lady Catherine will not think the worse of you for being simply dressed. She likes to have the distinction of rank preserved." (P. 161; LL 3-5; Ch. 29).

(iii) At dinner at Rosings Elizabeth finds her prying, officious and dictatorial. When Elizabeth ventures on an opinion that younger sisters have as good a claim on social exchanges as their elders, Lady Catherine cannot help commenting rudely: "you give your opinion very decidedly for so young a person. Pray, what is your age?" (P. 166; LL 14-16; Ch. 29).

(iv) Elizabeth discovers on investigation that Lady Catherine was fond of forcing her will on all and sundry: "Elizabeth soon perceived that though this great Lady was not in the commission of the peace for the country,

she was a most active magistrate in her own parish." (P. 169; LL 14-16; Ch. 30).

(v) Her invitation to Elizabeth to come and practice on the pianoforte at Rosings reflects her ill-breeding which makes Darcy wince: "She is very welcome, as I have often told her, to come to Rosings every day, and play on the pianoforte in Mrs. Jenkinson's room. She would be in nobody's way, you know, in that part of the house." (P. 173; LL 17-21; Ch. 31).

(vi) With her nephews for company, Lady Catherine loses her warmth for the Parsonage: "While there were visitors in the house, they could not be necessary," (P. 171; LL 24-25; Ch. 31). This is confirmed by Lady Catherine's renewal of interest after the departure of the guests. "(Collins) brought back, with great satisfaction, a message from her ladyship, importing that she herself felt so dull as to make her very desirous of having them all to dine with her." (P. 209; LL 17-20; Ch. 37).

ii. Darcy's visit to Rosings

(a) As Darcy knew of the presence of Elizabeth at Hunsford, he promptly pays a call to the Parsonage, eliciting Charlotte's shrewd observation: "I thank you, Eliza, for this civility. Mr. Darcy would never have come so soon to wait upon me." (P. 170; LL 25-26; Ch. 30).

(b) When Darcy makes a call and engages in a tete-a-tete with Elizabeth, Charlotte in her womanly wisdom diagnoses this as love: "my dear Eliza, he must be in love with you, or he would never have called on us in this familiar way." (P. 170; LL 26-28; Ch. 32).

(c) His peculiar way of conducting himself at the Parsonage, where he seemed ill at ease and sat tongue tied, made speculations on his deign vague and confused. "When he did speak, it seemed the effect of necessity rather than choice, a sacrifice to propriety, not a pleasure to himself." (P. 180; LL 19-21; Ch. 32).

(d) The real reason for this constraint is revealed in the manner of his proposal: a sincere avowal of his sentiments, spiced with an equally sincere intellectual judgment of the social undesirableness of such a match. In a way it makes Darcy's proposal hardly less comical than Collins' earlier one. The tension in Darcy's heart is laid bare by the manner of his stumbling confession: "In vain

have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you." (P. 188; LL 23-25; Ch. 34).

(e) The rejection of the proposal on the ground that Darcy had been guilty of separating Jane from Bingley and also of maliciously harming Wickham gives Darcy an opportunity of clearing himself in this letter: "You must, therefore, pardon the freedom with which I demand your feelings, I know, will bestow it unwillingly, but I demand it of your justice." (P. 195; LL 24-27; Ch. 35)

iii. Elizabeth's reactions to Darcy's letter

You will notice that while Darcy considers the offence of detaching Bingley from Jane, were it true, to be forgivable in comparison with his alleged role in willfully and wantonly ruining the prospects of the acknowledged favourite of his father, to Elizabeth the happiness of her sister is of prime concern and his offence in this regard is unpardonable. Yet, we can observe the manner in which she goes through successive states of feelings:

(a) On the first perusal of the letter she rejects as false Darcy's assumption of Jane's indifference to Bingley: "His belief of her sister's insensibility, she instantly resolved to be false and his account of the real, the worst objections to the match, made her too angry to have any wish of doing him justice." (P. 203; LL 16-19; Ch. 36).

(b) Darcy's version of Wickham's conduct at first left her too flustered to exercise her reason: "Astonishment, apprehension, and even horror oppressed her. She wished to discredit it entirely, repeatedly exclaiming, "This must be false. "This cannot be" (P. 203; LL 28-30; Ch. 36).

(c) A second careful reading of the letter convinces her that she had been too credulous in accepting Wickham's version without any previous knowledge of his character, and also that she had allowed herself to be piqued by Darcy's coldness towards her: "Pleased with the preference of one, and offended by the neglect of the other, on the very beginning of our acquaintance, I have courted prepossession and ignorance, and driven reason away, where either were concerned." (P. 207; LL 27-32; Ch. 36).

(d) In this chastened mood she was inclined to understand Darcy's attitude to her family and to feel a respect for his character. Without feeling any regrets for rejecting his proposal (is it self-deception?), she has to admit to herself that "in her own past

behaviour, there was a constant source of vexation and regret; and in the unhappy defects of the family a subject of yet heavier chagrin," (P. 212; LL 14-16; Ch. 37).

C. Check Your Progress

Answer the following questions:

Tick off the correct statements.

1. Elizabeth decides to visit her friend at Hunsford because
   (a) Charlotte was expecting a child.
   (b) Elizabeth is in love with Collins.
   (c) she had promised Charlotte.
2. Elizabeth found Mr. Collins' attitude to Lady Catherine
   (a) insolent.
   (b) discreet.
   (c) independent.
   (d) obsequious.
3. Col. Fitzwilliam's pleasure in Elizabeth's company was due to
   (a) her liveliness.
   (b) love.
   (c) evil design.
4. By whom, to whom, and about whom are the following lines said (also mention the chapter):
   (a) Last Christmas you were afraid of his marrying me, because it would be imprudent; and now because he is trying to get a girl with only ten thousand pounds, you want to find out that he is mercenary.
   (b) Your mother should have taken you to town every spring for the benefit of masters.
   (c) Your cousin will give you a very pretty notion of me and teach you not to believe a word I say.

(d) He likes to have his own way very well.

(e) I did not believe her to be indifferent because I wished it; —I believed it on impartial conviction as truly as I wished it in reason.

5. Who are the persons indicated in the pronouns italicized in the following lines?

(a) *She* will make *him* a very proper wife.

(b) *My* eldest sister has been in town these three months, have *you* never happened to see her there?

(c) *I* am confident that *she* would have performed delightfully.

II. Answer the following questions:

1. On what grounds did Elizabeth base her observation, 'that though this great lady (Lady Catherine) was not in commission of the peace for the country, she was an active magistrate in her own parish'?

2. Contrast the mode of proposal of Mr. Collins with that of Darcy.

3. Why is Elizabeth pleased to find that Miss de Bourgh is thin and small?

III. Tick off the most appropriate answers.

1. Elizabeth dining with Lady Catherine at Rosings is

(a) Flattered.

(b) nervous.

(c) cool.

(d) proud.

2. Col. Fitzwilliam was Darcy's

(a) brother

(b) friend

(c) brother-in-law.

(d) cousin

3. Elizabeth's conversation with Darcy at Rosings reveals that

(a) she is in love with Darcy.

(b) she is happy in his company.

(c) she is keen on retaliation despite her politeness.

4. Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth is prompted by

(a) Elizabeth's fortune.

(b) a liking for the Bennet family.

(c) Elizabeth's beauty.

(d) love.

IV. By whom, to whom, and about whom are the following lines said? (also mention the chapter).

(v) Her not objecting, does not justify him, it only shows her being deficient in something in herself sense or feeling.

By..... To .....About.....

(b) She is the sort of woman whom one cannot regard with too much deference.

By.....To.....About.....

(c) Who that knows what his misfortunes have been cannot help feeling an interest in him?

By ..... To ..... About .....

(w) He spoke of it as a certain event, of which the time alone could be undecided.

By ..... To .... About .....

(x) His resentment was in proportion to the distress of his circumstances—and he was doubtless as violent in his abuse of me to others, as in his reproaches to myself.

By ..... To ..... About .....

(y) In truth I must acknowledge that, with all the disadvantages of this humble parsonage, I should not think anyone abiding in it an object of compassion, while they are sharers of our intimacy at Rosings.

By .....To ..... About .....

(g) I am going tomorrow where I shall find a man who has not one agreeable quality, who has neither manner nor sense to recommend him.

By ..... To ..... About.....

(h) I rather expected, from my knowledge of her affability, that it would happen. But who could have foreseen such an attention as this?

By..... To ..... About .....

V. Who are the persons referred to in the following lines? (mention the Chapter)?

(a) *She* is a very good kind of girl, I believe I know no harm of her."

.....Chapter .....

(b) Lady Catherine will not think the worse of *you* for being simply dressed. She likes to have the distinction of rank preserved.

.....Chapter .....

(c) 'I assure *you*, Madam' he replied, 'that she does not need such advice. She 54ealized54 very constantly'.

..... Chapter ....

(z) *He* never said a great deal, nor did she give herself the trouble of talking or listening much.

.... Chapter .....

(aa) *His* attachment to Rosings certainly increases.

.... Chapter .....

VI. Charlotte Lucas makes a complimentary reference to Lady Catherine as 'a most attentive neighbour'. What is the nature of this attention?

VII. Give a detailed account of 'a contrariety of emotion' caused by Elizabeth's reading of Darcy's letter.

Section-IV Chapters 39-50

A. Summaries

i. Home-coming of Elizabeth and Jane

Having broken journey in London, and having stayed with her aunt Mrs. Gardiner, for a while, Elizabeth, accompanied by Maria and Jane from London, starts for home. They are met at a wayside inn by Kitty and Lydia. The latter, impoverished by imprudent purchases, has to borrow money from Elizabeth to treat them to a cold luncheon. All the way home she goes on prattling of Meryton and army society. She reveals that Wickham's engagement with Miss King was off. At home they are warmly received by their parents, the father being particularly pleased at the sight of

Lizzy. Lydia's suggestion about walking up to Meryton is turned down by Elizabeth. Lydia had referred, on the way home, to the plan of holidaying at Brighton where the militia had gone, and Elizabeth finds her parents heatedly debating on it. (Ch. 39)

ii. Elizabeth confides in her sister

Next morning, unable to repress her impatience any longer, Elizabeth discloses to Jane Darcy's proposal and also his revelation of Wickham's character, but she makes no reference to Darcy's observations on Bingley's attachment to Jane. The latter in her characteristic way is hurt by Wickham's wickedness and sympathizes with Darcy's disappointment at Elizabeth's refusal. Lizzy admits that her bitterness about Darcy was the outcome of prejudice, but as to feeling sorry she would leave it to Jane who was nothing if not kind. Mrs. Bennet tells Lizzy that should Jane die of a broken heart, Bingley would be properly punished for having deceived her. She plies Lizzy with numerous inquiries about Charlotte's housekeeping and every tribute to her acts like salt on a fresh wound. (Ch. 40)

iii. Lydia goes to Brighton

The paradise of Brighton, the portals of which had been closed by Papa Bennet, unexpectedly opens up for Lydia when she receives an invitation from the young Mrs. Forster to accompany her to the romantic watering place. Elizabeth frankly advises against paying heed to such a flighty and empty-headed young girl as Lydia, but her father, with more cynicism than wisdom, consents to send the girl in a bid to buy domestic peace. Kitty is distraught at being left out. At the party at Longbourn, on the eve of the departure of the militia from Meryton, Wickham is ill at ease on being told that Elizabeth had spent three weeks at Hunsford in the company of Darcy and his cousin. They part with no desire to meet again. Lydia takes leave of her family, for she was to leave Meryton the next morning while Kitty sheds copious tears of vexation and disappointment. (Ch. 41).

iv. Elizabeth sets out on the amended tour with her aunt

Although fond of her father, Elizabeth cannot blind herself to the evil effects of the kind of amused contempt that her father felt for her somewhat stupid mother and her younger sisters. Her only pleasure, with Kitty and her mother constantly bewailing the dullness of life at Longbourn, lay in looking forward to the tour promised by her aunt. But a fortnight from the stipulated date of the northern tour, her aunt, Mrs. Gardiner writes from London that, for business reasons, her husband would be forced to curtail the tour which was to start a fortnight later and end in about four weeks, so that a trip

to the Lake country must be replaced by a tour of Derbyshire from where Mrs. Gardiner had come. Elizabeth is disappointed but reconciles herself to the attenuated joys of seeing the beauty spots of Derbyshire. Mrs. Gardiner leaves her four young children under the loving care of Jane at Longbourn. Passing through Oxford, Warwick, Birmingham and other places of interest, Lizzy's party find themselves at Lambton where Mrs. Gardiner still had friends of her maiden days. Within five miles of Lambton lay Pemberley, Darcy's seat, not more than a mile or two out of their route. Mrs. Gardiner intends to visit the place, but Elizabeth feels embarrassed and only falls in with her aunt's proposal on eliciting from the chambermaid the welcome information that Darcy was not there. (Ch. 42).

v. Elizabeth crosses Darcy's path again

Elizabeth and the Gardiners visit the celebrated grounds of Pemberley, and the surrounding parkland fulfils their expectations. The housekeeper, a dignified elderly woman, takes them round the elegantly furnished house. She is full of warm admiration of the physical and mental attractions of her young master, which surprises Elizabeth, leaving her aunt sceptically amused. The inspection of the house over, they are handed over to the gardener who undertakes to show them round the grounds. As they are thus engaged, they unexpectedly light upon the master of the house coming towards them. Elizabeth is embarrassed beyond words and the Gardiners are surprised, for Darcy had arrived a day too soon. Darcy also seems astonished, but he comes up to Elizabeth and after politely greeting her goes towards his house. A little later, while they were still in the grounds, their progress, impeded by Mrs. Gradiner's weariness and her husband's interest in the leaping trout in the stream which he views with an angler's covetous eyes, Darcy comes upon them again, and to Elizabeth's great bewilderment, seeks to be introduced to her relations. Darcy promptly invites Mr. Gardiner to fish in the stream, offering his tackle. Before taking leave, he announces to Elizabeth that Bingley and his sisters would be accompanying his sister the next day and expresses a desire that his sister should be introduced to Eliza and her relations. This almost takes Elizabeth's breath away, for she cannot account for this vast change in Darcy. Mr. Gardiner is conquered, and Mrs. Gardiner, whose opinion of Darcy was based on her niece's report, remains frankly puzzled. (Ch. 43).

vi. Elizabeth meets Georgiana

Elizabeth never expected that Georgiana would make a call on them the very morning of her arrival at Pemberley, and they are taken by surprise when late in the morning,

while dressing for dinner with a family at Lambton, a carriage stops at their inn and Darcy and his sister step out of it. The Gardiners, being worldly enough, can only put down this attention to Darcy's interest in their niece. Elizabeth finds Georgiana, if not as handsome, at least as attractive as her brother, although very shy. A little later Bingley joins them. Everybody is pleased including Elizabeth, who had absolved him of any responsibility in making Jane unhappy. Bingley's manner assures Eliza that he still thought kindly of them, and her closest scrutiny fails to discover that there could be anything between him and Georgiana. Before parting, Georgiana joins her brother in inviting the Lambton hosts to dinner the day after the next. The evening is spent by Elizabeth in a great deal of heart-searching which makes it clear that her earlier hatred for Darcy had been replaced by admiration and respect and even a desire to be restored to his attentions. The Gardiners are intrigued to find Darcy obviously in love and watch Elizabeth's reactions with interest. To repay the gracious politeness of Darcy and his sister, they decide to make a courtesy call the next morning. Mr. Gardiner goes out fishing. (Ch. 44).

vii. Miss Bingley's jealousy is rekindled

When Elizabeth and Mrs. Gardiner pay their call on Darcy, they are received by Georgiana. Caroline and Mrs. Hurst barely acknowledge their presence, and polite conversation is rendered possible only through the kind offices of Mrs. Annesley, an agreeable old lady, with whom Miss Darcy stayed in London. Darcy, coming back after fishing in the stream, with Mr. Gardiner is eagerly watched by everybody and with jealous disapproval by Caroline, who with an intent to hurt Elizabeth asks her whether the withdrawal of the regiment form Meryton was not a great loss to her family. This oblique reference to Wickham embarrasses both Eliza and Darcy for different reasons, but Elizabeth's silence restores Darcy to his ease. On the departure of the guests, Caroline gives free play to her jealous dislike of Elizabeth. This unfortunately makes no impression on Miss Darcy's mind as she has perfect confidence in her brother's judgment Darcy makes an open confession of his regard for Elizabeth (Ch. 45).

viii. Lydia's elopement with Wickham

Back from Pemberley, Elizabeth is reassured to find two letters from Jane, but the intelligence conveyed by them sends her into utter confusion. Taking up the earlier, she is rudely shocked to learn that flighty Lydia had run away with Wickham to be married in Scotland. The second had worse things to say, namely that Col. Forster had

reported that the errant pair had not been traced and it was feared that Wickham might have no intentions of contracting a marriage at all. Jane further added that their father was accompanying Col. Forster to London in the hope of discovering them somewhere. Darcy lights on Elizabeth when she is completely upset and is about to seek out the Gardiners who were out visiting. Darcy dissuades her with difficulty and sends a servant on this errand. Elizabeth breaks down in Darcy's presence and accuses herself of irresponsibility, for knowing Wickham as she did, Lydia should never have been allowed to go to Brighton with the Foresters. Darcy seems to be contemplating a course of action, he keeps his council. When he takes his leave, absolving Elizabeth from the social obligation of keeping the dinner engagement at Pemberley the same day, Elizabeth speculates on how this misfortune might affect Darcy's continued interest in her. The Gardiners come back alarmed and are greatly disturbed at the news, even though Lydia was no favourite of theirs. They pack up quickly and are soon on their way to Longbourn. (Ch. 46)

ix. Lydia still untraced

On their way to Longbourn, her uncle gallantly suggests that Wickham could not be fool enough to treat the affair casually, but Elizabeth finds little comfort, for by now she is prepared to believe the worst of him. Her aunt is disillusioned in her notion that Elizabeth might have some regard for Wickham. Nor can Elizabeth find anything reassuring about her sister's virtue. When the party reach Longbourn, they find everyone, apart from the young Gardiners, depressed, although Mary makes a characteristically pompous and unsisterly observation on the loss of virtue in a female. They find Mrs. Bennet in obvious misery, although very far from feeling any guilt of irresponsibility. She accuses her husband of refusing to permit them all to go to Brighton and is beset with a frivolous fear that Mr. Bennet may be killed in a duel with Wickham. Mr. Gardiner tries to allay her fears and offers to go to London to assist Mr. Bennet in his search. When Jane and Elizabeth sit down in privacy to probe into this sorry affair, beyond learning that Lydia in her silly and hurried note to Mrs. Forster had looked forward to signing her name Lydia Wickham, they have little to console them, for from all accounts Wickham was an unmitigated scoundrel and a scandalous wastrel. Mr. Bennet, Elizabeth learns, was engaged in a not too well-defined attempt to trace the coach in which the elopement had been taken place. (Ch. 47).

x. Mr. Bennet comes home with no news of Lydia

Mr. Gardiner waits a day for some information from Mr. Bennet, and finding none, leaves for London on Sunday. On Tuesday, Mrs. Gardiner hears from him. Mr. Bennet had been persuaded to come to Gracechurch Street, but of Wickham not a trace had been found. Before Mr. Gardiner wrote again, the Bennets receive a remarkable letter from Mr. Collins in which condolence was blended with becoming clerical reprimand and also a © self-satisfaction that Elizabeth's denial had providentially saved him from being a relation of such a family. Shortly afterwards Mr. Gardiner writes again to report that Col. Forster had been unable to provide any information on any blood relation of Wickham's. More evidence of Wickham's prodigality in the form of gambling debts is supplied by the colonel. Mrs. Gardiner, with her children, returns to London while Mr. Bennet comes back home baffled and worn out with anxiety. He comes down hard on poor Kitty and threatens to curtail her freedom, as a belated recompense for his unwise indulgence to Lydia. (Ch. 48).

xi. Lydia traced in London

Two days after Mr. Bennet's return from London, Jane and Elizabeth, walking in the garden behind the house, are informed by the housekeeper that a letter from Mr. Gardiner had just been received. Running excitedly, the girls discover their father walking towards a small wood. He had hardly cared to read the letter, expecting the worst. Elizabeth reads it aloud to her father. Lydia had been discovered still unmarried. Mr. Gardiner had offered her protection and proposed that she should be married at his house. The marriage settlement was to be Lydia's share from the £ 5000/- and an annuity of a hundred pounds during Bennet's lifetime. Mr. Gardiner also adds that Wickham would have something left even after the debts are paid. Everyone is overwhelmed with gratitude for Mr. Gardiner, and Mr. Bennet shrewdly suspects that the cash persuasion must have bought Wickham's consent to marry. Mr. Bennet sits down to record his acceptance of so reasonable a proposal. Mrs. Bennet, triumphant in the matrimonial success of her youngest daughter, is fully prepared to condone the circumstance, and baulks in her attempts to arrange for the wedding dress, thinks that an airing will do her good, so that she may pass the glad tidings to her sister at Meryton, to Mrs. Lucas and Mrs. Long and other mammas in the neighbourhood. (Ch. 49).

xii. Mr. Gardiner fixes up Lydia's wedding

In readily expressing his consent to Mr. Gardiner's very modest proposal about the marriage settlement, Mr. Bennet 60ealized that an annuity of a hundred pounds would be in any case more economical than the generous pocket money that her indulgent mother allowed. Knowing, however, that a man like Wickham must have been handsomely bribed before consenting to marry a dowerless girl, he wants to know the extent to which he was indebted to his brother-in-law. The impending wedding of her daughter leaves her mother excited and, far from feeling embarrassed by the former's wicked action, Mrs. Bennet starts speculating on a suitable house for the couple within a short distance from Longbourn. To her vexation, she receives no support from Mr. Bennet who threatens to shut the door in Lydia's face and refuses to part with a guinea for buying the wedding-dress. Elizabeth, in turmoil ever since accidentally coming across Darcy at Pemberley, and obviously in love with him, makes herself miserable by arguing that Darcy could never involve himself with a family into which a scoundrel like Wickham had been married. Mr. Gardiner replies to Mr. Bennet, requesting him not to mention the financial arrangements again, and announces that in the best interests of the couple Wickham had been persuaded to resign from his former regiment and a fresh commission had been obtained in a regiment stationed in the north. Under constant pressure from Jane and Elizabeth Mr. Bennet consents grudgingly to receive the wedded couple. Elizabeth wonders how Wickham could have the cheek to face them. (Ch. 50)

B. The Principal Incidents

Having studied these dozen chapters it will require little effort on your part to realize that whatever takes place during this time affecting the Bennet family and Darcy springs from three principal events:

(1) Lydia's ill-advised trip to Brighton;

(2) The accidental meeting of Elizabeth and Darcy at Pemberley;

(3) Lydia's elopement with Wickham.

You will see that the three are inextricably interwoven—the very thoughtless irresponsibility of the parents in permitting a giddy young girl of extreme youth to go to a distant place under the care of a young wife almost logically leads to the catastrophe of the elopement. Nor can Jane and Elizabeth be considered free from blame, for they did not share their knowledge of Wickham's infamy with their parents. Finally, Elizabeth's providential meeting with Darcy enables her to enlighten him about Wickham's nefarious conduct, and we

shall find, a little later, that the discovery of the pair, and the forced marriage along with the financial settlement which alone finally decides the issue, are all due to Darcy's active agency, although in their ignorance the Bennets put it down to Mr. Gardiner. Let us take them up piece-meal:

i. Lydia's visit to Brighton

❖ **Mr. Bennet**

1. Although Mr. Bennet knew that in Elizabeth's estimate Lydia was 'vain, ignorant, idle and absolutely uncontrolled!' (P. 230; LL 25-26; Ch. 41) he did nothing to exercise his authority. His levity of manner reflects no credit on his responsibility as a father: "Lydia will never be easy till she has exposed herself in some public place or other and we can never expect her to do it with so little expense or inconvenience to her family as under the present circumstances". (P. 229; LL 27-30; Ch. 41)
2. The consent, thoughtlessly given, reflects a great flaw in Mr. Bennet's character: a weak submission to his wife (for whom he no longer cares) for the sake of maintaining peace. His confession to Elizabeth: "We shall have no peace at Longbourn if Lydia does not go to Brighton. Let her go then. "At Brighton she will be of less importance even as a common flirt than she has been here. The officers will find women better worth their notice. Let us hope, therefore, that her being there may teach her, her own insignificance. At any rate, she cannot grow many degrees worse, without authorizing us to lock her up for the rest for her life." (P. 23; LL 4-10; Ch. 41).

❖ **Mrs. Bennet**

1. That Mrs. Bennet should have heartily approved of Lydia's visit followed from the manner in which she sympathized with her younger daughter's sense of mortification at the withdrawal of the regiment from Meryton: "I cried for two days together when Col. Millar's regiment went away. I thought I should have broken my heart." (P. 228; LL 10-2; Ch. 41).
2. This may recall how at the beginning of the novel when Mr. Bennet was railing at the frivolity of the two younger daughters, the mother rose to their defence with the admission that at their age she had the same weakness for the glamour of the regimentals: "I remember the time when I liked a red coat myself, very well and indeed so I do still at my heart." (P. 28; LL 16-8; Ch. 7).

❖ **Lydia Bennet**

It will be interesting to note how Lydia (in the words of Jane Austen) feels about her visit to Brighton: "In Lydia's imagination, a visit to Brighton comprised every possibility of earthly happiness. She saw with the creative eye of fancy, the street of gay bathing place covered with officers. She saw herself the object of attention to tens and to scores of them at present unknown. She saw all the glories of the camp, its tents stretched forth in beauteous uniformity of lines, crowded with the young, the gay, and dazzling with scarlet; and to complete the view, she saw herself seated beneath a tent, tenderly flirting with at least six officers at once." (P. 321; LL 20-30; Ch. 41).

❖ **Miss Elizabeth**

Miss Elizabeth considers the invitation from Mrs. Forster to Lydia to accompany her to Brighton as "the death-warrant of all possibility of commonsense" for Lydia. In the words of Jane Austen, "she represented to him (Mr. Bennet) all the improprieties of Lydia's general behaviour, the little advantage, she could derive from the friendship of such a woman as Mrs. Forster and the probability of her being yet more imprudent with such a companion at Brighton, where the temptations must be greater than at home." (P. 229; LL 19-29; Ch. 41).

ii. The Meeting of Elizabeth and Darcy

❖ ***Its effect on Elizabeth***

(a) When Mrs. Gardiner suggests visiting Pemberely she seeks an excuse for avoiding it. In the light of the revelation of Wickham's character she is conscious of having wronged Darcy, and is particularly anxious to prevent her throwing herself across his path: "The possibility of meeting Mr. Darcy, while viewing the place, instantly occurred. It would be dreadful". (P. 249; LL 6-8; Ch. 42).

(b) When in spite of taking the utmost precaution and after feeling reassured that Darcy would not be at Pemberley she suddenly lights on him in the garden, her confusion is genuine: "Every idea of the impropriety of her mind, the few minutes in which they continued together, were some of the most uncomfortable in her life." (P. 248; LL 4-7; Ch. 43)

(c) The meeting, followed by Darcy's obvious keenness on introducing his sister to Elizabeth, led to Elizabeth's admission that her earlier estimate must have been greatly determined by her prejudice, and she has no hesitation in owning up to a realization that Darcy is in love with her: "Such a change in a man of so much pride, excited not only astonishment but gratitude—for to love, ardent love, it must be attributed; and as such its impression on her was of a sort to be encouraged, as by no

means unpleasing, though it could not be exactly defined." (P. 262; LL 13-18; Ch. 44).

(d) Although she readily confides in Darcy the disgrace of Lydia's heady flight, when the wedding is fixed up, through what Elizabeth yet knows to be the kind offices of her uncle, she feels humiliated at the thought that Darcy's love may not survive this catastrophe. "She had no fear of its spreading farther through his means. There were few people on whose secrecy she would have more confidently depended; but at the same time, there was no one whose knowledge of a sister's frailty would have mortified her so much." (P. 308; LL 17-21; Ch. 50).

iii. Lydia's elopement

❖ ***Its effect on Mr. Bennet***

He admits that he should have listened to the advice of his favourite daughter on withholding permission to accept Mrs. Forster's invitation, but it is belated candour; "Lizzy, I bear you no ill-will for being justified in your advice to me last May, which, considering the event, shows some greatness of mind." (P. 296; LL 29-32; Ch. 48).

(a) He is at first completely confused. He offers to go to London, and we find that his search is fruitless. Jane in her letter to Elizabeth says; "My father is going to London with Col, Forster instantly, to try to discover her. What he means to do, I am sure I know not; but his excessive distress will not allow him to pursue any measure in the best and safest way." (P. 271; LL 33-36; Ch. 46).

(b) Although his search is somewhat Quixotic, Mr. Bennet is disinclined to leave London according to Mr. Gardiner, who had proceeded to London, leaving his family behind.

(c) Back home with no news of Lydia, he vents his spleen on his wife's display of grief. When Jane prepares to take the tea to her mother, he snaps: "This is a parade, which does one good; it gives such an elegance to misfortune". (P. 296; last line P. 297; LL 1-2; Ch. 48).

(d) He is so depressed that he keeps Mr. Gardiner's letter unread in his pocket "What is there of good to be expected?" he asks Lizzy and adds, "but perhaps you would like to read it." (P. 298; LL 29-31; Ch. 49).

(e) While Mrs. Bennet is speculating on a suitable house for Lydia and Wickham, Mr. Bennet comes down on her with the threat; "Into one house in this neighborhood, they shall never have admittance. I will not encourage the impudence of either, by

receiving them at Longbourn" (P. 307, LL 26-29; Ch. 50). Later he relaxes this rigid attitude at the instance of Jane and Elizabeth.

❖ ***Its effects on Mrs. Bennet***

(a) In sharp contrast to her husband, Mrs. Bennet is so insensitive to the dishonour of Lydia's elopement that when Elizabeth comes back home, she finds her mother full of complaints against her fancied physical ills, but not a word of anger: "Tell him what a dreadful state I am in that I am frightened out of my wits; and have such trembling, all over me, such spasms in my side and pains in my head and such beatings at heart that I can get no rest by night nor by day." (P. 284; LL 29-38; Ch. 47).

(b) Mrs. Bennet's grief finds expression in heightening her failing health and keeping her to her bed. When Elizabeth comes home, she finds her mother carping at her husband and defending her girl, accusing the Forsters of neglect: "I am sure there was some great neglect or other on their side, for she is not the kind of girl to do such a thing, if she had been well looked after." (P. 283; LL 32-34; Ch. 47).

(c) Intensely self-centred, when she is told that the marriage settlement was due to her brother' generous help she exclaims, "it is all very right; who would do it but her own uncle?" (P. 303; LL 29-30; Ch. 49). Entirely free from any humiliation she can only think of Lydia's wedding and the celebrations. "Miss Lydia is going to be married", she announces to the house-keeper, and promises, "you shall all have a bowl of punch, to make merry at her wedding." (P. 304; LL 20-22; Ch. 50).

(d) Mrs. Bennet seems to have been so little affected by the scatter-brained conduct of her daughter that when on the eve of the marriage, Wickham's transfer from his former regiment is announced by her brother, she regrets it without faintly realizing how humiliating it would have been for Lydia to be in the company of people who knew her past: "It was such a pity that Lydia should be taken away from a regiment where she was acquainted with everybody, and had so many favourites". (P. 311; LL 4-6; Ch. 50).

C. Check Your Progress

I. Tick off the correct statements

1. Lydia's conversation with Jane and Elizabeth at the inn where Kitty and Lydia had gone to receive them reflects

(a) wisdom, (b) bitterness, (c) innocence, (d) irresponsibility.

2. Mrs. Bennet on hearing of the good management of the Collins household is

   (a) pleased, (b) envious, (c) sceptical, (d) indifferent.

3. The person who is responsible for sending Lydia to Brighton is

   (a) Jane, (b) Mrs. Bennet, (c) Mrs. Forster, (d) Mr. Bennet.

4. The house-keeper's good account of Darcy's character left Elizabeth,

   (a) amused, (b) unbelieving, (c) angry, (d) puzzled, (e) sorry for her earlier estimate.

II. Why was Elizabeth reluctant to visit Pemberley?

III. Why did Jane and Elizabeth keep their knowledge of Wickham's character to themselves?

IV. Who said the following to whom and about whom?

(a) "I am heartily sorry for him, but he has other feelings which will probably soon drive away his regard for me"

By ..... To ..... About .....

(b) "A flirt too, in the worst and meanest degree of flirtation; without any attraction beyond youth and a tolerable person; and from ignorance and emptiness of her mind, wholly unable to ward off any portion of that universal contempt which her rage for admiration will excite".

By ..... To ..... About .....

(c) "I am sure I know none so handsome; but in the gallery upstairs you will see a finer, larger picture of him than this".

By ..... To ..... About .....

(d) "I never in my life saw anyone so much altered as she is since the winter. She is grown so brown and coarse!"

By ..... To ..... About .....

(e) "Had his character been known, this could not have happened. But it is all, all too late now."

By ..... To ..... About .....

(f) "When first he entered the corps, she was ready enough to admire him; but so we all were."

By ..... To ..... About .....

(g) "Let me advise you then, my dear Sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offence.

By ..... To ..... About.....

(h) "He promises fairly, and I hope among different people, where they may each have a character to preserve, they will both be more prudent."

By ..... To ..... About .....

V. Refer to the persons indicated in the italicized pronouns:

(a) "in essentials, *I* believe *he* is very much what he was."

I for ..... He for .....

(b) "Some people call *him* proud; but I am sure *I* never saw anything of it."

Him for ..... I for .....

(c) "*I* believe *you* thought her rather pretty at one time."

I for ..... You for .....

(d) "*He* must know that *she* was as amiable and unpretending as we have found her."

He for..... She for .....

(e) "If *you* are a good girl for the next ten years, *I* will take you to a review at the end of them."

You for ..... I for .....

(f) "My good, kind brother! *I* knew how it would be – I knew *he* would manage everything."

I for ..... He for ....

(g) "She is so fond of Mrs. Forster," said *she*, "it will be quite shocking to send her away."

She for.....

(h) *He* did trace them easily to Clapham, but no further."

He for .....

Section VI Chapters 51-61

A. Summaries

i. Lydia with Wickham visits her parents

The wedding having quietly taken place in London as arranged by Mr. Gardiner, Lydia comes in triumph to her parents, followed by her mercurial husband Wickham. Mr. Bennet and the two older daughters feel compromised by the breezy thoughtlessness of Lydia who remains 'untamed, unabashed, wild, noisy, and fearless.' Far from feeling guilty she makes much of her married state and feels superior to Jane who had not yet obtained a husband. Finding a ready admirer of her resourcefulness in her mother, Lydia spends ten days in a gay social whirl, visiting and entertaining neighbours. Apparently absorbed in her husband, Lydia wants to share with Jane and Elizabeth her excitement at the wedding, and incidentally lets fall what she considers a well-guarded secret of Darcy's presence at her wedding. Reluctant to squeeze out more from Lydia, Elizabeth writes to her aunt, asking for a fuller account. (Ch. 51).

ii. How Darcy had played the good Samaritan

Mrs. Gardiner's long letter enjoining secrecy leaves Elizabeth in a wild flutter of doubt and hope. It appears that Darcy had left Pemberley, came down to London, and while Mr. Bennet was still in London, traced Lydia through the unscrupulous woman who had sought to abet Miss Darcy's flight with Wickham. He had vainly pleaded with her to leave Wickham, and failing in that, had persuaded the reluctant Wickham to agree to a marriage, stipulating to clear his gambling debts, settling a further thousand pounds on Lydia, and purchasing Wickham a fresh commission in the Army. Mrs. Gardiner's only objection to Darcy's conduct was his obstinacy in settling everything himself, although Mr. Gardiner would gladly have borne the financial burden. Elizabeth now perceives that they owed everything to Darcy and speculates on the only way to reward Darcy's labours. In conversation with Wickham, she slyly indicates her knowledge of his infamous conduct, but Wickham attempts to wriggle out with characteristic adroitness. (Ch. 52)

iii. Bingley Returns to Netherfield

Disconsolate at Lydia's departure for Newcastle, Mrs. Bennet is intrigued at the report from her sister that Bingley was shortly due back at Netherfield for some gaming. Jane is distressed at the thought of wicked tongues discussing her discomfiture. Mr. Bennet refuses to call on Bingley, but his wife decides to invite him to dinner. Bingley arrives and two days later visits Longbourn accompanied by Darcy. Mrs. Bennet hardly disguises her dislike for Darcy, and even Jane knew little of Elizabeth's state of mind consequent on her knowledge of what Darcy had done for them all. Mrs. Bennet with her match-making instincts rekindled is gushing in her welcome to Bingley and coldly formal to Darcy, a discrimination which hurts Elizabeth. Bingley is at first constrained, but soon it becomes evident that he was feeling the glow of Jane's presence. Darcy retires into his shell, and his gravity and silence, in pointed contrast to his free and easy manners at Pemberley, leave Elizabeth in a state of turmoil. (Ch. 53)

iv. The Hopeful Behaviour of Bingley

Elizabeth teases Jane for her lively pleasure in Bingley's renewed company. The following Tuesday, a large dinner party is assembled at Longbourn. Bingley, seated next to Jane at the table, is easy and affable: but Elizabeth has very limited opportunities for an intimate conversation with Darcy. They sit at different card tables after dinner and hardly ever come close together. Mrs. Bennet compliments herself on the excellence of the dinner and her hopes are raised by Bingley's natural suavity. Jane is teased by Elizabeth on reporting that she was heart-whole, and that Bingley had no particular interest in her. (Ch. 54)

v. Bingley Proposes to Jane

Darcy having left for London, Bingley pays a call a few days later, is asked to stay for dinner, declines but accepts an invitation for the next day. When he arrives, the ladies are not yet dressed to receive him. After tea, Mrs. Bennet's crude attempts to leave them alone together produce no tangible results. Bingley remains charming without trying to be intimate with Jane. He, however, accepts an invitation to go for hunting with Mr. Bennet the next morning and the latter finds him a charming companion. He stays to dine with the family, and in the evening, Elizabeth interrupts them in their intimate conversation. Bingley leaves the room and Jane breaks the happy news to her sister. Mr. Bennet readily gives his formal consent, and a rapturous mother is overwhelmed with emotion at the thought of all the comforts Jane would command.

She confides in Mrs. Philips, and the excited sister spreads the news for the edification of the neighbours whose pity for Lydia's conduct is replaced by envy of the Bennet family. (Ch. 55)

vi. Lady Catherine comes to Longbourn to scold Elizabeth

A week after Jane's engagement with Bingley, the family is surprised to receive one morning a call from a lady driving in a carriage with an unfamiliar device. Bingley and Jane withdraw into the shrubbery, and the visitor speaks directly to Elizabeth, rudely ignoring Mrs. Bennet. It is Lady Catherine in one of her most domineering and forbidding moods of assertiveness. She starts with an officious and ill-natured comment on the unsuitable nature of the drawing room and invites Elizabeth into the rock garden to pour out her mind on the preposterousness of her designs on her nephew Darcy. She dwells at length on the shortcomings of her family and fortunes, points out that is a way Darcy was betrothed to her daughter, makes an appeal to her good sense and her honour, threatens to bully her into giving up Darcy, but beyond inadvertently admitting that they were not formally engaged, Elizabeth obstinately refuses to do anything to oblige her ladyship. Lady Catherine leaves in a blustering rage without seeing Mrs. Bennet who assumes that the visitor had graciously come with a message from Charlotte. (Ch. 56)

vii. Mr. Collins interposes on his patron's behalf

Elizabeth, having antagonized Lady Catherine, argues that if Darcy, browbeaten by his aunt, failed to join Bingley at the stipulated time, she must reconcile herself to losing him for good. The next morning, however, she is met by her father who was coming to look her up. She senses at once that it had something to do with Darcy. When Mr. Bennet quizzically congratulates her on her conquest, she feels hurt that Darcy should have written to her father rather than to herself, but her father springs a surprise by telling her that the source of this information was Mr. Collins. In a letter full of clerical solicitousness, Collins had congratulated Jane on her achievement and on her contemplated triumph but warned her off against the hostility of her ladyship. He had also hinted that Christian charity should not have taken the form of admitting Lydia into the house. Mr. Bennet takes the information as evidence of absurdity entirely in keeping with the correspondent's character. Disappointed with her father's lack of understanding, Elizabeth puts a bold face on it and pretends to agree with her father that she is extremely diverted. But it hurts her. (Ch. 57).

viii. Lady Catherine helps in breaking the barrier

Within a few days of Lady Catherine's visit, Bingley brings Darcy with him from Longbourn. As the engaged couple badly want to be together, they propose a walk. They make a party of five: Bingley, Jane, Darcy, Elizabeth and Kitty. The first two soon contrive to fall behind, and as Kitty goes to look up Maria, Darcy and Elizabeth are left to themselves. Anxious to find out how the aunt's threats had worked, Elizabeth boldly opens out by thanking Darcy for what he had done for Lydia. Darcy is embarrassed, but emboldened by Elizabeth's apparent pliancy, immediately renews his suit. This leads to a frank confession from either party of how the pride of Darcy and the prejudice of Elizabeth had stood in the way of their love. Each in the present charitable frame of mind, feels heartily ashamed of the wrong done to the other and by the time the ramble comes to a close, Elizabeth comes to know, what she had felt to be true, that Darcy had declared to Bingley that Jane was in love with him, an opinion that encouraged Bingley to propose to Jane. Elizabeth's spirited resentment of his aunt's officious interference had raised hopes in Darcy's mind about her willingness to accept him. (Ch. 58)

ix. Darcy is accepted

The same evening, Elizabeth confides in Jane who, having overcome her first shock of surprise, is warm in her congratulations and generously happy in her sister's felicity. Darcy repeats his visit the next day and after tea formally seeks Mr. Bennet's approval. The surprised father sends for Elizabeth, and deeply concerned in his favourite daughter's happiness, wonders how Eliza, always hostile to Darcy, could have come to care for him. As a bridegroom he was so enviably covetable that he could not withhold his consent, but it hurt him to think of her sacrificing her happiness. Explanations over, Mr. Bennet is in high spirits, Mrs. Bennet, when Elizabeth breaks the news, is too overpowered to command coherent speech, Elizabeth's social status leaves her delirious with excitement. (Ch. 59)

x. Darcy and Eliza write to their aunts

Now Elizabeth recovers her usual playfulness, and she suggests quite shrewdly that Darcy must have been attracted by her impertinence, as he must have felt worn out by complacent encouragement of his attentions. All explanations of their conduct having been explored and found unnecessary in the certainty of their mutual feelings; both remember that they must write to their aunts. Darcy's is by no means a pleasant undertaking, but Elizabeth breezily unburdens her mind before Mrs. Gardiner because

she admired Darcy, next because she had great affection for her. Mr. Bennet writes a cryptic note to Collins, hinting at the prudence of not antagonizing Darcy. Georgiana writes a cordial letter to her brother extending the warmest welcome to Elizabeth. Before any replies arrive, Longbourn is enlightened of the Collins' flight to Lucas Lodge to escape the fury of Lady Catherine, brought about by her nephew's communication. Elizabeth's genuine pleasure at meeting Charlotte is offset by her fears of Mr. Collins' irritating display of obsequiousness. A further irritant is Mrs. Philip's irremediable vulgarity, and Elizabeth tries to shield Darcy as far as she can from the attentions of her foolish relations. (Ch. 60).

xi. Wedding bells

Mrs. Bennet warmly basks in the reflected glory of the social triumphs of Mrs. Bingley and Mrs. Darcy. But she still remains essentially neurotic and insensible, and she and her sister are mainly responsible for the good-natured Bingley's removing from Netherfield to an estate thirty miles from Pemberley. Mary takes an increasing share in running Longbourn, while Kitty, drawn away from Meryton and Lydia's influence, stays alternately with Jane and Elizabeth with perceptible advantage to her sense and conduct. Wickham goes his giddy way and Lydia has to help herself to occasional doles from her generous sisters. Mr. Bennet is supremely happy when she can spend some time with Elizabeth at Pemberley. Miss Bingley has to eat humble pie in overcoming her jealous dislike of Elizabeth and renews her contact with Georgiana Darcy who has become deeply attached to her sister-in-law. Lady Catherine is ultimately reconciled to her nephew through Elizabeth's agency, and the Gardiners come to be liked by Darcy as much as they had always been by Elizabeth. (Ch. 61).

B. Principal Events

Now that the little comedy played around the lives of a handful of people is drawing to its inevitable close, you cannot have failed to notice how events converge to ensure the happiness of Jane and Elizabeth. As Darcy is the principal agent in all this, he has not merely to renew his suit, but also to convey to Bingley his conviction that Jane was in love with him before Bingley can bring himself to propose marriage. You will see however, that since Lydia's elopement Darcy holds the centre of the stage. That he should exhibit so much enterprise as tracing the runaway couple, and winning over a scoundrel's reluctance by cash persuasion, is all an evidence of the manner in which his 'pride' had been humbled by the liveliness and fiery independence of Elizabeth's nature, while his single minded way of pleasing her had exposed to Elizabeth the folly of her 'prejudice' against such a man, on the

flimsy evidence of a mere scamp like Wickham. The conclusion of the novel thus revolves around:

1. Bingley's proposal.
2. Lady Catherine's visit.
3. Darcy's renewal of suit.

i. Bingley's Proposal

(a) While analyzing Bingley's conduct in dissociating himself from Jane, we must go back a long way to Darcy's letter. In his explanatory letter to Elizabeth, Darcy confesses that apart from considering such a match highly undesirable for his friend, he had not believed Jane to be in love.

"The serenity of your sister's countenance and air was such", says Darcy, "as might have given the most acute observer, a conviction that, however, amiable her temper, her heart was not likely to be easily touched". (P. 197; LL 4-7; Ch. 35) That Darcy's mistake is quite genuine and in a way is inevitable, is borne out in Charlotte Lucas' observations on Jane's reserve: 'If a woman conceals her affection with the same skill from the object of it, she may lose the opportunity of fixing him; and it will then be ... poor consolation to believe the world equally in the dark.' (P. 258; LL 26-30; Ch. 44)

(b) When Elizabeth meets Bingley in Derbyshire, she has little difficulty in persuading herself on Bingley's devotion to Jane. Even at this stage Darcy's evident desire is to please Elizabeth, for he might easily have suppressed news of Elizabeth's presence to his friend. That Bingley has not changed is evidenced by Elizabeth's reactions: Two or three little circumstances ... denoted a recollection of Jane, not untinctured by tenderness, and a wish of saying more that might lead to the mention of her, had he dared.' (P. 259 LL 26-30 Ch. 44).

(c) Bingley's very apparent delight in Jane's renewed company draws the pertinent teasing of Elizabeth: I think you are in very great danger of making him as much in love with you as ever. (P. 337; LL 20-21; Ch. 54).

(d) Jane's way of accepting the proposal is quite in keeping with her modest and generous impulses. She can only bring herself into exclaiming to her sister: "Tis too much ... by far too much. I do not deserve it. Oh! why is not everybody as happy?" (P. 345; LL 8-9; Ch. 55).

(e) Finally, Darcy's hand in encouraging him to renew the suit by admitting that Jane was in love with his friend becomes perceptible in Darcy's admission to Elizabeth: 'I told him, moreover, that I believed myself mistaken supposing, as I had done, that your sister was indifferent to him; and as I could easily perceive that his attachment to her was unabated, I felt no doubt of their happiness together. (P. 370; LL 21-2; Ch. 58).

ii. Lady Catherine's visit to Longbourn

(a) A report of most alarming nature (as she puts) has reached her that Miss Elizabeth Bennet is going to be united with her nephew—Mr. Darcy. When she journeys to Longbourn to see that Darcy does not become the 'property' of Elizabeth, she behaves in a more than usually insolent and disagreeable manner. But, besides this, another important aspect of her character is revealed. During Elizabeth's stay at Hunsford we come to know what Lady Catherine thinks to be important in life and what an enormous passion she has for self-aggrandizement. In her present visit to Longbourn, we get to know her views about the question of marriage. A marriage to her is purely a public affair. Hence, she thinks of it in terms of family, connections and fortune. How she seeks to make a case for Darcy's marriage with Miss de Bourgh, can be seen from the following words: "My daughter and my nephew are formed for each other. They are descended on the maternal side, from the same noble line; and, on the father's from respectable, honourable and ancient, though untitled families. They are destined for each other by the voice of every member of their respective houses." For Elizabeth, such material, maternal paternal considerations do not matter. No wonder Lady Catherine leaves Longbourn seriously displeased, and crestfallen.

(b) Lady Catherine's ill-advised bullying brings out Elizabeth's most attractive traits, her courage and fiery independence. Although she has not yet any definite proof of Darcy's ultimate intentions, she coldly puts Lady Catherine in her place in words of the most scathing contempt: 'With regard to the resentment of his family, or the indignation of the world, if the former were excited by his marrying me, it would not give me one moment's concern and the world in general would have too much sense to join in the scorn.' (P. 357; LL 23-27; Ch. 56).

(c) On Darcy, Lady Catherine's wrath produced the very opposite of the intended effect. The very fact that Elizabeth had not indignantly scouted the idea of

marriage with him revived his hopes: 'I knew enough of your disposition to be certain, that, had you been absolutely, irrevocably decided against me, you would have acknowledged it to Lady Catherine frankly and openly.' (P. 366; LL 21-24; Ch. 58).

(d) Collins, on the other hand, is seriously perturbed. When Darcy's letter to his aunt had finally settled the issue, he ran away to escape her fury (P. 383 Ch. 60). Earlier, he wrote one of his clerical letters which completely mystified Mr. Bennet and in which he warns the Bennets that her ladyship "would never give her consent to what she termed so disgraceful a match". (P. 362 LL 20-21 Ch. 57).

iii. Darcy's Second Proposal

(a) Encouraged by what he later confesses, Elizabeth's open avowal of disapprobation to his aunt, Darcy at the earliest opportunity renews his appeal to Elizabeth's heart with words direct and vibrant with suppressed emotion: 'My affections and wishes are unchanged, but one word from you will silence me on this subject for ever'. (P. 365; LL 22-24; Ch. 58).

(b) The charity consequent on perfect understanding leads to a confession from Darcy that he had indeed been guilty of pride: 'What did you say of me that I did not deserve? ... my behaviour to you at the time was unpardonable. I cannot think of it without abhorrence'. (P. 366 LL 29-33 Ch. 58).

I Not to be left behind in this bout of self-deprecation, Elizabeth holds forth on her equally baseless prejudice, confessing candidly: 'These recollections will not do at all. I assure you, that I have long been most heartily ashamed of it.' (P. 367; LL 20-22; Ch. 58).

(d) The impact of the intelligence that Darcy was an applicant for Eliza's hand left Mr. and Mrs. Bennet completely confounded. Mr. Bennet's surprise, however, is chiefly concerned with her happiness. Not perceiving how the two had been drawn together, his only fears centre round Elizabeth's sensitive nature. 'My child', he warns her, 'let me not have the grief of seeing you unable to respect your partner in life. You know not what you are about.' (P. 376; LL 29-31; Ch. 59).

Mrs. Bennet, on the other hand, is almost stunned by the sheer unexpectedness of such a development. Entirely free from scruples regarding her daughter's happiness,

completely oblivious of her estimate of this man a few hours ago as 'that disagreeable man'. (P. 374 last line) she can only chuckle in a kind of daze: "Three daughters married! Ten thousand a year! Oh, Lord! What will become of me. I shall go distracted.' (P. 378; LL 18-20; Ch. 59).

C. Check Your Progress

1. When Lydia arrives with her husband she is (*tick the correct choice*).
   (a) stricken with remorse.
   (b) cowering with fear.
   (c) completely subdued.
   (d) untamed.
   (e) unabashed.
   (f) silent.
   (g) noisy.
2. The news of Bingley's return to Netherfield leaves Mrs. Bennet
   (a) hostile,
   (b) indifferent,
   (c) hopeful.
3. When Elizabeth finds Darcy 'silent, grave, and indifferent, his conduct reflects,
   (a) pride,
   (b) arrogance,
   (c) diffidence,
   (d) amused contempt.
4. Mr. Bennet's surprise at Darcy's proposal reflects,
   (a) pride, (c) disapproval of Darcy,
   (b) stupidity, (d) concern for his daughter's happiness.
5. What light does Mrs. Gardiner's letter to Elizabeth throw on the conduct of Darcy?

6. What effect does Lady Catherine's anger produce on Darcy and Elizabeth?

7. Who made the following observations, to whom and about whom?

   (a) "I dare say I shall get husbands for them before the winter is over."

   By ..... To ..... About .....

   (b) "I have heard from authority, which I thought as good that it was left you conditionally only, and at the will of the present patron."

   By ..... To ..... About. .....

   (c) "Oh! he is the handsomest young man that ever was seen."

   By ..... To ..... About .....

   (d) "I think you are in very a great danger of making him as much in love with you as ever".

   By ..... To ..... About .....

   (e) "My youngest of all is lately married, and my eldest is somewhere about the grounds walking with a young man, who I believe will soon become a part of the family."

   By ..... To ..... About .....

   (f) "His diffidence had prevented his depending on his own judgement in so anxious a case, but his reliance on mine, made everything easy."

   By ..... To..... About .....

   (g) "But I have an aunt too, who must no longer be neglected."

   By ..... To ..... About .....

8. Who are the persons indicated by the following italicized pronouns:

   (a) "*I* don't like at all *your* going such a way off.

   I for ..... Your for .....

   (b) "*You* forced *me* into visiting *him* last year, and promised if I went to see him he should marry one of my daughters."

   you for ..... *me* for ..... *him* for.....

(c) "we may as well have *them* by themselves *you* know."

them for ..... *You* for .....

(d) "Let *me* congratulate *you*, on a very important conquest."

me for ..... *You* for .....

(e) "And *I* had narrowly observed *her* during the two visits which I had lately made her here."

I for .... *her* for ....

(f) 'Are *you* quite certain that you can be happy with *him*.'

You for ..... *him* for .....

(g) "*My* real purpose was to see *you*, and to judge, if I could, whether I might ever hope to make you love me."

My for ..... *You* for .....

3. A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Now that we have analysed from chapter to chapter the principal incidents that thread together the delightful comedy that Jane Austen chose to call *'Pride and Prejudice* you should find yourselves in a position to answer any questions arising out of your study of the characters in the novel. You have been presented with the plot, and you know the impulses and the motivations of the men and women who play their parts, consciously and unconsciously helping the novelist to build a certain design of life. Chapter wise survey having been done; what remains for us now is to discuss some of the important characters in relation to the events that take place in the novel. Such a discussion will be useful in that it will present to the reader the total view of a character as it emerges with the movement of the novel. So far, only a piecemeal treatment of characters has been possible. But since now we can freely refer backward and forward, we are in a position to deal, in some detail. with the pride of Mr. Darcy and the prejudice of Miss Elizabeth—the complication and reconciliation thereof. We shall see Darcy writing in his defence and also how Collins--that comic prodigy- is useful to the plot of the novel. We shall also have a fuller view of the character of Mr. Bennet.

3.1 Pride and Prejudice

Although 'pride' and 'prejudice' are reflected in varying degrees in several characters in the novel, they hardly play any vital role in the development of the plot excepting in the case of

the hero Darcy's pride, and the heroine Elizabeth's prejudice, which do not melt down till Darcy's active participation in having the runaway pair-Wickham and Lydia-married. It is from the comment by the novelist that we first know of Darcy's pride: "He was at the same time haughty, reserved and fastidious, and his manners, though well-bred, were not inviting." (Ch. 4. P. 4, last line, P. 5, L. 1). It is Darcy's cold refusal to accept any dancing partner at the Meryton ball that first hurts Elizabeth's feeling; Darcy's pride mortifies Elizabeth's ego thus breeding prejudice in Elizabeth's mind. But Darcy, for all his pride, is far from being unresponsive to Elizabeth's light and pleasing figure, the easy playfulness for her manners and her face, 'rendered uncommonly intelligent by the beautiful expression of her dark eyes.' It becomes evident from his bantering confession to Caroline Bingley who does not yet take it too seriously: "I have been meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow," (Ch. 6; LL 29-31, P. 25). When Caroline Bingley spitefully attributes low tricks to Elizabeth, Darcy flings back the retort, "whatever bears affinity to cunning is despicable". (Ch. 8, L. 6, P. 39). Needless to say, the bitter remark hardly pleases Caroline. Although the vulgarity of the Bennets wounds Darcy's pride, his interest in Elizabeth grows. As the novelist decides to enlighten us," he began to feel the danger of paying Elizabeth too much attention". (Ch. II, last two lines. P. 57). The finest evidence of his pride becomes apparent when in reply to Elizabeth's oblique hint that he was vindictive in his treatment of Wickham he remained silent, a silence interpreted by Elizabeth as a tacit admission of guilt: 'Darcy made no answer and seemed desirous of changing the subject. (Ch. 18, LL 33-34, P. 92).

That all his pride and fastidiousness are helpless in the face of his love for Elizabeth is proved by his declaration in Kent: 'In vain have I struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed.' (Ch. 34, LL 23-24, P. 188). But when Elizabeth throws cold water on his fine raptures, his pride prevents him from absolving himself from the guilt with which Elizabeth charges him. He can only bring himself to say with admirable dignity: "you have said quite enough, madam. I perfectly comprehend your feeling and have now only to be ashamed of what my own have been". (Ch. 34, LL 7-9, P. 193). He, however, chooses to account for his conduct in a lengthy letter (Ch. 35) which happens to be the turning point in Elizabeth's attitude towards him.

We thus notice that Darcy's pride is far less enduring than Elizabeth's prejudice. Darcy's unwillingness to be free with strangers earns him the general impression of being proud. This is emphasized by the novelist at several points.

Elizabeth does not, against the demands of social decorum, hesitate to share with a stranger like Wickham her feeling that she thought him very disagreeable. (P. 77). Her blind

prejudice makes it easy for her to accept readily Wickham's version of how Darcy had wronged him. Unlike her sister Jane, she is not prepared to accept that Darcy may have a case. She is still further prejudiced when Col. Fitzwilliam unwittingly confirms her suspicion that Darcy had a hand in estranging Jane from Bingley by admitting 'That he (Darcy) congratulated himself on having lately saved a friend from the inconveniences of a most imprudent marriage! (P. 184). Her blindness accounts for her rudeness in refusing the offer of marriage. "You could not have made me the offer of your hand in any possible way that would have tempted me to accept it". (P. 192). Darcy's letter opens her eyes for the first time. "How despicably have I acted". She accuses herself, "I who have prided myself on my discernment". (P. 207)

Out of this feeling of the injustice she had done him, sprang her love. The accidental meeting at Pemberley suddenly reveals to her his qualities never perceived before: "That he should even speak to her was amazing: but to speak with such civility: to inquire afire her family!" (P. 248). Such a reception certainly prepares us for the readiness with which she confides in Darcy regarding Lydia's elopement with Wickham. (P. 273). Later when Mrs. Gardiner enlightens her on Darcy's part in forcing Wickham to marry Lydia she cannot conceal from herself that 'her heart did whisper that he had done it for her. (P. 324). From here the course of true love runs smoothly until infuriated by Lady Catherine's rude threat to Elizabeth and encouraged by the negative evidence of her refusal to comply with her Ladyship, Darcy makes his second proposal to Elizabeth who now is purged of her prejudice.

Of the other characters, besides Darcy, who have a fair measure of pride, are Darcy's aunt Lady Catherine, Bingley's sister Caroline, and in his own manner Mr. Collins, who is intensely proud of his clerical calling. Lady Catherine, however, is not merely proud, but also insolently haughty and her pride leads to an ultimate clash of will between her and her nephew Darcy in which she is defeated. Caroline's pride takes the form of instant admiration for Jane and an open dislike for Elizabeth, inflamed by her jealous disapproval of Darcy's growing interest in Elizabeth. Darcy's pride, on the other hand, springs from sensitiveness. a wholesome fear of being too familiar. It is only Elizabeth's prejudice which puts a less charitable construction on the mainspring of his social conduct. In any case, it is his pride, which hurts Elizabeth's feelings and breeds in her prejudice against the man, and she in indignation turns down his offer of marriage.

As to prejudice, neither Mrs. Bennet's unreasonable prejudice against Mr. Collins for being the prospective inheritor of the Bennet estate, nor Caroline Bingley's spiteful dislike for Elizabeth Bennet, has any ultimate effect on the development of the plot. On the other hand, Darcy's refusal to dance with her at Meryton leads to a whole chain of actions which

reveals a blind and unreasoning dislike for Darcy. It is in such a frame of mind that she meets Wickham and swallows his story which almost reduces Darcy to a villain. Her prejudice is still further strengthened by Darcy's part in keeping Bingley apart from Jane. Darcy's pride dissolves much earlier than Elizabeth's prejudice, and it is not until Darcy appears in an altogether different light, from his unexpected appearance at Pemberley onwards, though doubts had cropped up as early as her receipt of Darcy's letter, that Elizabeth gains sufficient freedom form her prejudice to appreciate Darcy's considerable merits. From there to the final union is only a logical step. Thus, it is Darcy's pride, restraining him much against a strong attraction, and Elizabeth's prejudice, blinding her to the charms of Darcy, that constitute the main elements in the development of the plot.

3.2 Concern for Marriage

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife".

This opening sentence of the novel, in a way, represents the main concern of the novel (marriage being the uppermost concern): the selection of a suitable wife by two young men endowed with considerable fortunes: Bingley and Darcy, not to mention the episodic nature of Collins' wooing of Charlotte Lucas. The fourth wedding in the novel that of Wickham and Lydia is not a desired end, but a kind of retribution for Wickham in so far as he was forced to settle down, and for Lydia being unpardonably flighty and thoughtless. Wickham is not merely a scoundrel, but a fool also who has wasted his substance in riotous living.

Of the eligible bachelors in the novel, Bingley by virtue of his easy manners, and amiable disposition, raises hopes not merely in the easily susceptible Mrs. Bennet, but in Jane and her more astute sister's mind. Complicated by the social ambition of his sisters, and by the disapproval of his friend Darcy, he is estranged for some time from Jane. Ultimately, however, his friend's encouragement and the knowledge that Jane was in love with him. help towards the restoration of his successful wooing of Jane. Mrs. Bennet was by no means the only woman interested in him; his sisters did their best, although without any success, in making him seek Georgiana Darcy's hand.

As to Darcy, his pride protects him from raising fond expectations in the hearts of Mrs. Bennet, Lady Lucas, Mrs. Philips and women of their ilk but at least two highborn ladies are obviously interested in his matrimonial intentions: Caroline Bingley being as assiduous in making herself agreeable to him. as Lady Catherine in securing him as a son-in-law. "Ten thousand a year! Oh, Lord! what will become of me." (P. 378) is all that a delirious Mrs. Bennet can bring herself to say, distracted by the very magnitude of the phenomenon of

such an august person seeking her daughter's hand. It is true that her admiration of Darcy's looks is in marked contrast to her settled distaste for Darcy's personality; but with the sole exception of Charlotte Lucas and Jane Bennet nobody else had been quite fair to him. Elizabeth was fated to win him the hard way, through misunderstanding and misery. It is a great triumph of the novelist's art the Darcy' ardent passion for Elizabeth does not reveal itself until his dramatic declaration of love (P. 188); although, ironically, it is plain to Charlotte who has the first inkling: *"My dear Eliza he must be in love with you, or he would never have called on us in this familiar way."* (P.179).

While the marriages of the first two couples properly constitute the main plot, the matrimonial venture of Mr. Collins and the misadventure of Wickham resulting in his marriage with Lydia are of episodic importance. Mr. Collins without quite being a man of fortune is an 'ornament to the church and makes no bones that in seeking a reconciliation with the Longbourn family he has a wife in view. (P.69). His preference for Charlotte who catches him on the rebound is a commentary on certain solid virtues they have, despite the obsequiousness of the one and the unimaginative commonplaceness of the other. It is not the clever Elizabeth but the charitable Jane who represents the novelist's point of view "Consider Mr. Collins' respectability and Charlotte's prudent. steady character." (P. 135-136). Elizabeth later, on her visit to her friend at Hunsford, finds that the Collinses are quite happily paired.

The last wedding is hardly a wedding at all since it is made to happen rather than no take place by itself. Even a runaway marriage at Gretna Green would have been romantic enough; but the novelist glosses over the fact that Wickham had no intention to marry Lydia at all. Ultimately, it was Darcy's cash which extracted his consent; and Wickham and Lydia continue in a married state which makes for no felicity, as Wickham at least was not in love and had hardly enough economic stability to live a happy married life.

3.3 Mr. Collins

The chief characteristic of Mr. Collins is that he is unique: he would never be lost in a crowd. The letter to Mr. Bennet in Ch. 13, which introduces him to us, reflects, in Mr. Bennet's shrewd opinion 'a mixture of servility and self-importance which promises well.' (P. 63). All his subsequent actions. his lightning wooing of Elizabeth, his speedy consolation in winning Charlotte's favour, his admiration of Mrs. Philips' house effects. his fawning on Darcy despite Elizabeth's warning, his uncharitable clerical advice to shut the door in Lydia's face, and finally his threat to Elizabeth warning her against having any designs on Darcy because he has reason to imagine that his aunt ... does not look on the match with a friendly eye' (P.

362)—all illustrate the absurdity of his character. Yet, with all his obvious faults, he has no evil in his compound, which makes him a comic but by no means a despicable character.

One of the chief values of Collins lies in being an unconscious foil to Darcy. Collins serves as a link between Elizabeth and Darcy in being the first to propose to Elizabeth in his divertingly earnest manner. Thus, the two proposals—those of Collins and Darcy-are deliberately contrasted. The comic hilarity of the first is set off by the hardly less diverting spectacle of an immensely proud man unconsciously acting just as absurdly, excepting for the difference that Darcy is in love while such a consideration never enters Collins's mind.

It must be noted further that Collins is in a way responsible for bringing Elizabeth and Darcy together after Darcy had drifted away from Netherfield in the wake of Bingley, whom Darcy had contrived to keep away from Jane Bennet. It is at Hunsford, the vicarage of Collins, that Darcy, visiting his aunt, renews his acquaintance with Elizabeth. It is here that he proposes to her, and later writes to her in extenuation of his conduct. It is significant that while Collins is at his pompous best in his inflated epistolary style, the mental refinements and fine grains of Darcy's mind are revealed for the first time in his letter by the clarity and sensitiveness of his language.

It is Mr. Collins, who highlights the contrast between his childish timidity and Lady Catherine's formidability. His obsequiousness to the strong-willed Lady runs like a thread through the entire narrative. The manner. in which Collins makes himself ridiculous by harping endlessly on her many ambiguous virtues throws into a bolder relief her serious defects: her insolence, her officiousness, her utter insensitivity to the feelings of others and her love for flattery. Her formidableness comes to surface when the Collinses sheepishly leave the palace. It requires Elizabeth's tough courage to put her in her palace, at least once in her life. The man to suffer for Darcy-Elizabeth union is Collins who, however, temporarily flees from the imperious Lady's wrath.

3.4 Darcy in His Defence

With a mind obsessed by resentment against Darcy's overweening pride. Elizabeth Bennet was easily swayed by the plausible manner in which Wickham brought his charges against Darcy. Sensing that in Elizabeth he had hit upon a person who hated Darcy's haughtiness. Wickham built up a seemingly impregnable case against the son of his former patron. With consummate skill mixing half-truths and dangerous suppression of truth, in a manner indicating reluctance to speak out the truth, and subtly emphasizing his integrity by owning that it was impossible for him to be impartial (P. 77), he charges Darcy with (1) hypocrisy, the world sees him only as he chooses to be seen' (P. 77); (2) a very great ill-usage' (P. 78)

which took the form of refusing to give him a living even though it had been promised by Darcy's father who, according to Wickham, was 'excessively attached to him; (3) vindictiveness, because Wickham claims he cannot accuse himself of having really done anything to deserve it (P. 79); (4) a determined dislike which Wickham 'cannot but attribute in some measure to jealousy" (P. 80): and (5) finally pride, although Wickham admits that pride 'has often led him to be liberal and generous'. (P. 81).

Elizabeth, seething with resentment, takes the earliest opportunity of letting Darcy feel that she was in the know of the tricks Darcy had played on him, but beyond cryptically observing that Wickham 'is blessed with such happy manners cis may ensure his making friends--whether he may be equally capable of retaining them, is less certain'. Darcy is prevented by his fine pride to present his side of the case, until Elizabeth's challenge, accusing him of perfidy against his father's protege: 'You have reduced him to his present state of poverty ..... you have deprived the best years of his life of that independence which was no less luis due than his desert.' (P. 191).

in the explanatory letter which Darcy wrote in self-defence, he proceeded to clear himself by stating that (1) very far from depriving Wickham of a living, he had merely acceded to Wickham's request to set him up in law, and Wickham had received three thousand pounds from Darcy as compensation besides the legacy of a thousand pounds which Darcy's father had bequeathed to Wickham; (2) that when Wickham applied to Darcy after running through this money as a result of his extravagance, he had indeed refused to consider him for this living again; (3) that after a period of comparative inactivity. Wickham had again obtruded himself by planning to elope with Georgiana, not for love, but in pursuit of her thirty thousand pounds, a catastrophe which was prevented by his sister's candid avowal. Thus, Darcy succeeded in countering Wickham's charges by proving that Wickham was (1) a liar, (2) a reprobate and (3) an ungrateful scoundrel who had planned to ruin the young daughter of his benefactor.

3.5 Mr. Bennet-That Odd Mixture

"So odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve and caprice", thus Jane Austen seeks to enlighten us about the character of Mr. Bennet. That he is a man of quick parts is shown in his following remarks about his daughters: they are all silly and ignorant, like other girls: but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters". His reading of the man Mr. Collins from his letter attests his shrewdness: 'a mixture of servility and self-importance!

Mr. Bennet has a refreshing sense of wit and has a delightful way of enjoying any form of stupidity. His disarming question to Collins on the first day of their acquaintance, 'May I ask whether these pleasing attentions proceed from the impulse of the moment, or are the result of previous study?' (P. 67), and his still more crushing wit exhibited by his letter to Collins confirming Elizabeth's betrothal to Darcy: Console Lady Catherine as well as you can. But, if I were you, I would stand by the nephew. He has more to give.' (P. 382), are classic illustrations of his capacity to be amused.

Unfortunately, however, Mr. Bennet permitted himself to be amused by his wife's vulgarity and want of sensibility. One cannot help feeling that his sarcastic references to his wife's tantrums were wholly free from charity and his belittling of his three younger daughters was equally wanting in sympathy. Elizabeth who was grateful to her father for his tender affection for her could not "banish from her thoughts that continual breach of conjugal obligation and decorum which, in exposing his wife to the contempt of her own children. was so highly reprehensible' (P.235) Instead of being sarcastic, he might have been a little more severe with his children, and that would have made for a happy home. For above everything else, Mr. Bennet had ceased to concern himself with what happened to his children, taking refuge in his library and in his garden.

That, at least in the matter of sending Lydia to Brighton under the care of a young and inexperienced woman like Mrs. Forster, Mr. Bennet could have put his foot down becomes evident from his determined refusal to permit the whole family to visit Brighton. Indolent and ease-loving, he bought temporary peace by yielding to his wife. "We shall have no peace at Longbourn if Lydia does not go to Brighton." (P. 231) is a woefully inadequate reason in favour of thoughtlessly permitting Lydia whom Elizabeth had quite legitimately branded as "Vain, ignorant, idle, and absolutely uncontrolled. "(P.230) "The officers will find women better worth their notice". (P. 231) is both cynical and unworthy of a responsible father.

No wonder that when Mr. Bennet comes back from London, disappointed without being able to trace Lydia and Wickham, he should be consumed with self-reproach: 'It has been my own doing. I ought to feel it.' (P.296). He might have spared himself this feeling of guilt: but what tempers our disapproval of such irresponsible conduct is the daring candor of this man: 'Let me once in my life feel how much I have been to blame. I am not afraid of being overpowered by the impression. It will pass away soon enough' (P 296)

3.6 Check Your Progress

1. Which of the four weddings in the novel, is the most suitable in your opinion? Give reasons.
2. Give some instances of Collins' behaviour showing him as the comic prodigy that he is.

4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

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UNIT-I(2)

NARRATOLOGY: FORM AND FUNCTION OF NARRATIVE
(PGS.7-16, 103-105)

Gerald Prince

Kritika Sharma

STRUCTURE

1. Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Analytical Summary
4. Chapter 4: Reading Narrative (Pgs. 103-105)
5. Summing Up

1. INTRODUCTION

Gerald Prince (b. 1942) is an American academic and literary theorist. He is a leading contributor to the discipline of Narratology. Narratology is the study of narrative and the structures and techniques that make up narratives, and how they affect a reader's perception.

In his book *Narratology: The Form and Functioning of Narrative*, written in 1982, and from which the prescribed sections are taken, Prince elaborates on a theory of literary narratives. In the first chapter called "Narrating", he analyses the figure of the narrator in literature and various implicit and explicit ways in which the narrating voice functions in literary texts. In the fourth chapter, called "Reading Narrative", he shifts his concern from the author to the reader and analyses how readers shape texts and give them meaning. The prescribed sections from Prince's book form a useful introduction to literary studies by making the readers aware of all the processes at work when a text is read and interpreted by a reader.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Recognize the basics of Narratology, particularly the figures of the narrator and the reader.
- Understand the ways in which the figure of the narrator can be analysed.
- Acquire an insight into some fundamental concepts of literary studies, such as interpretation, self-consciousness, intrusiveness, and reliability of the narrator.

3. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

This reading begins with defining a narrative as "a collection of signs which can be grouped into various classes." Among these signs, there are signs of "narrating" and of "the narrated". This section focuses on the former and describes how through various signs and gestures within a literary text the activity of narrating is represented. Prince points out that in Narratology, "the narrator is a first person, the narratee a second person and the being or object narrated about a third person." That does not necessarily imply that the 'I' which makes up the narrator would always be obvious or visible. In some sentences it may not appear at all. Sometimes, the only thing which implies a narrating activity is the fact that a given text is a narrative. In Prince's example, the sentence "Joan is rich. She meets John and becomes very poor." also has a first person narrator, though one who is implied and not explicitly presented with an 'I'. The sentence is a narrative, therefore, it is narrated. Hence, it must have a narrator. Prince divides his discussion of the narrator-figure into the following four sections.

Section 1 - 'Signs of the I'

Prince claims that often the first person voice of the narrator is presented indirectly. Sometimes, in a sentence where the second person pronoun 'you' is used but it does not refer to or is said by a character, it might imply the presence of a narrator. Prince calls this a "trace" of the narrator. In Prince's example, the sentence "As you know, John went to France and then he went to Germany" has in it the trace of the presence of the narrator, as the 'you' is addressed to an implied reader. However, there are some signs of the 'I' pronoun that are much more direct, and represent not only the narrator but also tell us something about his "spatio-temporal situation." First person pronouns 'I' or 'We' that do not refer to a character within the story might refer to the narrator. Similarly, contextual words like "now", "here",

"yesterday" etc., when not referring to a character, might be referring to the narrator. Sometimes, "modal words" (words that describe the manner in which an action takes effect), such as "perhaps", "clearly", or "unfortunately" etc. can signify a narrator's stance on what is narrated. Other signs of the 'I' include any statement or words that give the reader any information about the narrator - his persona or attitude included.

Check Your Progress

1. How does Prince define narrative?
2. Does a narrator always have to be signified by the first person pronoun 'I'? Give examples of sentences where 'I' is not used but the act of narrating is implied.
3. According to Gerald Prince, what are some of the 'signs of the I'?

Section 2. 'Intrusiveness, Self-Consciousness, Reliability, Distance'

In this Section, Prince discusses four qualities of a narrator, the first of which is intrusiveness. He claims that a narrator can be more or less intrusive, regardless of whether he is represented by a direct 'I'. A narrator's intrusiveness is how overtly or not he is characterised as the narrator within a story. Prince points out that not all intrusions are equally obvious. In the novel *Tom Jones*, the narrator constantly warns the reader that the narrative is going to be very digressive. This is an example of very obvious intrusiveness. In a brief disclaimer, Prince claims that he is not convinced by a position that many narratologists take when they say that any even slightly evaluative word (a word that takes a position vis-a-vis an event or character in the story) is an example of intrusiveness. For Prince, not all evaluative words are markers of a narrator's subjectivity. For example, in the sentence "John walked elegantly", the comment on the elegance of John's walk does not have to be the subjective opinion of the narrator, and could just be the objective truth within the story.

Self-consciousness is another quality of a narrator. A narrator could be more or less self-conscious depending on how aware he is of his position of being the narrator. In a novel like *L,Emploi du Temps*, the narrator constantly comments on his writing of the story, thereby making him a self-conscious narrator. In Camus's *The Stranger* on the other hand, the narrator gives no indication that he is telling his own story, thus not being a self-conscious narrator. Prince points out that "a self-conscious narrator is always intrusive, but the reverse is not true."

The third quality of a narrator is Reliability - that is, whether he is trustworthy in his telling of the story. In the novel *La Chute*, the narrator is an established liar, constantly contradicting himself, making him unreliable. In a novel where the reader is not made to question the narrator's reliability, the narrator is most likely a reliable one. Prince states that reliability does not mean agreement. A reader does not have to agree with the narrator to find him reliable.

The fourth quality of a narrator is Distance - that is, how the narrator is situated in relation to the events of the story. According to Prince, a narrator's distance can be of many kinds - "temporal, physical, intellectual, moral, emotional" etc.

These four qualities do not only tell the reader something about the narrator but they also influence the response of the reader and the way in which the reader makes meaning out of the text. Our intellectual as well as emotional response to a text is affected by how we read the narrator of a story, and how we interpret the narrator's attitude towards the story he is narrating.

Check Your Progress

1. Define intrusiveness, self-consciousness, reliability, and distance. How are these qualities reflected in a given text?
2. Give examples of unreliable narrators from any literary texts. What makes these narrators unreliable?

Section 3 - Narrator-Character

A narrator may or may not be a character in the story he narrates. In a story told in the first person, one can distinguish between "the first person as narrator and the first person as character". In Prince's example, the 'I' in the sentence "I ate meat" refers to both the character as well as the narrator, since the 'I' recounts an action performed by himself. Prince goes on to state that "when the narrator is not a character, we usually speak of a third-person narrative, because the events narrated refer to third persons." Moreover, sometimes a narrator who is also a character can still refer to himself in the third person. In Laurence Sterne's novel *Tristram Shandy*, the narrator-character Tristram often does this. Similarly, a narrator-character could also refer to himself with the second person pronoun "you". Moreover, narrators can have varying degrees of importance as characters in the stories they narrate - central, minor, or secondary, or anything in between.

Section 4: Multiple Narrators

In any given narrative, "there may be an indefinite number of narrators", Prince states. Among multiple narrators, an hierarchy can often be established. The primary narrator might introduce the secondary narrator, who in turn, might introduce a tertiary narrator, and so on. However, that is not a marker of who the most important narrator is. In a narrative, it is possible that the tertiary narrator is of the most and the primary narrator is of the least importance. Moreover, between the many narrators of a single narrative, there can be varying degrees of distance.

Check Your Progress

1. Give an example of a narrator who is an important character in the story he is telling, and of one who is no importance whatsoever to the events of the story.
2. Name a text that is told by multiple narrators. Who is the primary narrator in this text, and who is the most important narrator?

4. CHAPTER 4: READING NARRATIVE (PGS. 103-105)

In the prescribed section from this chapter, Prince shifts his focus from the figure of the narrator to that of the reader. As he states, "ideal readers, virtual readers, implied readers, informed readers, competent readers, experienced readers, super-readers, archreaders, average readers, and plain old readers now abound in literary criticism." Prince's s statement seems to be referring to the fact that around this time, one of the prominent schools of literary criticism was Reader-Response criticism, which was interested in analysing the ways in which the readers (not the narrators, or the authors) primarily shape the meaning of texts. Prince defines reading as an interaction between a text and a reader in such a way "that the latter is able to answer correctly at least some questions about the meaning of the former." A reader both asks questions of a text and answers them on the basis of his reading. Prince then distinguishes between reading a text (an activity), and a reading of a text (a possible interpretation of the text). He also goes on to distinguish between reading a text, which is an intentioned, conscious activity, and responding to a text, which could include more than just reading a text. Moreover, not all linguistic signs can be read. A text is that collection of signs from which some meaning can be extracted. A random disordered collection of signs would not be considered a text, and hence cannot be read. Identifying a written script is not

necessarily equal to reading it. As Prince states, "my reading a text implies that the meaning which I extract from it is at least partly conditioned by it." That is, a reader's answers to the questions he asks of a text have to be grounded on the text itself and must not contradict it. Prince also claims that reading a text does not mean asking any possible question of it. The questions asked must be relevant. For Prince, a relevant question is one whose answers are based on the text, and add to the meaning of the text. Prince ends this section with the following definition of the act of reading: "Learning how to read is - among other things - learning how to ask more and more relevant questions. An ingenious reader is not only one who can find new answers to old questions but also one who can think of new questions."

Check Your Progress

1. How does Gerald Prince define the act of reading?
2. What is the importance of asking questions in the act of reading? What do you think Prince means by 'relevant questions'?
3. What is the difference between reading a text and a reading of a text?
4. What is Narratology? Based on your reading of the prescribed sections from Gerald Prince's book, what comprises the practice of Narratology? What aspects of a text is a narratologist interested in?

5. SUMMING UP

Narratives are central to one's understanding of the society one occupies, the culture one belongs to, and even one's own self. Storytelling is the most fundamental activity that makes up culture, and narratives are the building blocks of stories. For a student of literature, it becomes imperative therefore, to understand how narratives function. Gerald Prince's book *Narratology* is a great source in this regard. In the prescribed sections from this book, Prince analyses the basic units of any narrative - the narrator as well as the reader. Elaborating on the formal, syntactical ways in which narrators are represented in texts, he analyses the various components and qualities of a literary narrator. The narrator is often represented through the first-person pronoun 'I', but this might not necessarily always be the case. One can recognise various qualities of a literary narrator within a text - among these are intrusiveness, self-consciousness, reliability, and distance. Narrators can often be characters within their own stories, and can hold varying degrees of importance. Moreover, one text need not have a single narrator. Multiple narrators are, in fact, quite common in literature.

Prince then discusses another important unit of a narrative - this one, however, mostly situated outside of the narrative - and that is the reader. Prince highlights the importance of the activity of readings and associates it with a reader asking and answering relevant questions of a text.

Prince's deceptively simple analysis is a master-class in Narratology, the study of the form of narratives. It astutely points out the intricacies of a narrative that most readers often take for granted, or even dismiss entirely.

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Unit-I (3)

'A NEW PROVINCE OF WRITING', FROM *THE DOMAIN OF THE NOVEL: REFLECTIONS ON SOME HISTORICAL DEFINITIONS* (PGS. 20-36)

A.N. Kaul

Kritika Sharma

STRUCTURE

1. Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Analytical Summary
4. Summing Up

1. INTRODUCTION

Prof. A.N. Kaul (1930-2017) was a renowned scholar and teacher at Delhi University, who served as Professor of English, and, later, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University. *The Domain of the Novel,* the book from which the prescribed reading is taken consists of four posthumous essays, that have been put together from a series of lectures Prof. Kaul delivered at Sri Venkateshwara College in the year 1998. The book has been edited by Sambudha Sen and Mythili Kaul. In his 'Introduction' to the book, Sen, describing Kaul's project in the lecture series, states that it is to "uncover the multiple and complicated ways by which the novel achieved the two breakthroughs with which it revolutionised the world of letters: 'to taxonomize the social body and individualize the character'." That is, Kaul's project is to analyse this new literary form – that of the novel – in terms of the individual as well as the social, and how through various narrative maneuvers, the novel succeeds in representing both.

"A New Province of Writing" is the first of four essays in the book *The Domain of the Novel*, and in it, Kaul focuses on certain 18th and 19th century novels, through which he comes to certain general conclusions about the novel form. The novel is a 'new province of

writing' because it is younger than other literary forms. The word 'novel' itself means 'new'. When novels first began to be written in the English language, back in the 18th century, many authors tried to define the novel variously, and to use it for diverse ends. In this chapter, Kaul delineates what some of the common features of these early novels were.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the 'novel' as a diverse literary form
- Develop a clear understanding of the characteristics ascribed by Kaul to the novel form.
- Acquire an insight into how the novel form merges together the individual, the social, and the universal, through its characters and themes.

3. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Section 1: Pages 20-22, "I am grateful to… we sinned all"

Kaul begins by pointing out the difficulty inherent in his project, that of mapping out the novel form, a form which he calls "narcissistic" and "anarchistic". Unlike the epic, which is a much older literary form, the novel does not have any fixed rules. Therefore, attempting to come up with a satisfactory and all-encompassing definition of the novel is an impossible project right from the outset. Kaul suggests coming to a broader understanding of the novel form by reading some of the earliest novels synchronically (as he goes on to do in this chapter and in the other essays in the book), and by studying the relationship between the novel and its social, historical, and political context. Right from the 18th-19th centuries when the novel form emerged, Kaul points out, it has been "an internally conflicted" and "dialectical" terrain – that is, there are novels of all kinds of persuasion, sometimes contradictory to each other, and yet, subsumed under the same form – the novel.

Kaul starts his project of defining the novel by analysing various definitions of the novel form by the 18th century novelist, Henry Fielding, who is considered a pioneer of the novel form. Fielding famously defines the novel as "a comic epic poem in prose", and "a heroic, historic, prosaic poem" as well as "a newspaper of many volumes." He emphasizes therefore, the prosaic quality of the novel, which, unlike the epic, tells a "domestic history" – stories of commonplace, often bourgeois individuals – and not of noble heroes or gods.

Fielding's definition of the novel, as Kaul points out, is also oxymoronic. The novel is both "comic" and "epic" – and herein lies the uniqueness of the novel form. It replaces the epic as the dominant form of story-telling in British culture, but it retains various aspects of the epic form. While "epic" suggests the universal and the epochal, "comic" suggests the ordinary and the commonplace. The novel form successfully merges the two. It includes both the concerns that have traditionally been of the epic form - panoramic stories of the destinies of not just individuals but of entire nations and cultures, and the concerns that arise out of modernity - bourgeois individualism, privacy, and an emphasis on the ordinary. The novel form is rightfully said to be the literary form of modernity, and it contains within itself all the contradictions and vastness that modernity is often characterised with.

Check Your Progress

1. Why does Kaul call the novel form 'anarchistic'?
2. How does Henry Fielding define the novel? Why does Kaul claim that Fielding's definition of the novel is oxymoronic.
3. What according to Fielding, is the relationship between the novel and the epic?

Section 2: Pages 22-29, "On the other hand … diagnostic test of society"

Discussing Henry Fielding's novels further, Kaul comments on the entry of new kinds of characters into literature, the kind that have before then been excluded from the centre-stage. In classical epics and plays, the protagonists are more often than out noble and heroic figures. They are gods, Demi-gods, kings or noblemen. The common characters are often confined to comedy, but are excluded from more serious and more universal stories like those of epics and plays. That changes, however, with the emergence of the novel form. In Fielding's novels, the protagonists are often common people, middle class people, and sometimes even bastards. *Tom Jones* is an example of one such novel. In this novel the protagonist Tom Jones is an illegitimate child and illegitimate child and throughout the novel, is on a quest to find his true ancestry. To highlight his status even further, the novel is subtitled "A Foundling." Kaul suggests that one must understand this bastardy as not just a biological feature, but as a social symbol as well – it signifies the entry of a new kind of character into literature, as well as into the social order. The novel form has made way for characters like these to not just be represented or mentioned, but to be the protagonists of stories.

Kaul then briefly discusses George Eliot's novel *Middlemarch* written in the 19th century, or, as he points out, exactly between Fielding's age and ours, as a perfect example of the two planes at which the novel form works – that of the domestic-comic and that of the epic. As he states, *Middlemarch* "[embodies] in itself as a novel, both a challenge to and an acceptance of a limited domain for the novel." That is, while working at the level of the domestic or the local, the novel at the same time has aspirations of being socio-historical (therefore, going beyond the individual) or even universal. This is evidenced by the fact, according to Kaul, that *Middlemarch* was initially written as two different novels - both with very different kind of storylines - one more domestic and the other more epic. For Kaul, the fact that Eliot decided to merge the two together, is largely symbolic of a similar maneuver performed by the novel form itself. Kaul goes on to claim that the novel form contains within itself various polarities – "individual/collective, private/public, psychological/social, biographical/cultural, domestic/national, topical/historical/universal etc.", which make the novel form internally contradictory or dialogical. To understand how this movement from the individual to the social to the universal happens, Kaul then talks about Fielding's *Tom Jones* in more detail. Fielding himself claims that the subject of his novel is human nature itself. As Kaul points out, while the novel "emphasizes the individual aspect throughout, *Tom Jones* comes across equally as an epic". It is not epic in the sense that it covers a large expanse of space or time, but in the sense that it represents human life in the 18th century. Through individual characters and local situations, what is presented is human beings and society in general. Kaul states that the socio-historical aspect of the novel is not surplus or a "bonus". It is not extra to the representation of individuals. Instead, it is precisely through the individual that the socio-historical is presented. Through stories of individual characters, larger comments about the society, or even the epoch, are made. Moreover, this representation of the social is often a "critical" representation, since it is inevitably analytical and interpretive.

Focusing on the theme of love and marriage in *Tom Jones*, Kaul points out that the "motive analysis" of characters in the novel reveals truths about the larger society that they inhabit. That is, understanding the ways in which individual characters function and relate to their society, tells the reader facts about society at large. The central aspect of all Fielding novels is his cutting irony. Kaul claims that it is through irony that Fielding manages to merge all the various polarities within the novel form that were listed earlier. Kaul calls Fielding's technique "ironic motive analysis" – "from beneath people's professions, their real and sordid motivations" are revealed. For example, in the novel, Sophia's father locks her up in order to stop her from marrying Tom. His sister protests and demands that Sophia be set free. However, while they are so opposed in their personalities, their motivation is the same – neither wants Sophia to marry the poor Tom. This is one example of what is a trend in

Fielding's novels. Through revealing the sameness behind very diverse and often contradictory motivations of very different characters, he gives the reader an overview of the "sordid texture of society itself".

Check Your Progress

1. How does Kaul use 'bastardy' as a metaphor for the early novel form? What diverse impulses are submerged in the novel form?
2. What is the relationship between the individual and the social in 18th century novels?
3. How does irony function in Fielding's novels to resolve the polarities of the novel form?
4. What does Kaul mean by 'ironic motive analysis' as applied by him to Fielding's novels?

Section 3: Pages 29-34, "I shall now turn …anarchic domain"

Following this discussion, Kaul moves on to *Dombey and Son* by Charles Dickens and *Vanity Fair* by William Thackeray, two 19th century novels, and analyses how in these two as well there is a movement from the individual to the socio-historical, and ultimately to the universal or the epochal. These novels, Kaul claims, go beyond Austen's novels that had made clear the intricate relationship between money and matrimony. Austen's novels are known for their trenchant critique of 19th century marriage as a relationship of transaction and materialist desires. While Austen's novels astutely revealed the nexus between money and romance/marriage, these two novels of Dickens and Thackeray claim that the commerce is the basis of "not just marriage but of morality at one end, …, and, at the other end,… the basis of all family and social relations, class interaction, and class mobility." Commerce, then, is the basis of all society itself – something made clear by the way these two novels represent individual characters and local situations. The movement from the individual to the socio-historical is effected in two ways: 1) Matrimony becomes a symbol of class relations. Matrimonial alliances between very different classes show the transformation taking place within the British class system itself. This is present in a proto-form in Austen's novels too. A lot of anxiety about money and class in Austen's novels comes from the nobility's awareness that the class system of England is transforming fast. Marriages between diverse classes are not only happening, they are made necessary by these changes. 2) Irony is used to juxtapose the personal with the social-commercial. Another shift that these novels represent is the shift from a rural setting to an urban one – the new protagonists are representatives of the new

merchant and bourgeois classes. Kaul takes issue with Barbara Hardy's pronouncement that Thackeray is a "sociologist" and claims that if Thackeray is in fact a sociologist, his sociology is not a study of culture, but of ideology. Calling Thackeray a "pre-Althusser Althusserian", (Althusser was a 20th century Marxist theorist whose theory of the interrelation of the subject is seminal in literary theory), Kaul sees in Thackeray's work an awareness that human beings are products of their cultures and environments – "their desires and ambitions dictated by the general ideas of the society that includes them" - an idea that becomes central to Karl Marx and many other Marxist theorists. Thus, while these novels are narrow in terms of scope, they are vast in terms of what they imply. The actual stories might revolve around individuals or their families, but their actions, behaviour, and ideas and reveal truths about the age which they occupy.

Finally, Kaul compares the narratorial voice of these early novels as that of the Clown more than that of the Preacher. In particular, this is in reference to the narrative persona of Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair,* in which the author himself represents the narrator figure as wearing the livery of a Clown on the cover page. Since the Elizabethan age, the Clown is a character through which a critique of the ruler is mounted and voiced. Just like that of a preacher, a Clown's function is also to educate and moralize. Both the Clown and the Preacher function to tell bitter truths to society about itself – the only difference is in their tone. The shift from the Preacher to the Clown is analogous to the shift from earlier literary forms to the novel form.

Kaul ends the chapter with the following conclusion about the novel form, that it takes "traditional moral-universal categories – human nature, pride, vanity – and [redefines] them in terms of contemporary, material realities", thus both breaking away from and retaining certain features of older forms, and remaining a "theoretically wide-open, heterogeneous, anarchic domain".

Check Your Progress

1. According to Kaul, what characterizes the shift from Austen's works to those of Dickens and Thackeray? How do these novels differ in their assessment of the role of commerce in society?
2. What does Kaul mean by calling Thackeray a writer of ideology?
3. What does Kaul mean by characterizing the narratorial voice of a novel in terms of a preacher or a clown?
4. How does Kaul define the novel form?

4. SUMMING UP

The novel form is more often than not the form through which most readers enter the world of literature and literary studies. Since its emergence in the 18th century, it has been the dominant form of storytelling. This makes it imperative that one understand the context in which the novel form emerged, its engagement with older literary forms, and the novelty associated with it. In his chapter "A New Province of Writing", this is exactly what A.N. Kaul attempts to do. He reads the novel form as a new form of literature and elaborates on what 18th and 19th century novels tell us about both the novel form and the age in which these novels were produced. Kaul describes the novel form as dialogic and dialectical, both in the beginning as well as at the end of his chapter, thereby maintaining the vastness of the novel form, and the inherent impossibility of coming to single satisfactory definition of it. He analyses how the novel form effectively merges three different planes of meaning - the individual, the socio-historical, and the universal or epochal. Unlike the epic, it is the novel form that successfully merges the universal and the commonplace. Through detailed analysis of a few novels of Fielding, Dickens, Eliot, and Thackeray, Kaul teases out strands that make up the nature of the novel form right after its emergence**.**

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Unit-II

READING POETRY

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit aims to:

i. Introduce you to the four poets that have been prescribed in your syllabus.

ii. Familiarize you with the socio-historic background of each of the poets.

iii. Acquaint you with the different schools of poetry.

iv. Enable you to understand the terminology generally used in the analysis of poems.

v. Help you appreciate and understand the prescribed poems and analyse them critically.

2. INTRODUCTION

This study material is aimed at introducing you to, first the pleasures of reading poetry and second, to discover devices used by individual poets to articulate their emotions and ideas around diverse themes. While we would be engaging ourselves with the prescribed poems we would also be delving into some important aspects of the socio-historical processes which have contributed to the growth of different schools of poetry. By the end of your study, you would be expected to know different forms of poetry, their historical milieu, individual poetic styles and the concerns of poets as reflected in their work. In order to expand your study beyond the text, you may refer to any standard History of Literature which covers the growth of literature from the fifteenth century to the twentieth century. Find out which one is available in your own library. Since you would be examined through Reference to the Context as well as Essay type questions, it is important to attempt a close study of the poems in co-ordination with the appended glossary and notes.

2.1 How to Read a Poem

What should be your approach to the study of poetry?

Read the poem first, slowly sensing the melody of the lines. You will realize how different the experience is from that of reading prose. You will soon become aware of these special differences, symmetrical or varying length of lines, rhythm and rhyme, stanzas and sections and the control over rhythm through metre which constitutes the pattern of sound. After having "experienced" the poem, try to understand the theme- Is it love, a broken

relationship, a sad memory, hope, disillusionment, a sudden recognition or perhaps a self realization? Try to look for the devices used to convey these themes. Some terms for these devices are included as part of this introduction. Following the first reading of a poem go through the study material which has been planned to give you information as well as to stimulate your interest in poetry which is one of the oldest genres to enable you to trace its development. The study of each poem would now require you to consult the detailed notes which follow each poem. The historical outlines and some aspects of the life of each poet would help you to realize how different influences have a bearing upon the final product. Through this study we hope that you would learn to appreciate the art of poetry and also be well prepared for your examination.

2.2 Terminology in Poetry

Metre	In English verse, the term refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables indicated by signs like stressed and unstressed respectively. You will find suitable illustrations in some of the notes appended to the poems. For instance: Iámbĭcs márch / frŏm shórt / tŏ lóng.
Muse	In Greek mythology, there were nine muses, who were sisters each a presiding deity of one branch of learning. Traditionally poets appealed to a particular muse for aid in assisting them to compose their works.
Sonnet	A verse form containing fourteen lines. In the English tradition usually iambic pentameter and a complicated rhyme scheme are used (see metre and refer to notes).
Ode	A lyric poem of some length, serious in subject and dignified in style. Odes may vary from weighty public proclamation to the private, emotive meditation especially characteristic of the romantics.
Ballad	A narrative poem, usually simple, originally designed to be sung. The folk ballad, was composed anonymously and handed down orally often in several different versions, typified by the use of refrains.
Metaphor	A figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared by identification or by the substitution of one for the other, to make meaning more effective.
Simile	An expressed comparison between, two unlike objects, usually using 'like' or 'as'. This is a popular device used in descriptive poetry.

Symbol	Unlike a sign, which must have only one fixed meaning, a symbol may begin from a simple comparison but develops into a larger and deeper meaning. Symbols do not have a publicly accepted meaning but take their significance from the total context. Sometimes, not only an image but an entire work may be taken as a symbol.
Imagery	The term refers to the use of language to represent descriptively, things, actions, or even abstract ideas. Frequently, a writer combines both visual and non-visual images.
Assonance	The close repetition of similar vowel sounds, usually in stressed syllables.
Alliteration	The close repetition of consonant sounds, usually at the beginning of words, also called "head rhyme".
Rhyme	The repetition of similar or duplicate sounds of words at the ends of lines of verse.
Rhyme scheme	The arrangement of rhymes in a unit of verse. The four-line stanza or quatrain, frequently has a rhyme scheme of ab ab.
Dramatic monologue	A poem consisting of the words of a single character who reveals in his speech his own nature and the dramatic situation. The dramatic monologue discloses the psychology of the speaker at a significant moment.
Pun	Word play involving (1) the use of a word with two different meanings (2) similarity of meanings in two words spelt differently but pronounced the same (3) two words pronounced and spelt somewhat the same but containing different meanings.
Pastoral	A term that covers a variety of literary forms. The only consistent characteristic of pastoral literature is that it concerns country life.

Now that you are acquainted with poetry specific terminology, see if you can use it for a better understanding of the poems in your course.

Unit-II(4)

JOHN MILTON

LATE RENAISSANCE POET

Dr. Shashi Khurana

STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Historical Background

Following the death of Queen Elizabeth, I in 1603, the English throne passed from Tudor hands to the Stuarts of Scotland with the Scottish King James IV, who took the title James I of England as well. His reign lasting till 1625 is referred to as the Jacobean period in English history. It was witness to several major transformations in English society, perhaps the most important being the gradual alienation of the court from its increasingly insistent and demanding subjects and the King from an increasingly Puritan Parliament.

1.2. The Poet and his Poetry (1608-1674)

Milton is like an ideal in the soul, like a lofty mountain on the horizon. We never attain the ideal; we never climb the mountain; but life would be inexpressibly poorer were either to be taken away.

From childhood Milton's parents set him apart for the attainment of noble ends, and so left nothing to chance in the matter of training. His father, John Milton, is said to have turned Puritan while a student at Oxford and to have been disinherited by his family; whereupon he settled in London and prospered greatly as a scrivener, that is a kind of notary.

A brief course at the famous St. Paul's school in London was the prelude to Milton's

entrance to Christ's College, Cambridge. The most noteworthy song of this period of Milton's life is his splendid ode, "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," which was begun on Christmas day, 1629. Milton, while deep in the classics, had yet a greater love" for his native literature. Spenser was for years his master; in his verse we find every evidence of his "loving study" of Shakespeare, and his last great poems show clearly how he had been influenced by Fletcher's *Christ's Victory and Triumph*, But it is significant that this first ode rises higher than anything of the kind produced in the famous Age of Elizabeth.

While at Cambridge it was the desire of his parents that Milton should take Orders in the Church of England; but the intense love of mental liberty which stamped the Puritan was too strong within him, and he refused to consider the "oath of servitude," as he called it, which would mark his ordination. Throughout his life Milton, though profoundly religious, held aloof from the strife of sects. In his belief, he belonged to the extreme Puritans, called Separatists, Independents, Congregationalists, of which America's Pilgrim Fathers are the great examples; but he refused to be bound by any creed or church discipline.

From boyhood the strain on the poet's eyes had grown more and more severe; but even when his sight was threatened, he held steadily to his purpose of using his pen in the service of his country. During the king's imprisonment a book appeared called *Eikon Basilike* (Royal Image), giving a rosy picture of the king's piety, and condemning the Puritans. The book speedily became famous and was the source of all Royalist arguments against the Commonwealth. In 1649 appeared Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (Image Breaker), which demolished the flimsy arguments of the *Eikon Basilike* as a charge

The last part of Milton's life is a picture of solitary grandeur un-equaled in literary history. With the Restoration all his labors and sacrifices for humanity were apparently wasted. From his retirement he could hear the bells and the shouts that welcomed back a monarch, whose first act was to set his foot upon his people's neck. Milton was immediately marked for persecution; he remained for months in hiding; he was reduced to poverty, and his books were burned by the public hangman. His daughters, upon whom he depended in his blindness, rebelled at the task of reading to him and recording his thoughts. In the midst of all these sorrows we understand, in *Samson*, the cry of the blind champion of Israel.

Paradise Lost was finished in 1665, after seven years' labor in darkness. With great difficulty he found a publisher, and for the great work, now the most honored poem in English literature, he received less than "certain verse makers of our day receive for a little song in the popular magazines". Its success was immediate, though, like all his work, it met with venomous criticism. Dryden summed up the impression made on thoughtful minds of his time when he said, "This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too." Thereafter a bit of

sunshine came into his darkened home, for the work stamped him as one of the world's great writers, and from England and the Continent pilgrims came in increasing numbers to speak their gratitude. The next year Milton began his *Paradise Regained.* In 1671 appeared his last important work, *Samson Agonistes*, the most powerful dramatic poem on the Greek model which our language possesses. The picture of Israel's mighty champion, blind, alone, afflicted by thoughtless enemies but preserving a noble ideal to the end, is a fitting close to the life work of the poet himself. For years he was silent, dreaming who shall say what dreams in his darkness, and saying cheerfully to his friends, "Still guides the heavenly vision." - He died peacefully in 1674, the most sublime and the most lonely figure in our literature.

As students of literature, you are by now aware of the question of periodization, i.e. exploring the ways in which poetry and other genres are linked with the political and social contexts. Milton was writing in the Late Renaissance and his writings reflect the concerns of that period. However, the text that you would be studying forms part of Milton's work which is described as personal sonnets. To understand the sentiment underlying the sonnet, let us briefly examine the kind of poet Milton is considered to be. Most critics consider Milton to be the most important and influential poet in the English language after William Shakespeare. He was to have a lasting impact on the works of later poets like William Wordsworth, Percy Shelley and William Butler Yeats. Milton's understanding of the poetic vocation was, from the beginning an exalted one. He saw himself, as the true successor of Spenser, in that he wanted to fuse the classical heritage of the Renaissance with the Christian spirit of the Reformation. It is in this sense that Milton is also an intensely self-reflective poet, whose poetry is suffused with the awareness of its own ambition and vocation. What is important to note is that the answer for Milton was always a religious one, in the sense that he saw his poetry as always in the service of Christianity. In this sense, poetry was a spiritual vocation, divinely inspired by a religious muse and therefore, in continuation with his religious interests rather than a means of attaining public status or attention, and self-aggrandizement.

Milton believed contemporary protestant English culture was the true Christian one. Apart from a manifest English-nationalistic sensibility, most of Milton's poetry is suffused by a musicality that underscores his concern with enhancing the poetics of the English language. Thus, the rhymes and rhythms native to English are explored with lyrical skills. This musicality became an important dimension of Milton's poetry especially after his blindness set in. By 1652, Milton had become completely blind, which was also the year when his wife Mary Powell died. After two more marriages and a brief spell of self-imposed exile. Milton continued to create works of seminal importance in the world of English poetry and prose.

1.3. Milton and the Sonnet Tradition:

A sonnet is basically a poem of fourteen lines with varying rhyme schemes. Milton had written sonnets when he was very young. Some of the early ones had been published in the 'Poems' of 1645. Nearly all the others remained unpublished until 1673, the year before Milton's death, while three or four, for obvious political reasons, did not appear until 1694, long after the poet's death.

The sonnet is one of the few forms Milton used for which he had no classical precedent or model. One of the reasons for its appeal to Milton, could have been because it was an Italian form, the greatest practitioners of which had been Dante, Petrarch and Tasso. In England, it had been adapted by many, but the two English poets who would have been "authority" enough for Milton, had he needed it, were - "sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's Child" and "Our sage and serious Spenser". William Wordsworth's tribute to the sonnet form captures the heritage of the poets:

Scorn not the sonnet; Critic, you have frowned….

…..... alas, too few!"

In addition to its long history in the hands of poets he admired, Milton would have been attracted to the sonnet by the limitations the form imposed upon any poet who uses it. It is one of the few English forms (Italian has many more) in which the poet's craft is taxed to the full to keep within boundaries and limitations yet challenged to transcend those limitations by adaptation - of materials, to the metrical rules. The form required the terseness Milton admired in Greek poetry, the opportunity and the challenge to say much in little.

As Milton inherited the sonnet, he was free to choose among several forms, some Italian, some English, each having the authority of great poets. Most students of English think of the Italian sonnet as being divided between an *Octave* and a *Sestet* though the practice of various Italian poets seems to indicate that they were really writing two quatrains (a stanza in four lines) and two tercets (a stanza in three lines). Dante and other early and modern poets sometimes used alternate rhymes, *abab*; Petrarch did so infrequently. The octave of the Italian sonnet adopted by most English followers is *abba*, *abba*. The tercet offered more variety. Sometimes, it too was limited to two rhymes, often arranged *cdc*, *cdc* or *cdc*, *dcd*. Not infrequently a third rhyme was added, *cde*, *cde; cde*, *dce* and other combinations were possible. Occasionally, a final couplet appears, though it is far from common. The Petrarchan sonnet, to Milton, consists of an octave with enclosed, not alternate lines and a sestet (the last six lines of a sonnet) with three rhymes, arranged in various ways.

In England, two simpler forms developed among those who did not follow the

Petrarchan model. The simplest, used by Surrey and most famous in Shakespeare, consists of three quatrains, each with its own alternate rhyme, and a couplet, introducing still another rhyme: *abab, cdcd, efef, gg*. Spenser experimented with a form basically like the Surrey - Shakespeare sonnet, except that a rhyme was carried over from one quatrain to the next: *abab bcbc, cdcd, ee*. In spite of Milton's admiration for both Shakespeare and Spenser, it was natural that with his love for Italian poetry and his tendency toward the "Classical" model, he should have followed Petrarch and adapted the tighter and more difficult of the various rhyme schemes. His octave is always abba, abba, his sestet often limited to two rhymes, although he uses combinations of cde in five English sonnets. As the sonnet grew in Milton's right hand - it became a form characteristically Miltonic in its rhythmic dexterity and virtuosity. Unlike various other poets, Milton did not feel a necessary separation between octave and sestet. More and more he tends to carry over the sense from either the eighth or the ninth into the next part, as, for example, in his sonnet 'On his Blindness'. Milton's sonnets may be divided into three groups - conventional, personal and political.

1.4 Personal sonnets

These are a small group of private reflections on Milton's part concerning either his blindness or his dead wife. Dated around 1652, Sonnet XVI *On his Blindness*, reflects the mood of one who was facing the calamity for the first time. He must have believed that the great work for which he had been "called" would never be written.

1.5 Check Your Progress

i. What is a sonnet?
ii. What is the rhyme scheme usually followed by Milton in his sonnets?
iii. Name the three groups in which Milton's sonnets have been divided.

2. THE POEM

Sonnet XVI: On His Blindness

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

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

2.1 Paraphrase

When I consider...I fondly ask: There are moments when I reflect how my vision is lost when I have still to spend half my life in this sinful world. I had thought of serving my Maker with the gift of poetry which He had given to me so that I might not be found like the lazy servant in the Parable and be rebuked by God for not having made use of the poetic talent given to me. But now that gift is buried within me uselessly, reducing me to a condition of spiritual death. When I think of all this, I ask myself foolishly whether God demands full labour from those whom he has denied light.

But Patience .....Who only stand and wait.

But Patience puts an end to my murmurings and complaints. She tells me that the Kingdom of God is so great in itself. That He does not need either man's work or a return for the gifts He gives to man. They serve Him best who accept His decrees without questioning them. There are countless angels in His service, many of whom carry out His commands flying ceaselessly over land and sea. The other angels just wait but they also serve him though they are not called

2.2 Analysis

The Sonnet 'On His Blindness' proceeds from grief through questioning to final resignation but both mood and meaning are far more profound than they had been in youthful reflections on his birthday. Milton had laboured with all his might while it was still light but darkness of a different sort had fallen before the working day was over - before half his working - days should have been over. Was the labourer still responsible for increasing the talent which he could no longer see?

Blindness was a far greater impediment to Milton than it might have been to a poet of

another school to whom poetry might literally have been the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling. Milton was not only a 'classical' poet; he believed that one who would write a poem "doctrinal to a nation" must be a learned poet. For his great poem he needed to turn to books, as does a scholar, who is far more dependent on his eyes than is a novelist or a lyric poet. When total darkness descended, he must have believed there was no possibility of his continuing with the great work he had laid aside at the call of his poetry. For a time, he could only submit, saying with Job, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord". As among angels, so among men who serve God on earth, there must be those who no longer able to be God's "eyes", serve in some other way: "They also serve who only stand and wait".

The metaphor around which the sonnet is developed is the parable of the talents in the Bible. After having read the sonnet you would have sensed the mood, the controlled emotion, the despair and finally the note of submission to the will of God. The poem also reflects Milton's personal anxiety about his age, his vocational belatedness. By 1652, Milton was totally blind. He had spent years fulfilling his duties to the Council of State. Now he was under malicious attack for defending Cromwell's government to the world and for his own advocacy of divorce. However, the sonnet is proof enough that his talent has not been rendered "useless" by age and blindness.

2.3 The Structure

In structure this is one of the three most masterly of Milton's sonnets. It follows the scheme *cde cde* in the sestet. This pattern serves well to articulate the longish argument which constitutes the consolation to the blind poet, since it permits the elaboration of extended sentences. The sonnet represents a conventional, classical form. Rooted in Biblical thought and imagery the sonnet reflects the single most important influence on his work.

On re-reading the sonnet you will discover how the sonnet moves between two long sentences. The first one "When I consider" from line one to the middle of line eight, "I fondly ask" constitutes the octave. This reflects a deep-felt contemplation through Biblical parables. The poet's personal loss thus weighs heavier on his heart. But the mood changes in the second part of the sentence which constitutes the thought. Structurally it is a continuation of the first sentence. Yet there is a sense of consolation, through the reference to God's undemanding nature. The sonnet ends with the second sentence which affirms the greatness and glory of God and a justification of all that destiny has bestowed.

2.4 Check Your Progress

i. What is the central metaphor in the poem?
ii. How does the poem begin?
iii. Does the poem end on a conciliatory note? How does the poet come to terms with his blindness?
iv. Point out the rhyme scheme of the sonnet.

3. GLOSSARY AND NOTES

Spent: used up, exhausted

Ere: before

half my days: Milton was forty-two in early 1652, when he became totally blind. The traditional span of man's life is the Biblical 'threescore years and ten' i.e. seventy. Milton may have been thinking of his working life, or of his father who lived to eighty-four and had good eyesight.

talent: Used here in a two-fold sense:

i. A measure of gold or a unit of money used in ancient times among the Greeks, Romans and Assyrians.

ii. Natural power to do something well or a gift. In the case of Milton it is poetic talent.

reference to the parable of the talents in the *Bible* (Mathew 24.14-30). The kingdom of heaven is likened to a master who was about to go on a long journey and left five talents (a sum of money) with one servant, two to a second and one to the third. The first traded with his talents and doubled them, the second did the same and the third buried his one talent for safety. The master returned and called them to account and the first gave him the ten talents and was rewarded: 'Well done thou good and faithful servant.' The same happened to the second servant but the last one who had hidden the talent in the earth was sharply rebuked as wicked and slothful, made to give his one talent to the servant with ten, and cast into outer darkness. 'Talent' in Greek (the language of the New Testament) meant a sum of money. Milton plays

on this meaning and the modern sense of the word which means a 'special aptitude or faculty'.

Which is death

***to hide*:** With a proper use of his poetic talent, Milton could earn immorality therefore to hide it meant death. That is to say, by not using his talent, he would not only lose his chance of immortal fame on earth, but would also, like the unprofitable servant, suffer spiritual death in losing the kingdom of Heaven.

Lodged-Useless: Comparing himself with the servant with one talent in the parable. Milton says that though the poetic talent is very much there within him, he cannot use it on account of his blindness.

Lest He returning

chide: Just as the master in the Parable rebuked the servant with one talent for his failure to use the talent profitably so God would rebuke Milton too if he fails to use his poetic talent properly in the service of God.

Doth God exact day

labour light denied: Would God expect his labourer to do his work even when he is deprived of the gift of light?

exact: insist on

Day labour: Labour for daily wages or hired for the day. Milton asks whether God demands a full day's labour from those without sight and thus alludes to the Parable of the labourers in the vine yard, some of them were hired for a full day, others for only a part of a day but all of them got the same wages (St. Mathew 20: 1-16).

Milton draws solace from this parable that God in his mercy and kindness will find him as deserving as others who labour more because they have eye sight.

fondly: foolishly, naively

Patience: Christian patience or faith in providence could be a saintly virtue.

murmur: complaint, grumbling

God doth not.....

his own gifts: It is a common biblical saying that man returns God's gifts. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." *The Bible, the Book of Job*.

The talents have been given to us by God. So, they belong to him and in utilizing them for his service, we are merely returning to him what belongs to him. But God does not require our service nor the return of his gifts.

who best: those who best

Yoke: Rule, authority.

***Bear His Mild yoke*:** Submit themselves to the discipline of God. The best service of God, the service appreciated by God consists in submitting oneself quietly to the discipline of God.

thousands: probably a reference to angels, God's messengers

post: ride swiftly

***When I consider*:** Shakespeare's Sonnet 16 contains a similar first line.

***Dark world and wide*:** The reference carries over in *Paradise Lost* and sonnet 22.

***Day labour*:** Reference to the parable of the bridegroom in the *Bible* (Mathew 25:1-13)

Mild Yoke: Jesus states "For my yoke is easy and my burden of light".

What Milton means to say is that thousands of angels travel fast over lands and seas to carry out the wishes of God and thus serve him. But that is not the only way in which one can serve God. Even those who stand firm (in the midst of disasters) and await God's commands serve. Him equally effectively. And Milton knows that he is one of them - Here we find that the attitude of calm resignation gives a loftiness to the passage.

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Unit-II(5)

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

A ROMANTIC POET

Dr. Shashi Khurana

STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Historical Background

The period we are considering begins in the later half of the reign of George III and ends with the accession of Victoria in 1837. When, in 1783, King George announced in the House of Lords, his recognition of the independence of the United States of America, he unconsciously proclaimed the triumph of that free government by free people which had been the ideal of English literature for more than a thousand years, though it was not till 1832, when the Reform Bill became the law of the land, that England itself learned the lesson taught by America and became the democracy, of which the writers had always dreamed.

The half century between these two events is one of great turmoil, yet of steady advance in every field of English life. The centre of this development was the French Revolution (1789-1799) which proclaimed the natural rights of man and the abolition of class distinctions. The doctrine of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity was upheld and asserted as part of the popular movement. The literature of the Age is largely poetical in form and almost entirely romantic in spirit. The triumph of democracy in government is generally accompanied by the triumph of romanticism in literature.

At first, the literature, as shown especially in the early work of Wordsworth, Byron and Shelley, reflected the turmoil of the age and hopes of an ideal democracy occasioned by

the French Revolution. The chief characteristics of the age are: the prevalence of romantic poetry; the creation of the historical novel by Scott; the first appearance of women novelists, such as Anne Radcliffe, Jane Poster, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen; the development of literary criticism in the work of Lamb, Coleridge and Hazlitt; the practical and economic bent of philosophy as contained in the work of Malthus and James Mill, and the establishment of magazines like the Edinburgh Review, the Quarterly, Blackwood's and the Athenaeum.

Having looked at the background, let us now attempt an understanding of Romanticism, which was the dominant movement in poetry.

1.2. Romanticism

> The term romanticism is controversial as shown in the compilation of as many as 11,390 definitions in *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic* Ideal (1948) by F.L. Lucas**.**

What is meant by a romantic writer is one who insists, implicitly or otherwise, on her/his own uniqueness. In the Age of Reason, many -writers said that they represented their age. This was not so with the Romantics. Wordsworth and Coleridge who worked together for some time never applied the term, romantic, to themselves Goethe defined "classic" as good health and "romantic" as sickness. This distinction is more psychological than aesthetic and it has received much currency Around 1800 when Madame de Stael introduced German romantic literature into France, she stressed the medieval and Christian qualities in that literature These qualities replaced rationalism and agnosticism of the Age of Reason. She felt that the aridity of the eighteenth century was over and that the new literature celebrated the open heart. Heine, the German poet, held an opposite view. Victor Hugo described romanticism as 'liberalism in literature'. The important point is that romanticism has political overtones.

The term implies a literary and philosophical theory which tends to see the individual at the very centre of all life and all experience. The individual is placed at the centre of art. Romantic Literature is therefore an expression of the poet's unique feelings and particular attitudes.

It "places a high premium on the creative function of the imagination seeing art as a formulation of intuitive imaginative perceptions that tend to speak a nobler truth than that of fact, logic, or the here and now." Romanticism spread through most of Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It affected literature, art, music, philosophy, religion and politics.

Romanticism is opposed to the artificial conventions, the reigning literary tradition and the poetic establishment. The Neo-classical theory of poetry conceived it as imitation and as something acquired by training. The function of poetry, according to this view, is to

instruct and to please. Art is a mirror in which we find a reflection of life. For the Romantics, the source of poetry is the poet himself. As Wordsworth puts it, poetry is a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". It is an inborn gift and not something acquired. Poetry is the expression of emotion. The poet's imagination creates poetry. The traditional view that poetry- is a painstaking endeavour is discarded by the Romantics. Blake thought that poetry comes from inspiration, vision and prophecy. Keats said that poetry should come "as naturally as the leaves of a tree".

Romantic poets made daring innovations in the themes, forms, language and style of poetry. Lowly and eccentric characters like an idiot boy or a leech gatherer are material for poetic treatment by Wordsworth. Supernatural themes are used by Coleridge (*The Ancient Mariner)* and Keats (*The Eve of St. Agnes*). Romantic poetry often deals with the "far away and long ago", exotic places and forgotten events figure in Romantic Poetry. It draws inspiration from folk literature and the literature of the Middle Ages and of classical antiquity. Yet another innovation is the use of symbolist techniques, notably, by Blake and Shelley, the latter poet's "West Wind" and "Skylark" are good examples.

The Romantic poets displaced humanity by external nature as poetic subject-matter. Thus, the description of landscape and its aspects become prominent. In fact, poets like Wordsworth saw in nature the power to chasten and subdue. While neoclassic poetry is written on other people - Romantic poetry is about the poet, self. The latter is highly subjective. The Romantic poets also had a fascination for solitary figures, social non-conformists, outcasts and rebels such as Prometheus, Cain, Don Juan and Satan.

Another significant innovation is the use of everyday speech of ordinary people instead of lofty poetic diction. The Romantic poets looked for new meters and stanzas to replace traditional forms. The heroic couplet gave place to the ballad, the sonnet, the Spenserian stanza and other experimental verse forms. Rural life is idealized in Romantic poetry. The wild, the irregular and the grotesque in Nature and art fascinated the Romantic poets. Taboo themes like incest are used without any inhibition. Conformity to tradition and decorum as observed by the earlier generation are no longer respected.

Thus, the Romantic Movement was a revolutionary movement in many ways.

1.3. The Poet and his Poetry (1770-1850)

The description of Wordsworth is best brought out by Tennyson's words, "one who uttered nothing base". 'The Prelude', an autobiographical poem records the impressions made upon Wordsworth's mind from his earliest recollection until his full manhood, in 1805, when the poem was completed. Outwardly his long and uneventful life divides itself naturally into four

periods: his childhood and youth, in the Cumberland Hills, from 1770 to1787; a period of uncertainty of storm and stress, including his university life at Cambridge, his travels abroad, and his revolutionary experience, from 1787 to 1797; a short but significant period of finding himself and his work, from 1797 to 1799; a long period of retirement in the northern lake region, where he was born and where for a full half century he lived so close to nature that its influence is reflected in all his poetry.

Wordsworth's life is marked by some events and largely by spiritual experiences. Born in 1770 at Cockermouth, Cumberland, in the lap of nature amidst beloved rivers, sending a voice "That flowed long my dreams. "He grew up with four siblings and his mother exerted a lasting influence on his life, though she died when Wordsworth was only eight years old. He remembered her as "the heart of all our learnings and our loves". The father died some six years later, and the orphan was taken in charge by relatives, who sent him to Hawkshead, in the beautiful lake region. The unroofed school of nature attracted him more than the discipline of the classics, and he learned more eagerly from flowers, hills and stars than from his books. As a young man at the university of Cambridge, Wordsworth followed his own genius rather than the curriculum, looking forward more eagerly to his vacation in the hills than to his examinations

1.4. Wordsworth's Theory of Poetry

Wordsworth's observations prefixed to *Lyrical Ballads,* generally called the "Preface" to the second edition of 1800, is his manifesto in which he discuses a number of issues related to the art of poetry. These issues include the nature of poetry, the creation of poetry, the impact of the poem on the reader, and the difference between the language of prose and the language of poetry. The poet's views on these important topics are scattered throughout the preface and we have to piece together what he had said on each question.

The creative process is explained by Wordsworth in the following words: -

"Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on."

The Romantics give a high place to the poet; they endow him with the ability to speak to other men. Wordsworth asserts:

"He [the poet] is a man speaking to men; a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a comprehensive vision more than are supposed to be common among mankind."

A poet is related to other men who have the same ingredients, but the poet has them in greater measure.

1.5 Check Your Progress

i. List some of the important characteristics of Romantic Poetry.
ii. In what ways was the Romantic movement revolutionary?
iii. What does Wordsworth say about the creative process?
iv. Where is the poet placed by the Romantics?

2. THE POEM

Composed upon Westminster Bridge *(September 1802)*

Earth has not any thing to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air,
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

2.1 Paraphrase

This sonnet describes the beauty of London at dawn. At this time the corrupt influence of industrialised civilisation is completely absent and the calm and beauty which London reflects is unparalled. The poet feels that the earth has nothing better in its treasure to offer a more beautiful feast to the eyes than London at this moment. The entire London in this sonnet is one beautiful landscape exuding the same spirit of calm and tranquility. The poet shares this mood of London and celebrates the sweet sensations it creates. He says any person who could ignore this pleasant sight would be blind to all kind of beauty, and be insensitive and dull in his soul.

The poet then goes on to elaborate the majesty of London at this moment. He says that the morning embraces the city like a garment. But it is not a sophisticated garment which changes the personality of the town. It is silent, it is bare, least ostentatious, and restores London to its naturalness. Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lose their individual identity and open into (or merge with the fields and the sky. The buildings, whether it be a temple, a dome or a theatre, or even a ship which is not a building but a symbol of speed and moment, all represent the same mood and belong to the same phenomenon i.e. London at dawn. The air is not yet polluted by the smoke from factories. So everything glitters and shines, drinking in the same calmness. The sun never descended so majestically and lent the same charm to valley, rock, or hill. So the morning garment bears a colour (i.e. of sun-shine) but it makes no distinction between, valley, rock or hills, but combines them all into one harmonious whole. The poet says that he never experienced this calm before and realises that its impact is very deep. There is nothing to disturb the flow of the river. The ships are not moving and the river flows at its own sweet will. This sense of calm makes him wonder when he realises that even the houses seem asleep, as if hypnotised by this all prevading calm. The mighty heart (i.e. the pulsating, active and busy life of London when it is awake) is also put into a trance, it does not throb at this moment, thus pays its silent tribute to the great majesty and calm of London at dawn.

2.2 Analysis

By now it would be easy for you to recognize the sonnet form. While reading the sonnet, notice the punctuation and the rhyme scheme. The sonnet is in the octave-sestet pattern rhyming abba abba cdc dcd, an Italian rather than an English sonnet.

After having read about Wordsworth's poetic temperament, 'Westminister Bridge' comes as a surprise, Wordsworth's distrust of the city because of the way it encroaches upon nature, severing the man-nature ties found in poetic expression. Moreover, the city was

hostile and noisy from which the poet sought to escape to the quiet spaces of the Lake District. In this sonnet, however, the tone is celebratory, because it describes a moment in the past, at a time when the inhabitants were off the streets, in bed, perhaps asleep, and it is that of time of the morning when stillness envelopes the city. The poem captures the time when he passed through London, in July 1802. In some other notes he recorded that the lines occurred to him on the roof of a coach. It was perhaps completed on September 3rd. His sister, Dorothy's diary entry for the journey supported the description of London created in the sonnet.

The first three lines introduce the reader to what the rest of the poem is likely to contain - a detailed description of a place that is majestic and awe-inspiring, and expected to touch every soul. The next four lines stress, through the simple word, "now" that London is like this at a particular point of time. For the poet, it is that point of time which is important. The morning is like a dress covering the city beautifully - the beauty is contained in the moment of silence which speaks volumes for the unity between nature and society. There seems to be a continuum between what is man-made, i.e. artificial, and nature "the sky", "the fields", because they lend themselves to an experience of harmony. The air too for that moment of morning is free from anything offensive or unpleasant. Once again, the idea of harmony is created by images of harmony.

The concluding sestet reinforces the uniqueness of the experience, through the repetitive sound of Never. "Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!" This experience of London becomes special in the life of the poet because it spreads a sense of calm and the idea is connected with the sense of "sweet will" in the next line. The beauty, the security are born of a sense of freedom - living like nature with its own volition.

The closing lines extend the continuum to include God the creator of the human heart which is capable of such a wide range of emotions, responses and experiences. It is at peace with itself because it has absorbed the peace outside. Critics have also pointed to the glorification of a city of London which is the pride of any Englishman.

2.3 Check Your Progress

i. How is the city of London presented in the poem?
ii. Bring out the harmony between civilization and nature in this poem.
iii. Explain the sonnet form used by Wordsworth here.
iv. Explain the metaphor 'mighty heart' used in the last line of the poem.

3. Glossary and Notes

Line1 : **Fair** : Beautiful and Just

Line 3 : **Touching in its majesty** : Awe inspiring and stirring

Line 4 : **Now doth** : It is important to note how the poet has specified the immediate, because the poem celebrates a particular point of time in his journey.

Line 5 : **Like a garment** : The simile brings out the fresh appearance of the city, in the morning peace.

Line 6 : Various typical sights and movements of the city blend into a unified, pleasing whole.

Line 7 : The sense of unity emerges from the balance between nature and civilization. "Open unto the fields…" brings out the poet's view of harmony between the city and the countryside.

Line 8 : The word "All" is important because the "morning" in the first line shines forth on all alike creating a sense of sharing and understanding.

Lines 9-11 : The lines heighten the moment which is being celebrated, even though "Valley, rock or hill…" The poet reiterates the reason for the feeling of joy that he experiences."

Lines 12-14 : The lines express a sense of gratitude to God for the calmness that is possible in what for Wordsworth was a noisy, clamouring city. The words "sweet will" are significant because they evoke a sense of free movement important for Wordsworth who like other Romantics, celebrates the "natural". The last line is a tribute to the emotive nature of a human being on whom the heart has a more momentous influence.

The sonnet captures the wonder of nature in a particular setting at a particular moment of experience, and needs to be appreciated in its context, though it is tempting to raise questions about Wordsworth's periodical turning away from cities.

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Unit-II(6)

EMILY DICKINSON

A NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICAN POETESS

Dr. Shashi Khurana

STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical Background

The study of Emily Dickinson shifts our concerns to poetry of another milieu and specifically to the poetry of a woman amidst the ethos of a new world. Mid nineteenth century America is associated with the Civil War (1861-65) which posed a grave threat to the unity and cohesion of the nation. The civil war ended in the victory of the northern states of the nation and defeat of the southern states. The passion aroused by the civil war led to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the eighteenth President of the Union. The spirit of American Democracy, the glorification of the ideals of liberty, fraternity and equality were sung by mainstream poets like Walt Whitman. Emily Dickinson, was, however, preoccupied with the plight of the individual, particularly a woman, brought up in Puritanism dominated New England. The influence and impact of nineteenth century English Romanticism was an important source for the growth of Dickinson's writing and thoughts.

1.2 The Poetess and her Poetry (1830-1886)

Emily Dickinson was the daughter of Edward Dickinson who was a prominent lawyer of Amherst, Massachusetts and Emily Norcoss. Since her mother became a bed-ridden invalid, Emily Dickinson confessed she had no mother. It was Edward Dickinson, her strong and

dominating father, who became both father and mother to the child. He was such a stern and authoritarian father that he didn't permit Emily Dickinson to study at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary for more than a year (1847-48). Edward Dickinson believed that too much education was not becoming for a young woman. It led to the growth of female assertiveness and also caused a kind of discord and dissension in the family. Therefore, there is no wonder that Edward Dickinson also commanded his daughter not to go out of the Homestead which he had re-purchased in 1855. As a young woman, Emily Dickinson asserted that she wouldn't go out of the Homestead ever. She even refused to go to the church which all women, old and young, were encouraged to visit.

Thus began a life of utmost seclusion and introversion for young Emily Dickinson. She was, however, attached to her brother Austin and his wife Sue. She also cultivated a number of intense intellectual companions. The first of them was Benjamin F. Newton who was a law student in her father's office. It was he who introduced her to many stimulating books and authors and also urged her to take seriously her vocation as a poet. It was Benjamin Newton who introduced her to the writings of Emily and Charlotte Bronte and also to the writings of a feminist Lydia Maria Child. The young man also presented to Emily Dickinson a copy of Emerson's poetry in 1849 just two years alter publication. Walt Whitman, the celebrated poet was, however, considered too immoral, and wicked a poet for a young woman like Emily Dickinson.

The early death of her first literary mentor was a great shock to the young woman and one can understand the rationale behind her lifelong preoccupation with death. Later on, she developed an intense relationship with Reverend Charles Wadsworth of Philadelphia whom she met in 1854. She began to regard the priest as her “dearest earthly friend” and in her early poetry she created the image of the lover whom she knew only through her imagination. Wadsworth's removal to San Francisco in 1882 marked a turning point in Emily Dickinson's life. From 1862 onwards her withdrawal from the life of the Puritan community in New England was nearly absolute and critics are of the view that from 1862 to 1865 there was a remarkable upsurge of her creativity as a poet. Since her poems were not meant for publication and were only her “letters to the world,” it is not possible to date them with any degree of accuracy. Yet, there is adequate evidence that during 1862-1865 Emily Dickinson wrote nearly three hundred of her approximately 1700 and odd poems.

Although the publication of her poems was far from her mind, Emily Dickinson, however, had a budding poet's craving to find out if her poems were alive. On April 15, 1862 she wrote a letter to Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a professional man of letters to find out whether her verses “breathed.” Higginson had been a Unitarian minister in Worcester who

had resigned from the church and taken up writing literary criticism as a career. He had written the "Letter to a young contributor" as the lead article in the *Atlantic Monthly* for April. Emily Dickinson sent a couple of unsigned poems to Higginson and wanted to know if her poems had genuine literary worth. Higginson sent her a reply, asking her to send some more poems, inquiring her age, her reading, her companions and further details about her writing. However, Higginson's advice to James Fields, the editor of the *Atlantic*, was that the poems were not good enough for publication. They were too raw and fragile to be published in a popular venture like the *Atlantic.*

Emily Dickinson, however, continued to exchange letters with her third literary mentor. The conventional literary taste of Higginson strengthened her resolve to keep her poems unpublished. She went on writing feverishly and kept her poems in packets—away even from the eyes of her brother Austin and sister Lavinia. She went on writing in her own unconventional way and the absence of the response of readers gave her the freedom to stick to her individual style. She was, however, indebted to Higginson for the intellectual companionship and invited him to Amherst. She wrote to him, "you were not aware," she said, "that you saved my Life. To thank you in person has been since then one of my few requests." *(Introduction to the poems of Emily Dickinson)*.

It is unfortunate that "when Emily Dickinson died in 1886. she had published only seven poems, all anonymously" *(Emily Dickinson* by Donna Dickinson), While Higginson was of the view that her poems were too raw and fragile to be published in *The Atlantic*, Emerson was of the view that she wrote as if she was suffering from fever. Perhaps, she was born too soon and it was only after her death that she got recognition. There is no wonder that five years after her death, her first book of poems went through six printings in six months. Twelve years later, her poems were translated into German. By 1920 she had become one of the greatest poets of American literature.

Emily Dickinson's focus is on the plight of a single woman in nineteenth century New England. It may be understood why solitude, grief, death and redemption figure prominently in her poems. Dickinson's poems are often considered as fragments or letters to the world written in a confessional mode, revealing glimpses of her soul. The mode was suited to the writing of a woman living out an oppressed existence, who felt a strong need to articulate her feelings and yet not with the sense of abandon that male poets of her time could. She made use of ordinary objects as similes to intensify the meaning of her thoughts. The use of free verse with its absence of conventional metre, pattern and rhythm, with a liberal use of pauses and dashes convey the subtle thoughts and feelings creating the fineness of miniature painting. Death is one of the major preoccupations of her poetry. Acceptance of death, like

the acceptance of a lover comprises the core of her vision. After having read the bio-literary account of Dickinson, try to find out who is "master" and "He" in the poems.

2. THE POEM

341 After Great Pain

After great pain, a formal feeling comes—
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs—
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?
The Feet, mechanical, go round—
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought—
A Wooden way
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment, like a stone—
This is the Hour of Lead—
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the Snow—
First—Chill—then Stupor—then the letting go–

2.1 Paraphrase

The poem describes a moment of great pain and suffering such as the time after the loss of a loved one. There are pointers towards the loss being due to death as there are references to tombs. The poem begins at a moment immediately after such a loss. The first feeling is of such shock that the nerves become numb, and it feels almost as though you are paralyzed. The 'formal feeling' indicates an absence of feeling, a state of shock. The heart too becomes stiff with intense pain and you wonder whether the capitol 'He' is a reference here to Christ who felt the same pain at His crucifixion. The mind wonders whether that happened yesterday or centuries before. You are in a state of stupor.

In the second stage of grief the poem describes the mechanical nature in which one starts to move after a short time has passed. The feet walk around automatically without even knowing whether they walk on ground or air and unknowingly they move where they 'ought' to move. They move in a wooden way themselves feel like stone and a calm comes over them.

The third segment of the poem describes the 'the hour of lead' the moment of intense suffering which would be remembered if you are able to survive the pain and outlive it just as the people freezing to death in the snow recall their experience as feeling first a chill, then a numbness and then an acceptance, a resignation to whatever has to happen which leads to a release – a 'letting go'.

2.2 Analysis

Read the poem and try to understand the different poetic experience that this style of writing evokes. While reading you are made to pause and also fill the dashes which are essentially poetic devices to bring out the importance of a) what is left unsaid and b) giving space to silence in poetry. Note also the purely subjective experience. The poem sums up the way pain is experienced, realized and sought to be understood.

The first two lines refer to a state of mind which follows the experience of pain. The simile of Tombs, vindicates the death like intensity of pain which as after thought was almost impossible to survive and yet it was borne. The reference to 'He' in the third line is the mysterious presence in many of Dickinson's poems. Is the reference to God given strength - God whose presence is an eternal reality, or is it a reference to one of the mentors about whom you read earlier?

The second stanza describes the behaviour or the movements of the body after the experience of pain. The simile of stone highlights the acceptance of pain and after having understood it the ability of the protagonist to feel gratified. "A Quartz contentment…" brings out the quality of that particular experience.

The third stanza carries forward the experience of pain through another simile, that of "Freezing persons". But first let us try to understand the "Hour of Lead". Pain is conveyed through the metaphorical image which connects to a state of numbness. The use of dash suggests this appropriately. Recollection of pain as lead which is cold and heavy but recollected in the same way that Freezing persons recall their experience of imminent death through changing sensations. First immobility, "chill" the trance "stupor" and then a surrender to the condition, "then the letting go".

The protagonist uses various devices to express the dual, physical and mental or rather 'soul' experience of a state of pain. The poem needs to be read not only through the words but also through the dashes which are an essential part of the meaning constructed through the text.

2.3 Check Your Progress

1. What does the poem describe?
2. What is the meaning of 'formal feeling'?
3. What is meant by 'nerves sit ceremonious?'
4. What does the metaphor of tombs indicate?
5. What does the use of dashes indicate in the poem?
6. What is the poet describing in the last stanza of the poem?

3. GLOSSARY AND NOTES

A formal feeling comes: The shift from the subjective to the objective. It would mean an absence of feeling. A numbness.

The Nerves sit Ceremonious: Personification of the nerves which have become numb. The comparison is with an external appraisal, which like Tombs become symbolic.

He: Reference to God, embodiment of spiritual strength/mentor 1. Benjamin F. Neaston, 2. Reversed Charles Wadsworth

Quartz: hard mineral substance

Hour of Lead: Time of extreme suffering

4. FURTHER READING

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Unit-II(7)

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

AN EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY INDIAN POET

Dipannita Ghosh

STRUCTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

Poetry is amongst the earliest forms of creative expression within human civilization. It's origins can be found in the oral culture of ancient civilizations. The form of poetry through verse, lyrics, songs and poems has continued to develop differently in various countries and cultures throughout the ages. In India too, the poetry in the modern Indian languages has had a rich and varied history with its roots in ancient languages, folk cultures and traditions. Moreover, translation has played an important role in the movement of writings from one language to another amongst the many different languages and literatures in the country. The far reach of many Indian literary texts is primarily due to their translation into the English language. This is because English has a wider literary reach across various regions of India as compared to any other Indian language. Further, translations of Indian Writings into English also makes them accessible to a global audience.

Modern Indian literatures developed under the movement for freedom and independence from the British colonial regimes. The interactions of many Indian authors with Western literature in the wake of the spread of colonial education in pre-independence India also had a major impact on the writings in different modern Indian languages. Here we shall understand the trajectory of the development of Modern Indian Poetry through the pre-

independence era down to the present day by studying the translated works of three major Indian poets namely Rabindranath Tagore, G. M. Muktibodh and Thangjam Ibopishak.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the history and development of Modern Indian Poetry
- To examine the style and tone of different Indian poets
- To assess the political, societal, cultural and spiritual roles of poetry

3. THE POET (1861 – 1941)

Born on 7th May, 1861, Tagore was one of the most prolific writers of his time, along with being a thinker, social reformer, painter and music composer. He was also a prominent political thinker and essayist who was invited the world over for his work. Tagore had been awarded the knighthood in 1915, an honour which he later rejected in 1919 as a protest against the heinous Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.

He is credited with making major transformations in the domain of Bengali literature. He introduced newer forms and modernized the usage of the Bengali language as it was predominantly used in literature by freeing it from the traditional Sanskritic mode. He also conceptualized a different mode of education and set up the experimental institute, *Shantiniketan* in West Bengal. In *Shantiniketan*, as indeed in a lot of his work, Tagore sought to bring together the best of the two disparate worlds of the East and the West. Tagore initially made his mark on the international map for being the first non-European to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature. He received this award for his collection of poetry titled *Gitanjali.* The famous Irish poet W. B. Yeats wrote the 'Introduction' for the first translation of *Gitanjali* into English (by Tagore himself, 1912). Yeats aptly commented on the deeply spiritual nature of Tagore's poetry, which however never loses sight of the earthly concerns of day-to-day life.

4. THE POEM

Where the Mind is Without Fear

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments

By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

4.1 Analytical Summary

This oft cited poem by Tagore is the thirty fifth poem in *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings). The reason for its widespread popularity is that the poet says a prayer for the betterment of his country. It is often recited as a pledge or prayer at gatherings or cited as a mission for the bright future of a progressive country.

Writing at a time when India was under British rule, we see Tagore talk about freedom as the goal for his country. But the most significant aspect of this poem, is that it is not bound my measly political definitions. It does not understand freedom as fighting battles with the British, but rather aims to understand what being human and being free means. Tagore does not confine the idea of freedom to certain lines and borders that can be drawn on the political map of the country:

"…a land uncrippled,

Whole, uncramped by any confining wall…"

To him an ideal world would be where these borders do not exist, as these borders would only confine people within narrow walls and hence such a world would not be free. Freedom for the country here also imagines a land where all people can live with dignity and be respected:

"A fearless place where everyone walks tall,

Free to share knowledge…"

Tagore was acutely aware of the inequalities in Indian society. The widespread illiteracy and lack of education could be seen to lead to further evils. Knowledge being held ransom in the hands of the few, the rich and powerful people is also being criticized by the poet. The poet wishes that knowledge would be free for all. Moreover, the deception of the masses by the powerful ruling classes throughout the ages is criticized. The lower classes of society, the

poor, the workers, the peasants are routinely oppressed by newer regimes of power. Through the victory of truth and knowledge Tagore wishes for a freedom of these oppressed classes.

In the image of the ideal world and ideal country that Tagore creates, he criticizes blind faith in tradition and conservatism. He envisages–

> "A place where reason's flow is not soaked up
> By barren desert-sands of bigotry,
> Where niggling rules and dogmas do not sap
> It's vigour…"

Reason, rationality and logical thought must triumph in his free country. As opposed to this, the poet saw in his countrymen the rejection of reason merely to go on doing what they have always done. This is labelled as dead habit and desert sands. The stupor in the minds of people who no longer question their practices and beliefs, and go on acting in ways that can harm themselves as well as society is deplored. For example, there persisted widespread superstition and practices like *Sati*, ban on widow remarriage, etc. where dead habit had been winning over clear reason. Hence, he uses the image of reason being a river that could bring to life the dead and barren desert that the country has become relying on customs and traditionalism.

Tagore uses the metaphor of sleep to describe his country which is riddled with social evils, inequalities and oppression. Trapped in this sleep, the country would be free when it awakens:

> "…where rippled
> By millions of varied aspirations, a great River of action surges through…
> …
> Bring India to that heaven; wake this land."

This awakening, moreover, would only be attained when the aforementioned ideas of Freedom are not merely being talked about but are converted into concrete action. The poet prays for an ongoing strife from his people, towards reaching this ideal.

4.2 Check Your Progress

1. Why does Tagore describe India as a sleeping country?
2. What does the imagery of storms and rain denote?
3. How would you describe Tagore's idea of divinity?

5. FURTHER READING

- Radice, William translated "Where the Mind is Without Fear" from Tagore, Rabindranath.*Gitanjali: Song Offerings.* Penguin India, 2011.
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Unit-II(8)

'VERSIFICATION' AND 'POETIC SYNTAX'

(a) VERSIFICATION

JON STALLWORTHY

From: ***The Norton Anthology of Poetry*** **(pp. 2027-2052)**

Shriya Pandey

STRUCTURE

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This lesson will enable you to understand:

- Versification and its relevance for appreciation of poetry
- The two major components of Versification- Rhythm and Forms

- Parts of Rhythm- Syllable, Meter and Rhyme
- Types of Forms- Basic Forms, Composite Forms, Irregular Forms, and Experimental Forms

2. INTRODUCTION

In this lesson we shall summarize the major contentions made by Jon Stallworthy in the essay, 'Versification', *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (2005). Jon Stallworthy begins the essay by explaining 'Versification'. According to him, poetry is a "performance by the human voice", a verse is a group of lines with a certain number of word-sounds, and versification is "the principles and practice of writing verse" (Stallworthy, p.2027, 2005). The two ways to measure a poem are, a. Rhythm and, b. Form. Rhythm and Form, of a poem, are based on word-sounds and their arrangement. This lesson is divided into three sections. The first section discusses, versification, verse and poem. The second and third sections explain, rhythm and form. Word sounds have a certain rhythm, for example, the *tick-tock* of a clock. Have you ever wondered, why the phrase, *tick-tock-tick*, is not arranged as, *tock-tick-tick*? The study of the arrangement of word sounds in a poem is known as, form.

Check Your Progress

1. What are the two major components of Versification?

3. VERSIFICATION

Jon Stallworthy quotes W.H. Auden and T.S. Eliot, to define the principles underlying the writing a verse. They define it as a technique, as well as, an arrangement of meter and pattern. Versification measures the form and rhythm of a verse. The verse used in old English (449-1066) was alliterative, for example, William Langland's[†] (1332-1386) *Piers Plowman*. In the Middle English (1066-1500s), rhyme verse developed under the influence of French and low Latin verses, for example, Geoffrey Chaucer's[‡] (1340s-1400) rhyming couplets, 'The Friar's Tale' in *The Canterbury Tales*. The period of Modern English (1600s onwards)

[†] William Lagland (1332-1386), was a writer. He was born in West Midlands of England.

[‡] Geoffrey Chaucer (1340s-1400), was an English Poet.

adopted Blank verse and Free verse. Versification studies rhyme, number of words used in a line of a poem, the stressed-unstressed unit of a word, number of stanzas, number of lines, et al.

Check Your Progress

1. What is 'Versification'?

Parts of Versification

3.1 Verse

Verse, is a group of lines, or a group of words arranged to provide rhythm, structure and form, to a poem. Verse is the most important feature of a poem, that gives it it's uniqueness. According to Edgar Allan Poe[§] (1809-1849) in *The Rationale of Verse* (1848), a verse is a design, which has rhythm, rhyme, meter, and syllables, "*Verse* originates in the human enjoyment of equality, fitness. To this enjoyment, also, all the moods of verse—rhythm, meter, stanza, rhyme, alliteration, the *refrain*, and other analogous effects—are to be referred" (p.33). There are three types of verse a. **Rhyme verse**, b. **Blank verse**, and c. **Free verse**.

Rhyme Verse, is a type of verse where the words are arranged so as to have similar sounding words, usually final sounds in a line. A Blank verse has no rhyme, but an identical meter is followed in all the lines in a poem. This beat pattern is also known as, stressed and unstressed, part of a word. In a Blank Verse, the pattern of unstressed and stressed beat/sound is identical in all the lines. Virgil's (70 BC-19 BC) *Aeneid*[**] (29 BC-19 BC), was translated from Latin into English, by Henry Howard[††] in 1540. Henry Howard (1517-1547), adapted the Latin Heroic verse into English, which is known as Iambic Pentameter[‡‡] or Blank verse[§§].

[§] Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), was an American writer, who wrote in English.

[**] Publius Vergilius Maro (70 BC-19 BC) was a ancient Roman Poet who wrote in Latin. *Aeneid* (Ih-nee-id) is a Latin epic poem.

[††] Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-1547) was an English nobleman and writer. He is known as one of the founders of English Renaissance poetry.

[‡‡] Iambic Pentameter, is a meter (meter-measuring unit in poetry) of five unstressed-stressed beats, in a line. We will read more about it in section 1.1.

A Free Verse, does not have any rhyme or an identical beat pattern. there are no rhyming words, and the stress and unstressed beat/sound is also irregular. 20th century saw the rise of free verse in English poetry. The Free Verse appears in French poetry during 1880s, and according to *Britannica*, Gustave Kahn[***] (1859-1936), invented Free verse. In English, it was American poet Walt Whitman[†††] (1859-1936), who used Free verse for first time in his poetry collection, *Leaves of Grass* (1855).

Check Your Progress

1. Define Verse.
2. What are the three types of verse?

3.2 Poetry

> *What* a poem says or means is the result of *how* it is said, a fact that poets are often at pains to emphasize. "All my life'" said W.H. Auden[‡‡‡], "I have been more interested in technique than anything else." And T.S. Eliot[§§§] claimed that "the conscious problems with which one is concerned in the actual writing are more those of a quasi-musical nature, in the arrangement of metric and pattern, than of a conscious exposition of ideas." (Salter et al, p. 2027)

Poem is a verse, or group of verse, which is generally understood as an expression. According to J.S. Mill[****] (1806-1873) in the essay, 'What is Poetry?' (1833) writes, "something which does not even require the instrument of words, but can speak through the other audible symbols called musical sounds" (1833). According to, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (2005), poetry can be classified into three categories;

[§§] "It can be dated to around 1540, when it was first developed by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who also - with Thomas Wyatt - was responsible for adapting an Italian form into the English (often called Shakespearean) sonnet." (Barber, p. 76, 2016)

[***] Although, in France, Free Verse's antecedents were the poems of Victor Hugo (1802-1885) and J.N.A. Rimbaud (1854-1891). Gustave Kahn (1859-1936), was a French writer. Gustave Kahn, along with Jules Laforgue (1860-1887) is considered the inventor of Free Verse.

[†††] Walt Whitman (1819-1892), was an American writer, who wrote in English.

[‡‡‡] W.H. Auden (1907-1973), was a British-American poet, who wrote in English.

[§§§] T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), was a British-American writer, who wrote in English. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1948.

[****] J.S. Mill (1806-73), was an English thinker, who wrote in English language.

a. Epic,

b. Dramatic Poetry

c. Lyric

Jon Stallworthy defines Epic Poetry as a long poem. The poem is in the mode of narration, or a dialogue. The poem narrates, or tells about an important event. This event is an important learning for mankind. The form, rhythm, rhyme, meter and subject matter of every epic poem is unique[††††]. For example, Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie* Queene is written in Iambic Pentameter, and Pound's *Cantos* has "a freer, less formal structure" (Stallworthy, p. 2027, 2005).

Dramatic Poetry, is a long or short speech poem. It is written in the voice of a character, as a monologue or dialogue. In English, Alfred Tennyson's[‡‡‡‡] (1809-1892) *Ulysses* (1842) is considered to be the first dramatic monologue[§§§§]. A Dramatic poem, according to *The Dramatic Monologue: Its Origin and Development* (1910), expresses the thought of an individual who is speaking to the self in front of an audience. The component of climax in Elizabethan love lyrics developed into portrayal of self-reflection produced by a single dramatic occasion, as a new subject matter, during Victorian Period. The term 'Dramatic, implies, a highly emotional performance.

Jon Stallworthy defines Lyric Poetry as short poem with a single speaker. The speaker, 'I', oftentimes is a fictional character invented by the poet. Geoffrey Chaucer (1340s-1400) is called the first lyricist of English poetry. Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) and Henry Howard (1516-1547) began a new lyrical impulse with Sonnets, for example, Edmund Spenser's (1552-1599)[*****] *The Shepherds Calendar* (1579).

Check Your Progress

1. What are the three types of poetry? Explain.

[††††] *Beowulf* is the first English epic poem.

[‡‡‡‡] Alfred Tennyson, 1st Baron Tennyson (1809-1892), was an English Poet Laureate in Queen Victoria's (1819-1901) reign.

[§§§§] Robert Browning's (1812-1889), *The Patriot*, was published in a series of verse between 1841-46, also is a famous dramatic monologue/poem of the 19th century.

[*****] Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), was an English poet. He invented the 'Spenserian Stanza'. Charles Lamb (1775-1834), called Spenser, "the Poet's Poet".

Components of Versification

4. RHYTHM

Jon Stallworthy explains that poetry is the most 'compressed' form of language, and Rhythm is the, "the basic unit of pronunciation" (p. 2028, 2005). According to *Aspects of Verse Study*: *Linguistic Prosody, Versification, Rhythm, Verse Experience* (1993), Rhythm is a study of pause and patterns in a verse, "Rhythmic experience is thought to be complex, a product of several interacting responses (beating, phrasing, linear motion) as they are articulated at several levels of structure" (Cureton, p. 523). *The Principles of English Versification* (2007) posits two types of rhythm;

Spatial	Temporal
Spatial rhythm, is a type of rhythm which is based on visual perception of a word sound, for example, the equidistant windows in a wall, or architectural alternation and balance of monuments. In a verse, for example, rhyme.	Temporal rhythm, is a rhythm which is based on perception of time of a word sound, for example, the sound of drums. In a verse, for example, meter.

In Greek and Latin meter, the law is that vowel sound should make a separate, stressed-unstressed, unit in a word, this is called 'Diaeresis'. For example, A poem is a composition written for performance by the human voice.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain 'Rhythm', with examples.

Parts of Rhythm

4.1 Syllable

Syllable is a phonotactic unit, it is a sequence of phoneme in a word. A phoneme is the smallest sound of a word, for example, **TAB**, has three phonemes, |**T**| |**A**| |**B**|, and 1 syllable. In English, there are 44 phoneme sounds (26 letters, and remaining are letter combinations).

Syllable in a word is divided into, a. Onset and, b. Rhyme- Onset+ Rhyme. Rhyme has two parts, a. Nucleus and, b. Margin. For example, in the word TAB— **T** is Onset, and **AB** is Rhyme—**T+AB**.

T + AB

↙ ↘

Onset Rhyme

Based on Onset, and Rhyme, a rule of syllable division (syllabification), was given by George N. Clements and Samuel J. Keyser[†††††] in the 'Theory of Syllable' (1983). A syllable, based on the sequence of phoneme sound has been divided into the combination of consonant and vowel, as follows:

a. The 26 letters in English language are divided into consonants, and vowels.

b. In case, the consonant is the onset, vowel is the nucleus, and consonant is the margin. The syllable division is C+VC.

c. In case, the vowel is the onset, consonant is the nucleus, and vowel is the margin. The

Rhyme AB, can be subdivided as sound, **a e** + **b**

syllable division is V+CV.

d. There are light (unstressed) and heavy (stressed) syllables.

e. In case, the vowel is the onset, consonant is the nucleus, and vowel is the margin. The syllable division is V+CV.

f. There are light (unstressed) and heavy (stressed) syllables.

A syllable, based on the sequence of phoneme sound has been divided into the combination of consonant and vowel, as follows:

[†††††] George N. Celemets and, Samuel J. Keyser (b. 1935), are linguists.

Kind	Example	Number of Vowel
Monosyllabic	Tab	1
Disyllabic	Solid	2
Trisyllabic	Umbrella	3
Polysyllabic	Pharmaceutical	More than 3

A syllable is, mono, di, tri, or polysyllabic based on the number of vowels in a word.

Type	Characteristic
Closed Syllable	The vowel has short sound or short sound, for example, Truck. The word ends with a consonant and there is only one vowel.
Open Syllable	The vowel has long sound or short sound, for example. Grape. The word ends with a vowel.

The light (unstressed) and heavy (stressed) syllable in a word determine the meter in a poem. A light syllable, is also called unstressed syllable or fall, is represented by the symbol '^', for example, T **A** B, |T| |Â |B|. The vowel in the light syllable is short. The strong syllable, is also called stressed syllable or rise, is represented by the symbol '/', for example, T R E **E**, |T| |R| |E| |E|. According to the stress rule, a. In a disyllabic word, the stress is on the first vowel, for example, ISLAND; b. In a polysyllable word, the stress is on the first and second last vowel, for example, C**O**NDENS**A**TION; c. In a word with long syllable, for example, B**OO**K, the stress falls on last long vowel and; d. In an open syllable there is one stressed unit, only the first vowel.

Check Your Progress

1. What's a stressed-unstressed syllable?
2. What are the types of syllables?

4.2 Meter

Meter is a measurement, of stressed-unstressed syllable in a line, of a poem. In *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (2005), "If a poem's rhythm is structured into a recurrence of regular—that is, approximately equal—units, we call it meter (from the Greek word for "mea- sure"). For many centuries after its origins were lost in the mists of antiquity, meter was the principal feature distinguishing poetry from prose. There are four metrical systems in English poetry: the accentual, the accentual- syllabic, the syllabic, and the quantitative" (Stallworthy, p. 2029). In Modern English language, the poems mostly employ accentual syllabic meter.

Accentual-syllabic meter, measures the number of unstressed-stressed syllables in a line. A set of stressed-unstressed in a line is called foot. A set of foot in a line makes a feet. There are six types of foot in a poem;

a. **Iambic: Unstressed-Stressed**
For example: Charles Dickinson's (1780-1806) *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)
It was the best of time, it was the worst of times.
Î t w **Á** s | th **Ê** b **É** st | **Ô** f t **Í** mes, || **Î** t w **Á**s | th **Ê** w **Ó** rst |**Ô** f t **Í** mes

b. **Trochaic: Stressed-Unstressed**
For example: The traditional nursery rhyme, *London Bridge*
London Bridge is falling down
L **Ó** nd **Ô** n | br **Í** dge **Î** s | f **Á** ll **Î** ng | d **Ó** wn

c. **Anapestic: Unstressed-Unstressed-Stressed**
For example: G.G. Byron's (1788-1824) *The Destruction of Sennacherib* (1815)
The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold
Th **Ê Â** ss **Ÿ** r | I **Â** n c **Â** me d **Ó** wn | l **Î** ke th **Ê** W **Ó** lf | **Ô** n th **ê** f **Ó** ld

d. **Dactylic: Stressed-Unstressed-Unstressed**
For example, Thomas Hardy's (1840-1928) *The Voice* (1914)
Woman much missed. How you call to me, call to me
W **Ó** man m **Ú** ch | m **Í** ssed, h **Ô** w y **Ô** u | c **Á** ll t **Ô** m **Ê**, | c **Á** ll t **Ô** m **Ê**

e. **Spondaic: Stressed-Stressed**
For example, Toothache— T |**ó**| oth |**á**| che

f. **Pyrrhic: Unstressed-Unstressed**, or lightly stressed
For examples, Audible—Both, A and U are lightly stressed, or unstressed.

In a line of a poem, the set of Iamb, anapest, dactyl, spondee et al vary in number, the measure of a foot in a line is known as feet.

Feet	Foot
Monometer	1
Dimeter	2
Tri-meter	3
Tetrameter	4
Pentameter	5
Hexameter	6
Heptameter	7
Octameter	8
Syllabic Meter	According to, Jon Stallworthy, only the number of syllables in a line are measured. The stressed-unstressed unit is not measure. For example, Haiku, a three line poem divided into 5-7-5 syllables.
Quantitative Meter	According to Jon Stallworthy, only the length of syllable is important. For example, Thomas Campion's *Rose-Cheeked-Laura.*

Check Your Progress

1. How do you identify the meter of a poetry? Explain with an example.

4.3 Rhyme

Rhyme, in a poem is an element associated with occurrence of similar sounds, such as, a letter of a word, or similar sounding words, for example, Gerard Manley Hopkins's[‡‡‡‡‡] (1844-1889) sonnet *God's Grandeur* (1877),

It will flame out, like shining from shook **foil**;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of **oil**

Rhyme, since the Middle English period, have been constituted as a significant modulation in a poem. There are three types of Rhyme, *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (p.2037);

Rhyme	Types
Perfect Rhyme	Eye-Rhymes
Imperfect Rhymes	Internal rhymes
End Rhymes	Masculine and Feminine

Perfect Rhymes, are rhymes which have similar sounding words. 'Eye-Rhymes', and 'Monorhyme' are a type of perfect rhymes. 'Eye Rhyme', for example, laughter/daughter. Dick Davis's[§§§§§] (b. 1945)

poem, *A Monorhyme for the Shower* (2001), is an example of 'Monorhyme', the entire poem has one rhyme.

[‡‡‡‡‡] Gerald Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), was an English poet, known as the innovator of 'Sprung Rhythm'.

[§§§§§] Dick Davis (b. 1945), is an English-American academic, who is associated with the literary movement, 'New Formalism'.

Lifting her arms to soap her **hair**
Her pretty breasts respond—and **there**
The movement of that buoyant **pair**
Is like a spell to make me **swear**
Twenty odd years have turned to **air**;
Now she's the girl I didn't **dare**
Approach, ask out, much less **declare**
My love to, mired in young **despair**.

Childbearing, rows, domestic **care**—
All the prosaic wear and **tear**
That constitute the life we **share**—
Slip from her beautiful and **bare**
Bright body as, made half **aware**
Of my quick surreptitious **stare,**
She wrings the water from her **hair**
And turning smiles to see me **there**.

Since, 19th century poets have minimally used perfect rhymes in poems of grief, frustration, and doubt. Instead, various forms of *Imperfect Rhymes* are commonly used for the themes of grief, frustration, and doubt. *Imperfect Rhymes* have various forms, such as, 'Off-Rhyme', 'Vowel Rhyme', 'Internal Rhyme', and 'Pararhyme'. 'Off-Rhyme' is half rhyme, for example, gone/alone. 'Vowel Rhyme' is common vowel sounds, for example, assonance. 'Pararhyme' is common consonant or vowel sound, for example, alliteration. 'Internal Rhyme' is an identical echoing sound effect, for example, assonance, and onomatopoeia. *End Rhymes*, are of two types, 'Masculine' and 'Feminine'. 'Masculine' *end rhyme* consists of single stressed syllable, for example, Mind/Kind. 'Feminine' *end rhyme* has two stressed syllable,for example, Train/Lane. The *End Rhymes* which have three stressed syllables are called, 'Gleitender', for example, laugh of them/half of them. Hence, the classification of various forms of rhymes is as follows;

Rhyme	Types	Characterstics	Examples
Perfect Rhyme	Eye-Rhymes	Identical word sound	Rime Riche
Imperfect Rhymes	Internal rhymes, Off-rhymes, Vowel-rhymes, Pararhymes	Half rhymes, or identical first or last letter, rather than word sound.	Alliteration/ assonance/Onomotopeia
End Rhymes	Masculine, Feminine and Gleitender	Syllable Stress	Monosyllables/Disyllables/Trisyllables

Rhyme scheme in a poem, is a pattern of rhyme, at regular intervals. For example, the rhyme-scheme of William Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1609) is, 'abab, cdcd, efef, gg'.

Check Your Progress

1. What is a 'Rhyme'?
2. What are the types of 'Rhyme'?

5. FORMS

Jon Stallworthy defines 'Form' as a combination of meter, rhyme and stanza, in a poem. According to *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (2005), the forms are as follows;

FORMS	TYPES
Basic Form	Couplet, Tercet, Quatrain, Blank Verse, Rhyme Royal, Ottava Rima, Spenserian Stanza
Composite Form	Sonnet, Villanelle, Canzone, Pantoum, Limerick, Clerihew,

FORMS	TYPES
Irregular Form	Irregular Ode, Free Verse
Other Forms/Experimental Forms	Prose Poetry, Found Poetry, Concrete Poetry, Sound Poetry,

Types of Forms

5.1 Basic Form

A basic form of poetry is, the fixed number of lines in a stanza and rhyme scheme, of a poem. The characteristics of few basic forms of poetry are as follows;

Basic Forms	Characteristics
Couplet	A stanza, with two lines. There are two types of couplets, a. Open and, b. Closed. An open couplet, does not have same rhyme scheme and meter. A closed couplet, has same meter and rhyme scheme.
Tercet	A Stanza, with three lines. The lines may, or may not, have a fixed rhyme pattern. The meter is identical in all the three lines.
Quatrain	A stanza, with four lines. The lines may , or may not, have a fixed rhyme pattern, and meter.
Rhyme Royal	A stanza, with seven lines, in Iambic Pentameter, and rhyme scheme *ababbcc*. It was invented by Geoffrey Chaucer (1340S-1400).

Basic Forms	Characteristics
Ottava Rima	A stanza, with eight lines, and rhyme scheme *abababcc*. It opens with a quatrain and ends with a couplet. It was in introduced in English poetry by Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542).
Spenserian Stanza	A stanza, with nine lines, in Iambic Pentameter and last line in Iambic Hexameter (alexandrine). It opens with a quatrain and ends with a couplet.

5.2 Composite Form

Composite forms, are fixed forms. The number of lines, stanzas, rhyme and meter are identical in most, of the poems.

Composite Forms	Characteristics
Sonnet	A poem, with fourteen lines, written in Iambic Pentameter. The rhyme scheme may vary. Italian sonnet, is divided into two stanzas, a. First stanza has 8 lines and, b. Second stanza has 6 lines. English sonnet, has three quatrains, and a couplet.
Villanelle	It is a French verse form, which was derived from Italian folk songs. It consists of five tercets (Rhyme: aba), and a quatrain (Rhyme: abaa). It has two *Refrains*, which means the repetition of line— 1. The first line of the first tercet, reoccurs, as the last line of second and fourth tercet. 2. The third line of the first tercet, reoccurs, as the last line of third and fifth tercets.

Composite Forms	Characteristics
Sestina	It has seven stanzas, with six lines in each of them. The last stanza (Envoy/conclusion) has six lines, with lines/words from the initial six stanzas.
Canzone	It has twelve lines stanzas and five lines envoy. The number of stanzas vary.
Pantoum	A Malayan form in origin. It has varying number of quatrains. The second and fourth line of the 1st quatrain, is repeated, as 2nd and 4th line of the quatrain which follows.
Limerick	The form of English limerick was invented by, Edward Lear (1812-1888). It is a stanza of five lines .
Clerihew	The form was invented by, E.D. Bentley (1875-1956). It has two rhyming couplets of unequal lengths.

5.3 Irregular Form

Irregular form of a poem has no fixed pattern any. It can have rhyme and meter.

Irregular Forms	Examples
English Pindaric Ode	John Dryden's (1631-1700), *A Song for St Cecilia's Day* (1687)
Horatian Ode	Andrew Marvell's (1621-1678), *An Horatian Ode* (1681)
Open Form	Free Verse

5.4 Experimental Form

In 20th Century, the Confessional, Imagists, and Objectivists Schools, experimented with new forms of poetry, some of them are as follows;

Irregular Forms	Examples
Prose poetry	Originated in 19th Century France, influenced by the works of, Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) and Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891). It is similar to lyric poetry, but, set out in the page for eye, rather than ear. For example, Geoffrey Hills's (1932-2016), *Mercian Hymns* (1971).
Found Poetry	It is an off shoot, of *Prose Poetry*. For example, John Hollander's (1929-2013), *Swan and Shadows* (1966).
Shaped Poetry	For example, John Hollander's (1929-2013), *Swan and Shadows* (1966).
Concrete Poetry	The term *Concrete Poetry* was coined by Brazilian poets in 1952. It is a poem, which cannot be shaped. For example, Derek Mahon's (1941-2020), *The Window*.
Sound Poetry	Abstract form of *concrete poetry*. It is a poem which is performed. For example, Edwin Morgan's (1920-2010), *Interview*.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain the four different types of form.

All References are from:

Ferguson, Margaret, Mary Jo Slater and Jon Stallworthy. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, 5th edition, New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company,2005.

Unit-II(8)

'VERSIFICATION' AND 'POETIC SYNTAX'

(b) POETIC SYNTAX

MARGARET FERGUSON

From: ***The Norton Anthology of Poetry*** **(pp. 2053-2065)**

Nalini Prabhakar

STRUCTURE

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This lesson will enable you to understand:

- Poetic syntax and its relevance for appreciation of poetry
- The two major components of syntax- sentences and clauses
- The three kinds of sentences
- The three kinds of clauses
- Nominal syntax
- Double syntax
- Word order inversions

2. INTRODUCTION

In the previous lesson on Versification, we have seen how poetry is different from all other forms of writing, primarily because it employs verse. We have also tried to understand the basic principles underlying the writing of verse such as rhythm, meter, rhyme, and the basic forms of poetry. In this lesson we will look into another important aspect of poetry which is poetic syntax. We shall summarize the major contentions made by Margaret Ferguson in the essay, 'Poetic Syntax', *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (2005)

Ferguson begins the essay with the following sentence from Alexander Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" (p. 619): "Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms.", the meaning of which, according to her is not immediately available even to native English speakers. Pope uses a traditional grammatical pattern with a Greek name—zeugma—to describe a scene from Homer's Iliad in which two pairs of Greek gods are equipping themselves to battle one another. This line paraphrased will be - Mars [arms] against Pallas; Hermes [arms] against Latona. When one verb controls numerous parallel words or sentences, this is known as Zeugma. Pope uses a pattern that some of his English-speaking readers could have recognised, but not all of them, to create a tightly compressed line that slows down any reader and makes it difficult to understand. Pope manages to create a language analogy of the fictitious war scenario, and he does this through using syntax to convey concepts as well as to produce certain dramatic and significant effects through the arrangement of his lines. This example clearly illustrates that poetic syntax is the manner in which the poet arranges words and lines in a poem in order to create a desired effect.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain Zeugma with example.
2. What is poetic syntax?

3. SYNTAX

The Greek words syn (together) and tax (to arrange) are the roots of the English word syntax, which means "orderly or systematic arrangements of components or pieces." These components, at their most basic level, consist of symbols, including mathematical ones, that are put together to form propositions or assertions. Words and groupings of words are the symbols that matter most for poetic syntax, although punctuation, line shapes, stanza forms, metrical systems, and rhyme schemes are all crucial for understanding poetic syntax as a way to organise words to create meaningful assertions.

When discussing poetry, syntax relates not only to real word arrangements or to the grammatical rules, but also to the challenges posed to such arrangements. Word arrangements that cause significant disorder within a language are included in the term "poetic licence." As a result, poetic syntax is a tricky and even in some ways a contradictory topic. Ferguson writes that while many of the syntactic rules have changed over time, many still show evidence of the close historical ties between Latin and English, two very different languages that still share terminology and definitions of what constitutes syntactical "correctness." The most significant distinction between English and Latin for students of poetic syntax is that in Latin, proximity and distance between words matter little for comprehending most written sentences, but in English, meaning depends on particular words being in proximity to one another. Most English poets challenge the reader's assumptions regarding word order, and some English poets construct sentences with several sections that are more intricately tied to one another than they would be in most modern English speech or writing.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain poetic licence.

Parts of Syntax

3.1 Sentences and Words

The first rule of the poetic game of syntax is that most poets utilise the grammatical unit known as the sentence as a significant unit of meaning, together with—but sometimes in contrast to—the unit of the poetic line or the unit of the stanza. The word is the smallest meaning-bearing unit of syntax, whereas the sentence is the greatest. It is difficult to define either unit. This is the case due to the fact that both sentences and words may be combined and split in a variety of ways that get more complicated when they are examined etymologically. Here Ferguson cautions us that we should not assume that modern rules apply to texts written hundreds or even thousands of years ago because English has changed so much over time; instead, we must do our best to incorporate historical context into our readings.

Kinds of Sentences

A sentence is a unit that contains a subject and a predicate.

- The most prevalent type of English sentence is Subject- Verb- Object. For example, the bird eats the worm or, more elaborately, Edwin Muir's "The grasses threw straight shadows far away" ('Childhood'; p. 1337).
- Another typical sentence structure is a subject followed by a complementing predicate (which relates back to the subject). The first line of Dryden's "Mac Flecknoe" (p.517), "All human beings are subject to decay," is an example of this type of sentence in which there is no direct object; instead, a predicate complement informs us something about the subject. Another example is the phrase "I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be" from T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (p. 1343) and the great line "My attention is a wild / animal" from A. R. Ammons's "Pet Panther" (p.1700). This kind of sentence encourages metaphor-making and identity-related considerations.
- A subject followed by a verb that does not accept a direct object or predicate complement constitutes a third category of sentences. Such verbs are referred to as intransitive since they neither act on a direct object nor reflect back on the subject: For instance, 'Money speaks', or 'Jill faints'. Eliot offers a further, more detailed example: "The winter evening settles down / With smell of steaks in passageways" ("Preludes").

Some contemporary poets and thinkers favour transitive verbs over all others. Ernest Fenellosa, a philosopher who studied Chinese poetry and had a significant impact on Ezra Pound, asserted that the "transfer of power" is a fundamental fact of nature and that the correct use of poetic grammar is to depict an agent (subject) acting on an object (transitive verb), as in 'Farmer pounds rice.'

Even those contemporary English-language poets who appear to wage war against grammar and punctuation, nonetheless rely on the classic subject-verb-direct object phrase as a core building block of their poems. Paradoxically, this is true even when the poetry doesn't seem to have whole sentences. Poets might presume that readers will struggle to generate a sentence even when none first appears to exist since they are aware that proficient English readers demand sentences. Reverting back to the line by Pope that was quoted at the start of this essay, "'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms," Ferguson explains that with the use of syntactic understanding, we can observe that "arms" in this line not only serves as a verb but also acts, in a sense, retrospectively, as the intransitive verb for both portions of the

assertion. Mars [arms] against Pallas; Hermes [arms] against Latona, to put it in prose. Understanding grammar and being prepared to put in the effort to translate or paraphrase Pope's impactful statement can help us make sense of his peculiar word choice.

Although some poets (and English instructors) agree with Fenellosa that sentences should include a subject, an active verb, and a direct object, many poets use alternative sentence structures to express various emotions related to action and passion as well as to produce rhythms that are slightly different. The opening stanza of Kenneth Koch's poem "Permanently" (p.1691), exemplifies all three of the fundamental categories of English sentence construction and ends with a specific nod to one of them.

One day the Nouns were clustered in the street.

An Adjective walked by, with her dark beauty.

The Nouns were struck, moved, changed.

The next day a Verb drove up, and created the Sentence.

In numerous sentences, something occurs, a story is conveyed, and time passes in a significant way, as Koch's lines remind us. We stop at the finish, and since the late Middle Ages, writing has used a 'period' to denote this pause. This symbol represents the visual equivalent of a pause in speech or a moment to collect one's thoughts. The term "period" has several historical connotations. One refers to the phrase itself, and the other to a specific type of sentence in which a number of supporting clauses work together to support the main clause.

Check Your Progress

1. What is a sentence?
2. Explain the three different sentence structures with suitable examples.
3. Why does Fenellosa favour transitive verbs over all others?

3.2 Clauses

Because both sentences and clauses include subjects and predicates, a clause might appear to be, or even be, a sentence. 'Jill runs home' is both, a clause and a sentence. However, a clause is considered to be the smaller or "component" unit and a sentence to be the bigger or "containing" unit. This is so because a sentence might include several clauses. One main clause (or independent clause) and any number of dependent clauses make up the

aforementioned "periodic" sentence, for example, 'When she remembered the time, which she did when the bell rang, Jill ran home'. Although it has a subject and a predicate, a subordinate clause cannot function as a complete sentence on its own. The main clause's notion or picture is frequently expanded upon, qualified, or even refuted in the subordinate clauses.

Kinds of Clauses

The noun, the adverb, and the adjective are the three parts of speech that subordinate clauses mimic in terms of syntactic function. Adverbial clauses, for example, frequently follow subordinating conjunctions such as- 'after', 'although', 'as', 'as if', 'because', 'whether', and 'while'. Such an adverbial sentence appears at the beginning of Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 106' (p.265): "When in the chronicle of spent time / I behold descriptions of the finest wights... "Adjectival clauses are usually begun with relative pronouns (that, which, who, whom, whose) or relative adverbs when they modify a noun or pronoun (when, where, why). Shakespeare employs an adjectival phrase in the second main clause of 'Sonnet 116'" Let me not to the marriage of true minds;' (p.266): "Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds." Here, the main clause's contradictory statement is followed by and explained by the subordinate clause.

Because they modify a noun, pronoun, or verb in the main clause and may be seen as hanging on (depending on) a word in the main clause, adjective and adverbial clauses are rather simple to identify. Noun clauses are more challenging to identify. Both relative pronouns and alternative pronouns (what, whomever, whomever, and whatever), can be used to introduce them. Additionally, several of the subordinating conjunctions that denote adverbial phrases can be followed by noun clauses. Understanding the grammatical roles that noun clauses play in the poetry sentences we are working with is essential to spotting them. Noun clauses can take the form of subjects, direct objects, prepositional objects, or predicate complements, but they can never stand on their own. To view the poem's syntactic skeleton clearly, the poet sometimes leaves off the linking or articulating words, so these sections have to be unearthed. However, to do this it is essential to understand how the clauses function syntactically, in order to spot them; doing so leads to better understanding of the poem.

Ferguson illustrates how a poet creates meaning through the interaction of clauses by using Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 106'. To make the structure of the poem (given below) clear, the beginning of main clauses is in bold and the beginning of subordinate clauses is italicized and underlined.

When in the chronicle of wasted time

I *see* descriptions of the fairest wights,

And beauty making beautiful old rhyme

In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,

Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,

Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,

I see *their antique pen would have expressed*

Even such a beauty *as you master* now.

So all their **praises are** but prophecies

Of this our time, all you prefiguring;

And, *for they looked but with divining eyes,*

They had not skill enough your worth to sing:

For we, *which now behold these present days*,

Have eyes to wonder, **but lack** tongues to praise.

Ferguson analyses this poem, by identifying the main clause or clauses. After locating the poem's "head" and "torso," as it were, she moves on to locating the "limbs," which can be thought of as the subordinate sentences. The main clause "I see," comes in the 7th line of the sonnet. It is not immediately identifiable as both its meaning and its syntax seem to depend on the first dependent clause. The second clause is the main clause, even if the "when... then" structure (each sentence receives precisely four lines) embodies a careful balancing of ideas. "When" sets up expectations for the thought to be completed, and it is completed, but in a way that the remainder of the sonnet qualifies and elaborates.

Once the main subject and verb are identified, the next step is to locate the direct object. In the words "their ancient pen," we briefly do. However, the syntax quickly forces us to revise that assumption since the verb phrase that follows the pen's picture turns it into the focus of a brand-new narrative: "I see ['that'] their archaic pen would have expressed / Even such a beauty..." Even experienced readers will have to engage in some unconscious editing, reversing the normal forward reading motion, to automatically add 'that' (the missing relative pronoun). By identifying the direct object of the first main clause as a subordinate noun clause, we begin to understand that the "object" the poet finally perceives in his main clause

is not actually an object, a thing, at all; rather, what the Shakespearean speaker perceives (both here and elsewhere in his sonnets) "is an amazing blending of past and present, of certainty and supposition: a constructed object rather than a natural one" (p.2059). In this way, the main clause and its exfoliating direct object help to inform us about the speaker's perspective as well as what he sees. What is interesting here is, the speaker is interpreting meanings from old books in relation to his present and, implicitly, his future.

To understand the sonnet, a new subordinate clause in line 8 needs to be created. Even such a beauty as [the one that] you master now. This subordinate clause, functioning both to rename and to describe the "beauty" that is the direct object of the noun clause functioning as a direct object of "I see," blurs the traditional distinction between adjectival and noun clause. Just as 'that' was added (line 7) to see the noun clause serving as the direct object of "I see," so we also need to add missing words (the one that) to line 8 to make it work. The poem's reflection on themes of mastery, competitiveness, and relationships of dependency between the past and present, lover and beloved, writer and reader, subject and object of seeing, is made possible by the syntax: the interaction of the main and subordinate clauses.

More main clauses appear in the last six lines than the first eight, and in the last couplet, they do so more quickly, and let us to perceive the logical framework of the poet's ideas. The coordinating conjunctions "So," "And," and "For" are used to introduce them. In line 11 the embedded subordinate clause may lead us to believe it is a main clause ("for," after all, introduces a main clause just two lines later). However, a closer look reveals that the collection of words introduced by the first "for" functions as an adverb, altering the verb phrase in the next line. In line 11, 'And', both interrupts and clarifies the poet's assertion that his forebears lacked the ability to praise the speaker's beloved because they could only see him or her by "divining". Although identifying main clauses from subordinate clauses is not always simple, it is crucial to our understanding of the syntax of a poem.

Check Your Progress

1. What is a clause? How is it different from a sentence?
2. What is the difference between main clause and subordinate clause?
3. Define adjectival, adverbial and noun clauses.

3.3 Moves in the Game

Ferguson, in the previous sections has identified the main components of syntax. In this section she discusses how the poets put sentences to different uses by making them in various ways, as well as readers' expectations of those uses.

Poets often use subordinate clauses to postpone the use of a main verb, and this creates anticipation between the poet and the reader. For example, at the beginning of *Paradise Lost* (p.421) before we get to the main verb 'sing' of the first poetic sentence, Milton gives us several lines of intricately interconnected subordinate clauses to consider and remember. William Collins does the same at the beginning of "Ode to Evening" (p.675). The imperative verb phrase "now teach me" appears in line 15, following a long subordinate clause (beginning "If aught...") in which the poet appears to be trying to convince his addressee—the "Evening" personified as "Eve"—that his own "pastoral song" has the ability "to soothe thy modest ear."

Nominal Syntax

'In a Station of the Metro'

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough.

Pound's short poem given above is a good example of nominal syntax, which has two noun phrases but no verb. Ferguson quotes Cureton and states that noun phrases allow the reader to draw a "conceptual or emotional connection between the poem's syntactic parts" (p.2061). Pound gives us two powerful images which appear to come from two very different worlds—on the one hand, the bustling city, and on the other hand, that of nature. Contemporary poets employ a variety of sentence fragmentation techniques to subvert conventions of everyday language and poetic tradition. They assume that the reader is familiar enough with sentence structure to understand the meanings that are produced when expectations are not met. Such writers highlight the idea that syntax serves as a sort of contract between the poet and the reader. E. E. Cummings seems to defend breaching syntactic and other language rules in the first stanza of "since feeling is first" (p.1349):

since feeling is first

who pays any attention

to the syntax of things

will never wholly kiss you;

This four-line unit ends with a semicolon, a punctuation mark that, generally indicates the conclusion of a main clause. He is making employing an ancient and significant literary technique known as double syntax, as described by critic William Empson.

Double Syntax

When a phrase, line, or set of lines can be understood in two distinct ways depending on the syntax that comes before and/or after the unit, this is the case. In many instances of double syntax, the poet first presents us with an idea that appears to be finished—in a syntactic unit that appears to be an independent clause—before going on to rewrite the idea, frequently in a humorous or paradoxical way, by revealing that the unit we initially believed to be finished is actually a part of a larger and typically more conceptually difficult syntactic structure, frequently a sentence.

The first three lines of Cummings' poem "since feeling is first" can be seen as a complicated sentence comprising a subordinate adverbial phrase and a main clause. The first three lines can be paraphrased as follows: Who in their right mind would care about the syntax (the orderly or logical arrangement of things), since feeling comes first. The question is rhetorical as it presupposes a simple solution that everyone agrees on. Simply put the lines would mean, since feelings are of a higher order on the value scale, syntax is not of much importance.

The stanza however doesn't end there. Cummings introduces a phrase in line 4 that initially appears to be unconnected to the previous three lines. The first three lines however will need to be read again in light of the new idea presented in line 4. The entire section can be summarised as: He, who is more concerned with the syntax of things will never kiss you completely since feelings come first. The second, more comprehensive interpretation calls for us to include a relative pronoun(he) before the word "who," changing the opening lines from a straightforward (and maybe simplistic) rhetorical query to a more complicated assertion.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain nominal and double syntax with one example each.

3.4 Word Order Inversions

Inversions of the standard subject-verb-object structure of transitive sentences are the source of numerous lyrical difficulties, including several in double syntax examples. The most frequent of these modifications puts the direct object before the subject and verb. Edward Taylor begins his poem "Upon Wedlock, and Death of Children" (p. 537) with the words "A curious knot God made in paradise". Had Taylor chosen the standard sentence format, "God made a curious knot in paradise", he could not have established the visually arresting connection between 'wedlock' in the title and

'knot' in the opening line. As in many poems, word order inversion as this one enables the poet to draw attention to a particular theme or picture.

Check Your Progress

1. What is word order inversion. Explain with example.

4. SUMMING UP

In this lesson we have understood an important aspect of poetry which is poetic syntax. Each language has a different set of grammatical rules (syntax) governing it, and hence it is important for us to understand the syntactic features of the English language in order to appreciate English literature in general, and poetry in particular. We have dealt with the two major components of syntax- sentences and clauses- in detail with particular emphasis on the various ways in which poets use them to achieve a desired effect. Therefore, when discussing poetry, syntax relates not only to real word arrangements or to the grammatical rules, but also to the challenges posed to such arrangements. Word arrangements that cause significant disorder within a language are referred to as "poetic licence". We have also dealt with some other ways in which poets experiment with language, notably- nominal syntax, double syntax and word order inversions.

All References are from

Ferguson, Margaret, Mary Jo Slater and Jon Stallworthy. *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, 5th edition, New York and London: W.W. Norton &Company,2005.

Unit-III (9)

READING DRAMA

TARA
MAHESH DATTANI

Deb Dulal Halder

Section-1 : Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*: An Introduction

STRUCTURE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mahesh Dattani is one of the most popular Indian English dramatists of the present times who still is making significant contribution to the Indian dramatic as well as cinematic world with his constant efforts to put the issues very close to Indian sensibilities in his theatrical presentations so as to enlighten the Indian audience as well as the western counterparts. Probably along with Vijay Tendulkar, Mohan Rakesh and Badal Sircar, he can be considered to the great modern dramatists from India who have helped in making Indian theatre, especially, Indian English drama stand on its own feet and be an example to the world.

As per the syllabus of BA Honours English, we will be dealing with Mahesh Dattani's play *Tara* in this self instructional material. The effort of this study material will be to

acquaint you with the play as well as theatrical politics of Mahesh Dattani so as to make you go through the most significant aspects of the play. In this Unit, the focus will be to make you acquainted with the theatrical world of Mahesh Dattani and also to introduce the play *Tara* in short, while other significant aspects of the play *Tara* will be dealt with in the next units. A short summary of the play is being provided in this unit, but it should not be taken as an substitute for reading the original play.

1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, you will come to know about–

- Indian English Drama
- The life of Mahesh Dattani in short
- The position of Mahesh Dattani in the Indian theatre
- Major Works of Mahesh Dattani
- A short introduction of Dattani's *Tara*
- A Short Summary of *Tara*

1.3 A BRIEF NOTE ON INDIAN ENGLISH THEATRE

Indian English Theatre is a comparatively new genre compared to the Indian Theatre. You have already come across some of the Indian plays from Classical Age earlier in the course. In the present course, which deals with Indian English, you got acquainted with different genres of Indian English and the only play that is recommended in the course is Mahesh Dattani's *Tara.* But before going into a detailed discussion on *Tara,* it is significant that you also have some knowledge about certain significant aspects of Indian English Theatre. Some of the key aspects are–

- Indian English play probably owes its origin to the play named *The Persecuted* by Rev. Krishna Mohun Banerjee who wrote it in 1831 following the western model of theatre about the persecution that he faced because of his western ideas, thoughts and practices in a society which believed in staunch Brahminical tradition which was deeply superstitious and could not stand the rebellious westernized ideas of Banerjee.
- From 1831 onwards, a host of writers not only wrote plays in English in India, but also translated a number of plays, leading to the enrichment of the Indian theatrical traditions, especially the Indian English Theatre.
- Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the Bengali poet, translated three of his own Bengali plays

into English – *Ratnavali* (1858), *Sermista* (1859) and *Is This Called Civilization?* (1871).

- Sir Aurobindo and Rabindra Nath Tagore are also thought to be significant in terms of the development of modern Indian theatre. In the nineteenth century there were some significant dramatists such as A.S. Panchapakesa Ayyar, T.P. Kailasam, Hemchandra Joshi, and others. Immediately after independence, Asif Currimbhoy, Partap Sharma, Gurcharan Das, Manjeri Isvaran, G.V. Desani, Lakhan Deb and Pritish Nandy made much contribution to Indian theatrical scenario.
- In the recent times, Girish Karnad, a Kannada actor, director and playwright is famous for his contribution to Indian Theatre. He translated two of his plays to English *Tughlaq* (1972) and *Hayavadana* (1975). *Tughlaq* is a historical play on the life of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq of the fourteenth century India.
- In the recent years, Mahesh Dattani, from Bangalore, has emerged as a very committed dramatist and film maker who through his plays and films have tried to educate the mass. (We will deal with him at a greater length in a while)
- It may seem awkward to think of Indian English theatre as mostly no one in India speaks English as their mother tongue. Only a select upper class people know and speak in English and that too not in every sphere of their lives. Therefore to represent the lives of Indians in English language in theatrical performances may seem unrealistic to many. But at the same time, it is to be thought that as Raja Rao mentioned in the Foreword to his famous novel *Kanthapura*, English is the intellectual language of modern India. In today's time, English is serving the same purpose what Sanskrit served in the ancient India when Prakrit was the language of the common man. Those days, if the experiences of the common men who spoke Prakrit could be expressed in the Sanskrit language, then why it is that today the common man's language in theatrical representation cannot be represented in English.

1.4 MAHESH DATTANI

Mahesh Dattani, a Bangalore based playwright, scriptwriter for cinemas as well as a director, actor and writer, is known across the world for upholding to the society a mirror in which he tries to present the society in a much more clearer terms so that the common people of India can be educated about the significant issues that somehow mars the sensibilities of the Indian

society. In that sense, we can term Mahesh Dattani to be a committed writer. Jean Paul Sartre in his famous book *What is Literature*, while speaking about the commitment of the writers, states –

> **"**The writer has chosen to reveal the world and particularly to reveal man to other men so that the latter may assume full responsibility before the object which has been thus laid bare."

A committed writer "reveals" the world to the audience / readers so that they may not say that they had no idea that the world was so, as Sartre further adds –

> "The 'committed' writer knows that words are action. He knows that **to reveal is to change** … the function of the writer is to act in such a way that nobody can be ignorant of the world and that no body may say that he is innocent of what it is all about." (Jean Paul Sartre, *What is Literature?* emphasis added).

Mahesh Dattani can be thought to be committed writer in the sense that Sartre talks about the commitment of the writer. The project of Mahesh Dattani as a playwright as well as a film maker was that he thought that it is his duty as an artist to get engaged in educating and informing the mass about the various issues which he thinks are significant for the people to know. Therefore, most of his plays deal with significant social and cultural issues. The play *Tara*, though originally named *Twinkle Tara*, is an effort in that direction where the dramatist through the treatment meted out to Siamese twin probes the age old gender prejudices that mars the lives of girls/ women in our country. (We will be discussing the gender aspect of the play in the next few Units in details).

It is not that Mahesh Dattani has produced a single play which is worthy of being read and performed; but he has a number of plays to his credit which talks about the significance he holds in the history of Indian English Drama. Some of the significant plays of Dattani are–

- *Where There's a Will*
- *Dance Like a Man*
- *Tara*
- *Bravely Fought the Queen*
- *Final Solution*
- *On a Muggy Night in Mumbai*
- *Thirty Days in September*
- *Seven Steps Around The Fire*
- *The Murder That Never Was*, etc.

Mahesh Dattani is the first playwright to be awarded the *Sahitya Akademi* Award for his play *Final Solutions* which again goes on to prove his caliber and charisma as a dramatist. His *Sahitya Akademi* award citation reads as follows:

> "Dattani … probes tangled attitudes in contemporary India towards communal differences, consumerism and gender… a brilliant contribution to Indian English drama."

It is not that Mahesh Dattani is known for the social issues that he brings in his plays but also for his theatrical innovations which make him a master craftsman and at the same time an intellectual giant. His plays are directed by famous Indian directors including Arvind Gaur, AlyquePadamsee and Lillete Dubey. Dattani, as mentioned earlier, also directed movies such as *Mango Souffle*, *Morning Raga*, *Dance Like a Man* and *EkAlag Mausam* which has received much international and national acclaim.

It is also to be kept in mind that the underprivileged people of the society are the subject matter of his works as he thinks that the role of an artist and function of art is to talk about the developmental processes where the concerns of the lowest strung of the society needs to be taken up. To take up the mantle of this cause, he set up a theatre group names Playpen in 1984 and from then on this group has staged many plays. The play *Tara* was also staged for the first time by *Playpen*.

Scholars and critics dealing with Indian theatre, especially Indian English theatre are of the opinion that Mahesh Dattani is the dramatist who provided a new direction to Indian theatre not only because of the concerns of the underprivileged and marginalized that he takes up in his theatrical works, but also because of his theatrical innovations and techniques. A famous critic John McRae thinks Dattani to be "the voice of India." It is true to a greater extent as Dattani through his plays tries to give voice to the new India which is hitherto not represented or voiced in the way Dattani does it. It is very significant to note here that he does not romanticize about life in his works/ theatrical productions but moreover tries to be very realistic so as to make the message reach his intended audience. He makes attempts to interpret Indian sensibilities very closely so as to represent them in his works, but at the same time he questions the traditional notions of what India represents and tries to incorporate the new voices emerging within India so as make India develop in the true sense of the term. Dattani himself says –

> *I would like to challenge the assumption of what is Indian. Does that mean traditional theatre forms? Yes, they're wonderful, they're very sophisticated, they're very impressive, but are they really India? That's something I would*

> *like to question and challenge. Are they really reflecting life as it is now, that is the question that I would like to ask. They're fine, but there is the danger that if you look at them as if they're quintessential India you're doing those forms a great disservice, because you're not allowing them to change. What we need to do now is to look at those forms and say we're approaching the twenty-first century, this is where we are and this is our legacy, so where do we take that.*

1.5 *TARA*: A SHORT INTRODUCTION

By now you must have realized that Mahesh Dattani is a very conscious committed writer who in his plays and other artistic expressions always intends to reveal the atrocities that the Indian society went through and at the same time represents the new voices emerging in India which needs to be incorporated in the Indian cultural sensibilities so as to manifest the new modern India. The contemporariness of his themes makes his plays so appealing and popular. In the play *Tara*, the theme of Gender discrimination is being represented through the portrayal of a Siamese twin (conjoined twins). The unjust ways in which the leg which naturally belongs to the girl (Tara) is being given to the boy (Chandan) forms the crux of the dramatic representation. It is around this incident that the play revolves though the play begins with Dan (Chandan) as the sutradhar as well as the character who is reminiscing about the way in which Tara was unjustly treated.

You probably have by now understood the fact that it is a play dealing with the theme of Gender Discrimination. The play deals with the theme of Gender related atrocities that women in India (and also in all other patriarchal societies of the world) go through, but it also deals with some of the other issues such as family, use of science and medicine in life, etc.

Tara is the third play by Mahesh Dattani and it was first staged in Bangalore, Chidian Memorial Hall on 23rd October 1990 by Playpen Performing Arts Group and directed by Dattani himself though the name of the play then was *Twinkle Tara.* Next year, the play was staged in Mumbai when Alyque Padamsee directed the play and it was named *Tara.* On the question of what gave him the idea for the play, *Tara*, Mahesh Dattani says in an interview:

> "Well, basically, it began with, you know, reading an article in a medical journal about Siamese Twins being separated, and, of course, they were invariably of the same sex and there was this thing about a fused leg and which had the qualities of both left and right so there had to be some careful consideration as to which twin was supplying the blood to the leg and the

> journal went into the detail because obviously it was a very unique operation and separation. Although that was the inspiration but I think by then having written *Dance Like a Man*, I was prepared to take on the gender issue head on, and I think that was a powerful metaphor. Again, you know, the play is misread and, you know, people tend to focus on the medical details but that's really not what the play is about. It's a metaphor either for being born equal as male and female and sharing so much more and with the surgical separation comes a cultural distinction and prejudices as well, but on another level, it could also deal with the individual having the male and female self…"

The above quotation from Mahesh Dattani's interview is a significant pointer to the understanding of the play as it emphasizes how the play is not really about the conjoined twins or about the medical surgery to separate those twins; but more about the issues dealing with the ways in which the girl child are being victimized in India as the patriarchal mindset does not care about the girls and privileges the males.

The play opens with the introduction of Tara and Chandan, a pair of conjoined twins, separated through surgery. Born with three legs between two of them, the decision on who gets the second leg is clear as the mother decides it has to be her son because he is the male heir to the family. This is a play on the injustices done to both women and men. Women bear the brunt of social stigmas because of the gender bias that taints our society. The doctor performing the surgery to separate the conjoined twins, makes it clear that the leg would be helpful only to the girl and would in no way aid the boy but nonetheless, succumbs to pressure from Bharati and deprives the girl of what biologically was hers. Bharati tries to get over her guilt by over indulging Tara, but no amount of empathy or sympathy can undo the injustice she has done and this guilt further leads to her mental breakdown and the deterioration of her relationship with her husband. Chandan on the other hand bears the brunt of this injustice as he lives with the knowledge that the useless limb that he was given during surgery was rightfully Tara's. He has to live through life carrying the burden of the wasted leg and pay for the mistake that his parents committed.

Family, society, neighbours and the value systems that prevail in them are some other themes that Dattani has dealt in "Tara." What are the moral values that we find important? Was Bharati right in taking the decision in Chandan's favour even when she knew the outcome of her decision? Were Dr. Thakkar and his team ethically, morally and medically right in executing a decision that they knew was medically wrong? Was Mr. Patel right in giving in to his wife's wrong decision, or did he just accept it because he was economically

and socially not at par with Bharati's family? Was it actually love or guilt that governs Bharati's decision to donate her kidney to Tara? Was Roopa, a representative of the society and neighbours around us, right in the way she behaved and looked down upon Tara, as invalid? Do we as individuals have the authority to make decisions that could jeopardize completely the chances of an individual's growth and existence?

The struggle continues and "Tara" clearly reflects the attempts of an individual's effort for existence, growth and development. The fight is an unending one and we as silent audiences witness the very reflection of issues that exist all around us. The desire to lead a life that is normal, without any deformities exists in all of us, but then what is normal? Is it normal to do injustice to a child only because she is a girl child? A closer look at this theme make us remorseful angry and bitter about the patriarchal and cruel society in which we live in as we come across the harsher realities which pervades in our society in such a way that injustice seem to prevail at every corner of our existence, one of the important one being the gender injustice. Dattani being a sensitive individual gave importance to this issue that pervades our society at all levels.

1.6 SUMMARY OF THE PLAY *TARA*

(Summary can always merely be a faint approximation of the original and therefore should not be taken to be a substitute for the original. The Summary is just to provide you with a recap of the plot of the Play *Tara.* You are therefore advised that you go through the original text of the play *Tara* before you progress any further with this study material)

Before we get into the summary of the play, it is significant to understand that the setting of the stage is significant part of the play as it is the dramatic representation which makes the play more theatrical, leading to it signification. Thus, we see the play in multiple segments on the stage which talks of various locales and times.

- The play is Chandan's play as therefore at one level we see Chandan's London apartment where he stays and is writing a play.
- On another level, Dr. Thakkar sits – which is a slightly higher level – as he has a 'sheer, godlike presence' in the play as he is the one who does the operation of Tara and Chandan and gives the third foot of the Siamese twins unjustly to Chandan. In the emotional drama, Dr, Thakkar has a great role to play and therefore he is given a higher level of setting on stage.
- The lowest level of the stage set is the Patel's house which is primarily being enacted out in the memory. There is a *galli* outside the house (which is suggested by cross –lighting) where the play is mostly enacted).

Apart from the stage setting, the stage directions are very significant for the play as it provides the necessary background for our understanding of the play. Dan is Chandan himself who is both a narrator as well as a character in the play.

Act I

The play begins with Dan busy typing in his London apartment. Dan addresses the audience directly in a soliloquy as he informs that –

- He is trying to put his past experience into writing – he is writing the play *Twinkle Tara* which is composed of his memories.
- He is living in London so as to distance himself from his past
- He and his sister Tara were Siamese twins who shared a leg amongst themselves which was unjustly being given to him by a medical operation.

The action then moves to Mumbai to the past, when Bharati is finishing her morning worship ritual and Patel is getting ready to go to work. Usually in the traditional Indian patriarchal family men go to work and the women take care of the household. The situation is same here, as Tara explains to Roopa "The men in the house were deciding on whether they were going to hunting while the women looked after the cave." In such a circumstance Chandan is willing to become a writer and Tara just wants to be "Strong. Healthy. Beautiful." We are also being informed that Patel, Chandan and Tara's father is worried about the mental health of Bharati.

The play shifts back to Chandan who wants to focus on Tara as he thinks that nature hadn't treated them (Chandan and Tara) in a fair manner. Nature probably wanted them to be together as they were born together as Siamese twins, nut it was Dr. Thakkar who operated and separated them. The next scene is an Interview of Dr. Thakkar who is interviewed by Dan where the doctor related the case of the operation of Chandan and Tara when they were only three months old.

The scene shifts to the lowest level of the stage where Tara is asked to show her artificial leg. In the following dialogue between Chandan and Tara we come to know that Bharati showers her excessive love for Tara which in turn makes Tara feel that her father does not love her. Their neighbour girl Roopa examines Tara's artificial leg. We are also shown that Bharati is trying to bribe Roopa to be friendly with Tara. Further, we come to know that Bharati and Patel belong to two different states – Karnataka and Gujarat respectively. We see that Bharati and Patel quarrel amongst themselves where Bharati's father's money was the

reason why Bharati always feels that she has an upper hand. At this point when Patel forces Bharati to see a psychiatrist, Bharati threatens that she will reveal everything to Tara.

We also are made aware that Tara needs a kidney transplant and Bharati wants to donate her kidney to which Patel does not agree. In some time when Bharati is with the children she tells them Patel is not much concerned about Tara and that their maternal grandfather has left them enough money to survive luxuriously and yet Tara needs to find a career for herself so to have her self-respect. While they are having this conversation, Chandan points out to her mother that she has missed a stitch in the sweater that she is knitting for Tara. Patel enters the scene and looking at Chandan being interested in knitting, fumes over the gendered roles that one needs to follow where Chandan should be concentrating on his career. He reveals his plans to send Chandan abroad for his higher studies, though we know that he hasn't made any such plans for Tara.

ACT II

The opening scene of Act II is a conversation between Bharati and Tara where she talks about donating her kidney to Tara as an act of love and also as an act of making up for all things Tara lacks. Dan looks at his scrap book and tells about the surgery. He comments that Nature has provided Tara with a raw deal. Dr. Thakkar informs about the various complications that the surgery involves. Action moves to Patel household where Tara is shown to be unhappy and Bharati is shown to be having a kind of nervous breakdown. We are also informed that their maternal grandfather has left his Bangalore house for both Tara and Chandan but his money only for Chandan. Patel who has a deep hatred for his father-in-law thinks that the house should be burnt down. A phone call from Patel to Dan informing him that Bharati is dead does not move Dan at all. Dan refuses to come back to his home in India and instead asks his father to come to London as he sees no point coming to India when Tara and Bharati are dead. We come to know that Tara is dead now for six years. The play ends with spirits of Tara and Chandan hugging each other.

1.7 LET'S SUM UP

In this Unit, you have been introduced very briefly to the scenario of Indian English theatre which started its journey in 1831 when Rev. Krishna Mohan Banerjee wrote the play *The Persecuted* following the western model of theatre. From then on, many attempts were made in writing as well as translating plays in India in English and to present them on stage. A brief history of the significant playwrights has been provided so as to make you understand the tumultuous journey of Indian English Theatre.

Thereafter Mahesh Dattani, the Bangalore based playwright and cinema person is being introduced where it is being discussed how he deals with Theatre as a medium of reaching out to his audience about the new ideas and voices emerging in India and this educate the mass of the same. His commitment to the cause of the underprivileged is being emphasized so as to show how the issues of gender and other issues related to the marginalized sections of the society are manifest in his plays. Then a brief introduction of the play *Tara* is being provided so as to formulate your ideas about the play. Certain questions are posed in this section of the study material so as to make you think more about the play. It is advised that you read the play thoroughly at this stage.

1.8 UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS

1. In what ways do you think Mahesh Dattani is a playwright who took up the cause of the marginalized sections of the society? Write a brief account of Dattani's politics with reference to the play *Tara.*
2. Do you think Mahesh Dattani is a 'committed' playwright? Why do you think so? Give reasons for your answer. Write your answer with close reference to the play *Tara.*
3. Indian playwright Mahesh Dattani is thought to be of the new voice of India. Do you agree? Write a brief note on Dattani as a playwright with reference to the play *Tara.*

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Section-2 : Themes in *Tara*

STRUCTURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Your reading of Mahesh Dattani's play *Tara* probably has made it clear to you by now that the play deals with the question of gender, which is also being mentioned in this self instructional material from Unit One itself. Probably, by now you have also figured out for yourself how and why Mahesh Dattani thought that the Gender issues in India needs to be presented through his play before the audience. This Unit will specifically focus on the themes of *Tara* so as to make you have a better understanding of the play as well as focus on the contemporary nature of the play. This unit is especially focused on Gender issues in India and will make us have a better understanding of Gender in the Indian context.

2.2 UNIT OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, you will learn about–

- Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* as a play about the issue of Gender discrimination and its consequent effects on family, society and psychology
- Other Significant themes such as Familial relationship, Science and Medicine and its Misuse, Disability, etc.

2.3 Themes

Theme can be said to be a common thread or idea that is incorporated throughout a literary work which binds the work together. A theme is a thought or idea the author presents to his

or her reader(s) which the reader explores while reading the text. The author utilizes the characters, plot, and other literary devices to assist the reader in this endeavor. In truly great works of literature, the author intertwines the theme throughout the work and the full impact is slowly realized as the reader processes the text. The ability to recognize a theme is important because it allows the reader to understand part of the author's purpose in writing the work. It is true that a work usually is written keeping in mind a single theme; but often multiple themes and sub themes also comes into the purview of the work and make the literary piece complex and interesting.

For example, in Mahesh Dattani's *Tara*, the dramatist has consciously and conspicuously tried to present the theme of Gender oppression and repression in Indian society in such terms that the readers become aware how a family (Patel Family in the play *Tara)* suffers because of a wrong decision to give certain unlawful, immoral advantage to the boy child over the girl child. Thus the dominant themes that the play deals with are –

(a) Gender Politics

(b) Bias against Girl Child

(c) Familial relationships

(d) Disability

(e) Science and its misuse, etc.

In the course of this Unit, these themes will be taken up in details so as to acquaint you with the intricacies with which Mahesh Dattani dealt with these themes in *Tara.*

2.3.1 Gender Politics in India and Dattani's *Tara*

Gender politics in India can be termed as a set of movements aimed at defining, establishing, and defending equal political, economic, and social rights and equal opportunities for Indian women. It is the pursuit of women's rights within the society of India. Like their feminist counterparts all over the world, feminists in India seek gender equality: the right to work for equal wages, the right to equal access to health and education, and equal political rights. Indian feminists also have fought against culture-specific issues within India's patriarchal society, such as inheritance laws and the practice of widow immolation known as Sati, etc. The history of feminism in India can be divided into three phases –

- The first phase, beginning in the early nineteenth century, was initiated when male European colonists began to speak out against the social evils of Sati and banned it in legal terms (Raja Ram Mohun Roy), championed widow remarriage and got it legalized (Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar), when tracts of Women's education started

coming out (Rev. Krishna Mohun Banerjee and others) and women started slowly gaining some respectful status in society. In Bengal, the Brahmo Samaj movement made rapid progress, arousing a new desire among women for freedom. There were women too who participated in these reformist movements and the famous ones among them are Pandita Ramabai and Savitri Bai Phule who respectively worked on the young widows and women's education. A few women also overcame their social handicaps and achieved positions of distinction. They included Toru Datta, Ramabai, Swarana Kumari Devi and Kamini Roy. These attempts notwithstanding, women did not get the benefit of Western education. Women of upper classes suffered from the custom of enforced widowhood and a ban on divorce. Among the lower classes the practice of "Devdasi" was in vogue. Apart from these, from about 1878, university studies particularly medicine began to attract Indian women and around 1888 some women went across the seas even to America to seek new knowledge. As early as 1892 the first Indian woman took her Civil Law degree in England.

- The second phase, from 1915 to Indian independence, started when Mahatma Gandhi incorporated women's movements into the Indian Freedom struggle. Gandhi legitimized and expanded Indian women's public activities by initiating them into the non-violent civil disobedience movement against the British Raj. He exalted their feminine roles of caring, self-abnegation, sacrifice and tolerance; and carved a niche for those in the public arena. Peasant women played an important role in the rural *satyagrahas* of Borsad and Bardoli. Women-only organizations like All India Women's Conference (AIWC) and the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) emerged. Women were grappling with issues relating to the scope of women's political participation, women's franchise, communal awards, and leadership roles in political parties. Women joined men in equal footing during the great struggle for Indian's Independence. This participation of women in the national struggle loosened the social bondage in which they were held. Their equal participation with men in the struggle led to the breakdown of traditional conceptions and brought about a profound change in the attitude of women. The ban on women practicing law was removed in 1920 in England. Among the first batch of women to be called to the London Bar was an Indian woman. During the non-cooperation movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi, he directly appealed to the women of India that led to the awakening of thought in women.
- The third phase began when independent women's organizations focused on fair treatment of women at home, after marriage, in the work force and right to political parity, etc. The improvement in women's position and status became further evident when immediately after

the independence, Indian women made their mark by becoming Governors, Cabinet ministers, and ambassadors. Several measures were taken by the Government of India to assign equal status to women in the economic, political and social fields. When in the 1970s women's movement was at its peak in the west, many women in India as well as the feminists carried on fighting for the cause of women. More avenues were opened to them to show their talents and have a sense of participation in national activities. The Constitution of India pledges equality of status and opportunity to men and women. The passage of several Acts by the Parliament and the process of social change brought about by industrialization and urbanization during the last few decades have done much for women's emancipation both legally, politically and socially. Mrs. India Gandhi, the first women Prime Minister of India, is the pride of India's women folk. She served for fifteen years and remained the undisputed leader of the most powerful party in India. She was considered to be the most powerful woman in the contemporary world.

- The Constitution of India provides for equal rights for all, irrespective of caste, creed and sex. The Fundamental Rights guarantees equality of men and women in every walk of life. Article 15 assures that the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of sex and says: "Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women." Women's issues began to gain an international prominence when the decade of 1975–1985 was declared the United Nations Decade for Women.

In spite of so many efforts across centuries, the position of women in India has not reached the state where we can proudly say that Indian women enjoy all the rights and privileges that Indian men have. If that state would have been reached for the Indian women then the need for writing *Tara* would not have arisen. That a play like *Tara* needs to be written and presented before the audience only goes on to show that Indian women still are living under patriarchal oppression, suppression, violence and silencing. The women are made to live in a state of continual fear and subjugation where they cannot live their lives according to their potential and moreover many young girls and female fetus are killed everyday across India because of the gender bias.

Mahesh Dattani, as being stated in Unit One, is a committed writer and thinker and therefore thinks that it is his task as a writer / dramatist to represent the tales of women to his audience so that they are able to see the state on women once again on stage which they experience all the times in their daily lives. By rendering an artistic representation of the everyday tortures of women in India, Mahesh Dattani wants to get it registered in the minds of his audience and readers in such a way so that next time when they act in a patriarchal manner their conscience pricks them and they are led to act in a just manner. Probably, Dattani's project is not just artistic, but also has a social implication to it. Similar to George Bernard Shaw, the famous English dramatist, who said "I will not take the pains of writing a

single sentence for the sake of art"; Dattani is also a committed artist who writes his plays so that he can make his audience see what they often lack to see in their lives.

One of the function of art is to make everyday occurrence lay bare to the readers / audience in such a manner that the readers become much more aware of the same and are made to act in a conscious manner leading to some kind of social and cultural change in the society for good. Such thoughts must have occurred to Mahesh Dattani when he chose to write a play like *Tara* where he tries to present the biases that a girl child has to face in the Indian society.

2.3.2 Bias against Girl Child

It is a typical feature of the patriarchal thought and culture all over the world, more so in India, that the girl child is mostly not welcome in this world. This leads to female feticide as well as killing of girl child even after they are born. In different parts of India therefore one can perceive that the gender balance in the society is much misbalanced as girl children in many cases to do survive because of the neglect that the Indian society shows towards them. Mahesh Dattani finds this injustice towards the girl child to be very much prevalent in the Indian society and therefore felt that he should take up the issue in the third play that he wrote and consequently *Tara* was written so as to make the Indian mass be aware of the ways in which women in general and girl child in particular are victims of the patriarchal social system which does not allow them to live life. What is rightfully due to women and girl child is consciously and deliberately taken away from them and they are left to be victimized and oppressed throughout their lives. *Tara* narrates one such tale – a tale which every Indian should come across so as to change their worldviews and look forward to not only safeguarding the girl child, but also giving them what is due to them.

The question which naturally arises – why is it that a boy is given preference over a girl child? Probably all of us know the answer. Probably all of us have experienced the differential treatments towards girl child – probably all of us have seen how girls are not provided with as nutritious food as the boy, not as expensive clothes as the boy, and not as better education as the boy child. All these discriminations have to be encountered by the girl child and even after that they emerge victorious in lives often, though many of them are left to die or suffer unjustly. It is not that all girl children go through discriminations, but in most cases the girls do undergo various kinds of pressures on them from the family and society which somehow curbs their natural instinct as well as their natural psychological growth.

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* rightly says – "One is not born, but becomes a woman." What she means is the difference between sex and gender. Sex is a biological

construct where as gender is a social and cultural construct which we, humans, have made in such a way that women are made to be victimized and oppressed and yet they will never talk about this victimization and oppression as from their childhood they are being made to learn that their salvation lies in obeying the male whims and wishes and to serve them. So, even though they are victimized, yet they will not put up a voice against the victimization as they are being made to believe that this victimization is natural and it is a part of their lot.

In India from the ancient times onwards, (probably from the later Vedic Age) we see that women are being subjected to various atrocities because the *shastras*, especially *The Manusmriti* provided women with the status of secondary citizens who need to be kept under the check of patriarchy /male domination. It is not just true of the Indian civilization, but also in the West, we can see a similar kind of treatment being meted out to women. It is only in the twentieth century that vehement protests and movements against the patriarchal system started gaining momentum in the West (feminist movements) so as to not only give women the right to dignified existence, but also to live life according to their own desire. In India, too, women's issues started gaining momentum as some of the educated Indians felt that it is not necessary that women be given their due not only in society but also in their private lives.

One such voice which took up the issue of Gender/ women in India very seriously is that of Mahesh Dattani who thought that it is through his dramas as well as cinemas that he can try to create awareness amongst the Indian mass about the ways in which women are being victimized and oppressed for generations. The play *Tara* is an attempt in that direction where the playwright shows that what is rightfully due to Tara is being given to her brother only because he is a male.

The privileges that the male child enjoy in India, and also elsewhere, make him grow up thinking that he has a right over women and that he can carry on doing any kind of atrocities on women. Similarly, girl child from their childhood are made to learn that if they are beautiful according to the male standards of feminine beauty and if they can learn how to be subservient to men and obey their order then she can grow up to be an ideal women. This kind of education makes children grow up with gender biases which perpetuates their whole life and carries on from one generation to another leading to the perpetuation of the patriarchal thoughts and practices. It is against these thoughts, prejudices and practices that Mahesh Dattani is revolting against in his play Tara where he makes an attempt to lay bare the ways by which the society perpetuates such abnormalities in the name of doing good to males.

The plot of *Tara* deals with the lives of a conjoined (Siamese) twins – Chandan and Tara – son and daughter of Mr. Patel and Bharati. The twins are joined together at their hip and can be separated only through a surgical operation which could have meant danger to one of them. Bharati and her father decide that the third leg of the conjoined twins be given to Chandan so that he may lead a healthy life though the leg rightfully belongs to Tara. Medically, it should have gone to Tara, but Bharati and her father bribe the Dr. – Dr. Takkar – so that he does the unjust thing medically to give the leg to Chandan. Mr. Patel, the twin's father, remains a mute spectator to the whole thing, though he can sense the gross injustice that is meted out to Tara. The operation leaves Chandan with a slight limp and Tara crippled. Thus it turns out to be futile for both children as neither Tara nor Chandan could really do much with the third leg that they shared between themselves at their birth. This shocks Bharati to a great extent as she realizes that she has done gross injustice to Tara and therefore tries to compensate that with more affection and love.

This incident is the crux from where the play is initiated – in the sense that how the girl child are usually being victimized in Indian society as they are thought to be of inferior than the boy child who can achieve supposedly greater things and can keep the family name shining with his efforts. So usually sons are given preference over the daughters, whose manifestation we can always carry on seeing in our daily lives all around us. Female foeticide and infanticide are therefore a grave concern in the Indian society as girl child often face the discrimination not only when they are born but also when they are in the womb of the mother. In a society which is so gender biased, it is essential that a conscious dramatist like Mahesh Dattani takes up the theme of Gender based violence and discrimination of the girl child as one of the significant topics to be discussed in the play *Tara*.

But at the same time, to merely say that the play *Tara* is about Gender discrimination and injustices would be to draw a limit to the play and not look at the complex contours that the dramatist brought forward in his play. It is to be understood here that Gender is a significant aspect of the play and yet to explore the contours of gender constructs in the society what is needed is to study the society, family and culture in much more detailed terms. Therefore familial relationship is one of the foremost aspects that the play also deals with.

2.3.3. Familial Relationships in *Tara*

Familial relationship is one of the prime issues that the play *Tara* deals with. As soon as Mr. Patel and Bharati are married, Mr. Patel is forced to leave his parental home as their relationship was not accepted by his parents. This leads to a host of problems for him as he is not able to assert himself in the way he should. Being assertive here does not mean that he

should have been patriarchal in terms of being a husband who thinks he should be assertive only because he is a male. But when the time comes for the surgery to be done by Dr. Takkar to separate the conjoined twins and Bharati and her father asserts that the third leg should be given to Chandan which rightfully belonged to Tara, Mr. Patel could not and did not oppose it.

As Mr. Patel did not have support of his parents, therefore he seems to be isolated leading to a situation when he knows that gross injustice is being done to his newly born daughter and yet he could not do anything to stop it.

As at the right moment Mr. Patel could not be assertive therefore his whole family starts suffering –

(a) Chandan gets the third leg, but still it is not of much use to him. Moreover, when he grows up he suffers from a sense of remorse.

(b) Tara remains crippled throughout her life.

(c) Bharati, to some extent, becomes insane and starts showing extra love and affection to Tara so as to compensate for the injustice that she has perpetrated on Tara

(d) Mr. Patel becomes violent and aggressive.

Thus, a surgery which is done to give certain advantage to Chandan only because he is a male child, ruins the whole of the family as everyone in the family suffers due to it.

Therefore it can be easily said that though the play starts with the premise of a Siamese twins and how the leg that the twins shared is given unjustly to the male child because of the gender bias in the society and the minds of the parents of the twins; yet the play deals with much more than that when it tries to probe the ways by which the familial relationship are ruined and how each member of the Patel family suffers from a sense of agony.

It is significant to note that Tara is discriminated against by her own mother. Even being a woman she is not able to feel and act for Tara as she is conditioned to think in a patriarchal way. It is the tragedy of women that they are so deeply conditioned in the gendered existence by the patriarchal society that they cannot and do not realize the ways the male-dominated society victimizes the women; and moreover they themselves become the perpetrator of gendered violence on other women. Bharati feels that by giving undue advantage to Chandan she will help him in acquiring the huge fortune of her maternal grandfather. In the process, she commits a crime against her own daughter, though at the same time this should be kept in mind that Mr. Patel is also to be blamed for this crime as he does not take a stand against this gross injustice being done to Tara.

As a consequence, Tara becomes an innocent victim of the patriarchal injustice and throughout her life, till her death, she had to suffer for the same. In the course of the play, we see that she longs for her two legs, when she says:

Tara: I would wish for both…I would wish for two of them.

Chandan: Two Jaipur Legs?

Tara: No, silly, the real ones.

As a compensation for the gross injustice that Bharati does to her daughter, she tries to excessively love her in the later part of life. In this phase, we again see in the play that Mr. Patel is excessively concerned with Chandan and his career, making Tara feel that she is not loved by her father so much. We see that Mr. Patel makes plans to send Chandan to college, but he does not make any such attempts for Tara. Where as we see Bharati concerned about Tara as she remarks to Chandan about Tara –

> "The world will accept you-but not her! Oh, the pain she is going to feel when she sees herself at eighteen or twenty. Thirty is unthinkable. And what about forty and fifty!"

Thus throughout the play, we see that Tara is being treated differently as she is a female and that leads to her trauma. The patriarchal society fails to understand that women should be given as much opportunities as men so that they can also realize their potentials. But in a patriarchal society, it never happens and therefore women suffer agony without even being able to share it with anyone.

Though the patriarchal society does gross injustice to women and then leave them to suffer in their loneliness; yet in the play *Tara*, we see that all the major characters – Bharati, Mr., Patel and Chandan suffer from a sense of remorse and therefore suffer from psychological turmoil. Amidst this, we see Tara to be a strong woman who has come in terms of her wooden leg and is not at all perturbed by the same. Her bold stance shows that she has accepted life and have made her mind to move on. As her confidence in herself is supreme therefore she describes herself as "Strong. Healthy. Beautiful." Later she had to go through a kidney transplant and suffers an untimely death. Tara's death makes Dan distance himself from his family.

Dan starts believing that by being irresponsible towards Tara for taking away the leg from her which rightfully belonged to her, Dr. Thakkar along with his parents have taken away the possibilities of a better life from Tara. So he decides to write a play named *Twinkle Tara* and dedicate it to her. The play that he is writing seems to be some kind of a purgative

aspect of his being as through writing this play he wants to get away with the guilt conscience that is pestering him though he is not at fault as he didn't decide that the third leg should come to him.

2.3.4 Disability

Physical disability is phenomenon which has been into much focus in today's discourses as it is thought that those who think of people with some physical disability to be disable are themselves mentally challenged as physical disability does not make a person inferior. If nature has made the disabled person in a particular manner then it does not mean that they suffer from a lacuna; moreover they need to be respected and cared for as they fighter more odds to emerge victorious in life. But in Indian society, traditionally, it is being perceived that disabled people are often made more a victim of social and cultural ostracism then what nature did to them. People are culturally conditioned in such a manner that they think the disabled people are a burden to society and therefore we see that Tara becomes a victim of certain kind of social ostracism because of her being physically challenged. In the play it is being shown that nobody wants to befriend Tara. Bharati had to go a step further to bribe Roopa with cosmetics and other stuff that she is nicer to Tara; yet we see that Roopa has a dislike for her. Roopa places a poster in the wall of their residential area – "We don't want freaks" which is meant for Chandan and Tara. This poster demoralizes Chandan and Tara as they are not able to deal with the societal pressure that works against the physically challenged.

By portraying these kind of incidents in the play, Mahesh Dattani shows that he is very much concerned with the disabled people and through his play wants to create a consciousness amongst the mass that we should change our mindset towards the physically challenged. We should not act in a manner to make their lives more difficult. They are as much a part of our society and no way are "freaks" and to think of them to be "freaks" can only be done by a freak. One needs to understand that till the time we do not change our mindset towards the physically challenged we will remain under some kind of mental retardation.

In a situation when the society does not accept them (Tara and Chandan), we find that they develop a strong emotional bond between themselves. The bond was always there – from the time of their conception in their mother's womb till the time they are physically separated by Dr. Thakkar, their physical separation could not severe their emotional connectedness and dependence on each other. It is Chandan (Dan) who tries to expose the

tragedy that Tara went through as he feels for her. But at the same time, it is also true that the realization makes Chandan understand that life is also bleak and absurd for him.

2.3.5 Medical Science and its Misuse

In the stage setting, Dr. Thakkar is provided the highest plane where he sits throughout the play with his "god-like" presence which makes us realize that the play also deals with how Medical science has been used by the medical practitioners for their own good than for the benefit of the humanity at large. This is also another significant issue that the play *Tara* deals with as we see in the play that Dr. Thakkar is bribed by Bharati and his father to separate the conjoined twins (Chandan and Tara) where the third leg which rightfully belonged to Tara is unjustly given to Tara only because she is a girl child. The gendered decision of Bharati and her father (also Patel through his silence is to be blamed for it too) to be unjust to the girl child makes Tara and Chandan suffer throughout their lives. (It has been discussed throughout this unit and therefore not elaborated any more at this juncture.)

Some people may argue that Medical science is to be blamed for such injustice as Dr. Thakkar is the one who does the surgery. But one needs to understand here that Medical science is not to be blamed as it is meant to be for the benefit of the humankind. If a medical practitioner like Dr. Thakkar does unjust things to make extra money that does not take away the achievements and progress of medical science. It is to be kept in mind here that it is actually people like Dr. Thakkar and their unethical immoral choices which bring shame to medical practitioners. Instead of having a "god-like presence"; we can say that it is because of his evil presence that Bharati and her father could take an unjust decision to provide the unjust privilege to Chandan. Mahesh Dattani, thus, brings to the fore another pressing issue of the time which needs to be thought with much care and attention in the present circumstances where the medical practitioners need to be much more ethical to their responsibilities and get over their petty gains.

2.4 LET'S SUM UP

The Unit has made you go through the major issues that Mahesh Dattani's Play *Tara* deals with. You have probably by now understood that the gender issue is the most significant realm of the play which binds all other themes. In other words, it can be said that Gender discrimination (one of its prevalent form is the biases against girl child) is a prevalent practice in our society which needs to be rooted out not only to make girls realize their potential but also to make them have their due which has been taken away from them for centuries. The problem is that we need to change our patriarchal mindset and gendered

conditioning of our minds so as to allow a gender-neutral sensibility and society where women can breathe freely and are not victims of any gender based violence of any kind.

Mahesh Dattani makes it a point not only to just present the gendered violence in case of Tara; but also focuses on how a single instance of an unjust decision by the mother and her father to provide the third leg to Chandan makes the whole family suffer different angst and anguishes and how they suffer from different psychological problems because of it. The whole family is affected by that decision and thus it leads to a breakdown of the emotional bond that a family usually should have. This breakdown of the familial relationship makes Dan (Chandan) take the step of distancing himself and be at London as he is remorseful for the way Tara has been unjustly treated by her own family.

Moreover, disability is also an issue that Dattani dealt with much care and showed how the society needs to be sensitive towards the psychically challenged for its own good and not just treat them as "freaks." Medical practitioners are also being given a piece of ethical tirade as sometimes because of petty gains they practice some measures which puts shame not only to their profession but also to Medical science itself.

Thus multifarious concerns of Mahesh Dattani are prevalent in the play *Tara* making it a play fit for the present times. One needs to reread the play time and again to understand the ways Dattani makes it a chronicle of our times.

2.5 UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS

1. What do you think is the most significant theme that Mahesh Dattani deals with in the play *Tara?* Why do you think so? Give reasons for your answer.
2. Do you feel that gender discrimination is still prevalent in India? With reference to the play *Tara*, write a critical note on the contemporariness of the theme of Gender discrimination in *Tara.*
3. Disability and its study are not only limited to social sciences, but form the core of literary studies too. In reference to the above statement, write a short critical note on Tara.
4. Bias against girl child and cultural preference of boys is one of the manifestations of patriarchal mindset. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer with reference to *Tara.*
5. Medical science is shown to be misused in *Tara*, but it is not the main theme of the play. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.
6. In what ways, do you think Mahesh Dattani has written a play which deals with contemporary issues? Give reasons why you think so.

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Section-3 : Dattani's Politics

STRUCTURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In spite of the many challenges that the Indian English playwrights have faced in the past, Mahesh Dattani has managed to carve a niche for himself as a playwright as well as a director. The credit of this acclaim goes to his compassionate treatment of invisible issues of our society, which needs to be brought to limelight so as to make the world a better place to live in, so as to give the marginalized and the underprivileged the rights that are due to them and also the context in which they can enjoy those rights. On the surface of it "Tara" is the story of conjoined twins: Tara and Chandan who have been surgically separated and yet emotionally entwined. As the story unravels, however, it becomes evident that the play is not so much about the twins' being conjoined but about people and personalities and some important social issues related to them. What the play deals with is the politics of patriarchy as it is being carried out in our society in such a manner that we are unconscious of it and yet we live by it at every moment of our life. What is extremely significant is that what we cannot see with our open eyes, needs to be presented to us on stage so as to have a better view of the same. Mahesh Dattani is making effort to do the same in *Tara* and thus his politics is very significantly manifest in the play.

In the present Unit, we will be looking at the politics of Mahesh Dattani to fathom the ways in which he made efforts not only to be committed to the cause of society and that of an artist; but moreover to that of India which he wants to liberate from the thralldom of the patriarchy. The unit is especially focused on the ways in which Dattani tries to achieve this purpose in the play *Tara.*

3.2 UNIT OBJECTIVES

In this unit, you will learn about –

- Mahesh Dattani's Politics – Literature as tool of social critique
- Patriarchy and how it not only victimizes females but also the males?
- Why there is a need to do away with the patriarchal system?

3.3 MAHESH DATTANI'S POLITICS

We have seen some aspects of Dattani's politics in the last Unit which discusses the themes of the play *Tara.* The themes probably have given you a broad parameter to think about the concerns of the dramatist. In this unit, the focus in especially to discuss the political aspects of Dattani's *Tara.*

3.3.1 Politics and Literature

Politics is usually thought to be a word which is related to the world of governance and also has some negative connotations as it is usually thought that the politicians are corrupt and use their political power to attain things for themselves by depriving common and poor people. It is therefore advised that one should try to be distant from the world of politics. But when one thinks of politics in such a manner, one is looking at a very narrow significance of politics. Politics is not just about what the political leaders do; but everything in this world is political. 'There is nothing personal, everything is political' – this has been the motto of the cultural theorists across the world. All personal spaces that we think exist are nothing but manifestation of certain political choices we make.

In such circumstances, the choices that a writer or a playwright makes to represent in his or her works are choices that cannot be termed personal as these are political choices. In that sense, every writer makes political choices; but in case of some writers the choices are prominently political as they try to go question the dominant order / ideology of the society so as to assert the newer voices which seeks attention to come to a new world order. It is true that traditions are significant for us; but not all traditions are beneficial for the present times and therefore it is always necessary that we look a closer critical look at the traditions. Some aspects of the tradition may appear to be useful in the present context; while some may appear outdated and rigorously oppressive and suppressive which we need to do away with so as to establish a better social and cultural order. What is required is a critical study of the said

traditions and then do a 'selective assimilation' of the same depending on which traditions are worth imbibing in the present context.

3.3.2 Dattani and Traditions

There are scholars across the worlds who think that they need to uphold the traditions so as to continue with the cultural heritage and to moreover reestablish and preserve those heritages for the future generation. These scholars blindly follow what is there in the past without questioning their veracity and thus try to perpetuate what is being inherited by them. But there are "Organic Scholars" such as Mahesh Dattani who do not want to accept the traditions without questioning them. For such scholars, the traditions are nothing sacred and they need to be questioned to figure out if they are of any use to the present context. Moreover, these scholars feel that the traditions which are outdated and oppressive, they need to be discarded so as to establish a better society.

Mahesh Dattani is one of the new voices of India who takes a closer critical look at the traditions and tries to present a sane voice to the audience so that they can also think deeply about the issues that the playwright wants us to think about. In the play *Tara*, Mahesh Dattani dealt with many issues which we have discussed in the last Unit. The issues probably has made it clear to you that Dattani has tried to deal with these issues that he wants his audience and readers to think about them. In that sense, what Dattani does though his plays is to build up a consciousness so that the norms that are detrimental for the society at large are being rooted out. Biases against girl children, gendered discrimination, gender violence, privileging of the boy child as an heir to the family, misuse of medical science, etc are some of the issues that Mahesh Dattani has presented in *Tara*. By presenting those issues and critiquing them, Dattani has tried to form a consciousness which cannot be termed personal in any way. It is political as it is a critique of patriarchy.

3.3.3 Patriarchy

Patriarchy is a political system where the males try to dominate, oppress and suppress women so as to have privilege over them so that makes enjoy certain privileges by curtailing the same for women. Moreover, patriarchy is a system where the women are being made to subdue to male whims and whishes in such a manner that they are conditioned to think and act in the same manner as males want and this perpetuating the patriarchal set up. The colonization of the female mind by male ideology is another manifestation of patriarchy. It has become so prevalent from time immemorial that it is thought to be normal to believe in the ideology of male dominance and to practice it in everyday life. In our normal everyday life, we carry on living by this ideology of patriarchy in such a manner and to such an extent

that it does not seem to be an ideology anymore. It has been made to appear so common sensical that the masses do not realize that they are living by an ideology which is making them submit to the patriarchal system. Gramsci used the term "lived ideology" for some common sensical ideology that we live by in our everyday life which we even do not accept to be ideological.

3.3.3.1 Patriarchy and *Tara*

We all know that male–dominance or patriarchy has been not only detrimental for women; but few of us are aware that it is similarly so for men. Men are also victims of patriarchal system which mostly they do not think to be true. For example, in the play *Tara*, it is being shown that –

"The men in the house were deciding on whether they were going to hunt while the women looked after the cave." This analogy is very significant as men decide that they will hunt and even decide that women will look after the cave. Many questions arise from this simple sentence –

(a) Why should men only hunt (in the sense of earning money)? Why can't women also participate in hunting? Why the access to the outer world is only allowed for men?
(b) Why should women only look after the cave (in the sense of looking after the household)? Why should women be under bondage to be always within the household?
(c) Why should the men decide that the women should look after the cave?
(d) Can sex (biological factor of being male or female) be the basis of decision of who does what work?
(e) Why it is that women's work in the cave is be thought to be less respectful than that of hunting?

Many such questions arise which only goes on to prove that gender roles are decided by patriarchy and the people living in a patriarchal society are meant to follow those codes in a strict manner. Following those codes means that one follows patriarchy.

Men continue to follow these codes thinking that they are have the privileges of being at the helm of affairs without realizing that these codes make them follow only what is allowed for them to follow. Even if a male wishes to remain within the "cave", he can't; as patriarchal system does not allow him to make such a choice. In the play, Chandan is provided with the leg which was not due to him (though it is of no use for him in his later life) and yet we see that he cannot take the privilege of that leg and moreover finds himself to be remorseful as he thinks he got what he didn't deserve. The patriarchal system made him have something what is not due to him and throughout his life he had to bear the brunt of that burden which not

only distances him from his family, but also at the same time makes his live a lonely life. So not only Tara, Chandan also seems to be a victim of the patriarchal system.

It is to be understood here that patriarchy tries to present itself to be a social and cultural order which is just and manifests itself to be beneficial for the society as it makes people believe that women are inferior to men in many ways and that women should be subordinate to men so as to maintain peace and order in society. Moreover, it maintains that women should be under strict control of men so that they do not go astray which they usually have a tendency to do. Women are thought to be transgressive by nature and therefore there is a need to control them which the patriarchal system likes to believe as well as perpetuate amongst both men and women so that the repressive dominance of patriarchy carries on. As gender stereotyping and conditioning happen in both men and women that they follow the strict gender codes of patriarchy and do not in any way think or act in a way which will question and critique the order.

With the changes that started occurring in India, (which we have discussed in the earlier unit) from the nineteenth century as the western educated youths of India wanted some changes to take place to the plight of women and started questioning the Hindu *shastras* so as to destabilize the cultural order of the patriarchal structures. But in spite of the efforts of the people starting from nineteenth century for more than a century, we see that the plight of women did not change much leading to conscientious people like Mahesh Dattani take up the cause of the women and speak about the same in his works.

It is to be acknowledged here that it is not that Mahesh Dattani is not only interested in the plight of women as in his other works he deals with the other marginalized sections of the society. The marginalized, the subaltern people and their concerns have been the focus of much of Dattani's works as he believes that it is by portraying the plight of the marginalized that he can give true meaning to his works. In case of *Tara*, as we have discussed earlier, he deals with gender politics which he thinks to be one of the gravest concerns of present day India.

To present the same, he takes up the idea of a 'conjoined twins' (conjoined twins usually are of the same sex, though he twists it to make Chandan and Tara belong to different sex) from a medical journal where the twins are separated and the third leg that the conjoined twins shared between themselves which rightly fully should have belonged to the girl Tara is being given to Chandan as he is the heir of his family and is going to amass a great fortune from his maternal grandfather.

We have discussed earlier that boys are preferred over girls (gender bias against girl child) and that this preferential treatment results from the patriarchal mindset which likes to believe that men should inherit the property of his parents and grandparents. Women from the ancient Hindu civilization (from Later Vedic Age) were not given the right to education, the right to inherit property, etc. These rights were taken away from them as giving these rights to them would make them powerful to questions the patriarchal structure. This tradition still carries on in India where even though the constitution gives the girls/ women the right to education and right to property; yet for all practical purposes women are not able to enjoy these rights as the traditional mindset of the people haven't changed.

It is therefore necessary that writers and dramatists like Mahesh Dattani and others should take up the mantle of informing and sensitizing as well as educating the mass. The dissemination of these gender specific ideals needs to reach the mass, not only to the uneducated who are living in the thralldom of poverty and hell; but also to the supposedly educated (literate but not educated in the right sense of the term) such as Patel, Bharati and her father, or Dr. Takkar, who being educated still cannot understand and see the crime they commit when they distinguish between a girl and a boy. This patriarchal mindset needs to be put into question so as to make the society a gender equitable one and to look forward to justice for women. In those terms, Mahesh Dattani can be called a feminist as Feminism can be defined as "a political position against patriarchy" and feminist criticism as "a specific kind of political discourse: a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism." (Toril Moi, 117). Feminist criticism is an interdisciplinary approach which focuses on 'gender politics' though feminism rather than confining itself to textual analysis has a broader perspective in terms of having the political aim of seeking a just world for females and an end of all kinds of suppression and patriarchal oppression against women. It is with this aim that Mahesh Dattani has written *Tara* and therefore his feminist viewpoint is more than perceivable to anyone reading or watching the play.

3.4 *TARA* AS A "NATIONAL ALLEGORY"

Frederic Jameson in his controversial essay "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" have tried to posit the idea that that the "third-world" literature is primarily national allegory and that "the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society" (69). In other words, he is of the view that in a national allegory, the personal is the national. This view has been challenged by many third world critics including Aijaj Ahmed on the basis that its reductionist arguments; yet many still prefer to view the literature written in the third

world primarily to be "national allegories" as most literatures from the erstwhile colonized countries make attempts to aid in the construction of the nation. During the colonial times, the Indian literature focused on the idea of instilling a national consciousness amongst the mass and similarly in the post-independent India, the efforts of the Indian writers was to build India. Sometimes in the process of this nation building, the writers attempted to create characters who voices critical concerns with the idea of the nation as does Salim Sinai in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children.*

Often the concerns of the subaltern, the oppressed, the suppressed and the marginalized and victimized are brought forth by the writers so as to bring their concerns into the ambit of national discourses. For example, untouchability was brought forth in Mulk Raj Anand's novel *The Untouchable.* It is not only that the voices of the under-privileged are voiced and debated in literary creations, but often a roadmap is also presented for their development within the national developmental framework.

Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* can be considered to be a national allegory as it is seeking a just and equitable world for girls and women. It is asking people to draw their attention to the ways in which girls are being victimized in Indian society and how this patriarchal mindset needs to be changed. In that sense, Dattani is writing an allegory of the Indian nation which needs to pay its urgent attention to this dire problem of discrimination against girl child.

3.5 LET'S SUM UP

Dattani is a conscious, conscientious as well as committed artist who has paid heed to the urgent concerns of today's India in his plays and films so as to educate Indians. Thus his art is a committed art whose politics is evident when one reads them. In that sense, it can be said that he is consciously being political and thinks that art should be taken as a medium of educating the people and should not be treated as mere entertainment. Thus the political aspect of art, especially theatre, has been championed by Dattani.

3.6 UNIVERSITY QUESTIONS

1. What do you think is the politics of Mahesh Dattani in the play *Tara?*
2. What aspects of the traditions does Mahesh Dattani deal with in the play *Tara?* How does he deal with those traditions?
3. Can we say that the play *Tara* is a "national allegory"? Give reasons for your answer.

3.7 RECOMMENDED READINGS

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UNIT-III (10)

THE NATURE OF DRAMA

GEORGE J. WATSON

Renu Koyu

STRUCTURE

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

George J. Watson's *Drama: An Introduction* (1983) is a comprehensive guide on the dramatic art form. After going through the study material, you will be able to:

- Identify the major components of drama.
- Learn about the interesting origins of drama and its universality in human society at large.
- Learn about the different ways in which playwrights use the stage for an impactful theatrical performance.

2. COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY

George J Watson's *The Nature of Drama* is the first chapter of his book *Drama: An Introduction (1983)*. This chapter introduces the dramatic art form. It explains in detail all the major components of drama with illustrations from different literary periods and different literary cultures, beginning with the Ancient Greeks to the Absurdist plays of the 1950s. In a way, it is an extensive and thorough exploration of the dramatic literary form. It is systematically arranged in 7 parts for easy reading and understanding.

This study material provides a comprehensive summary of the chapter and has kept its original divisions to avoid any confusion.

References to the text in this study material are to the following edition;

George J. Watson. *The Nature of Drama*. "Drama: An Introduction", The Michigan Press Ltd, 1983, pp. 1-18. https://archive.org/details/dramaanintroduct0000wats_b9v4/page/n9/ mode/2up?view=theater

2.1 Definitions

In order to come to a comprehensive understanding of "drama", Watson references various definitions given by many scholars of the field and arrives at one that encompasses the important characteristics of the dramatic literary form. Watson's search brings him to the conclusion that "theatricality" is an important aspect of drama. By "theatricality" Watson means performance on a stage. The other important requirements are "real life people pretending to be imagined people" – i.e., actors- and a "particular emphasis on *action*, of a concentrated, often intense, kind". (1) Thus, the important elements of the dramatic art form are its theatricality; actors; and concentrated and intense action. Taking these points into consideration, he defines drama as a "representation of carefully selected actions by living people on stage in front of an audience". (2)

In this section, Watson works out a definition of drama that includes all its essential elements that distinguishes it from other literary forms and gives it its distinction.

Self-Check Questions

2.1.1 Define drama according to your understanding of it from reading the above passage.

2.1.2 Do you agree with Watson's definition of drama. Give reasons.

2.2 Origins and Universality

After arriving at a definition of drama, Watson traces its origins to understand its significance in human society. He observes that one of the most important characteristics of drama is that it is a communal art form, that is, it requires the participation of people. Usually this involves a group that performs on stage and a larger group – the audience- who watch the performance. This communal aspect is an inheritance of early cultures- its primitive fertility rituals and religious observances. Watson states that, "drama's relationship to the myths, legends and folk observances of a culture is the major source of its power."

The plays of prominent African playwrights like Wole Soyinka, Robert Serumaga, James Ng'ombe use elements of African tribal religions and myths in their dramas. For them, the rituals of tribal groups – essentially an early version of the dramatic form- continue to influence and inspire their dramatic creations. Similarly, during the early twentieth century, Irish playwrights like W.B. Yeats and J.M. Synge incorporated/used Irish legend, folk-tale and symbolism to revitalise the English theatrical traditions. Myths also provide the symbolism to comment on the concerns of the modern world. All over the world, playwrights have successfully adapted traditional stories to the contemporary stage and proved that the human condition is a universal experience in spite of its various cultural forms. The adaptation of the Irish playwright J.M. Synge's play *The Shadow of the Glen* (1930) to a Ugandan setting by Ugandan playwright Erisa Kironde in *The Trick* (1966) attests to the universality of drama.

Watson states that both Greek and English plays were originally closely connected with religious rituals. Even though each of these became secular in the process of its development, "it can still call upon powerful ritualised effects when necessary." Shakespeare did this by employing pagan celebration of fertility in his comedies, *As You Like It* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Rituals continue to be an important and powerful aspect in many dramatic performances. However, Watson reminds us that it is not the archaic origins of the drama that sustains it but its "naturalness". Watson insists that the naturalness of theatricality means humans instinctively gravitate towards it from their early childhood and that it is essential for one's intellectual development. In fact, playwrights develop and sharpen this instinct to use it their art.

Self-Check Questions

2.2.1 Trace the history of drama through human civilization.

2.2.2 How do playwrights use ritualistic elements in their plays?

2.3 Stage Conditions

Watson asserts that there is a correlation between the structure of the physical nature of the stage and the conditions of the drama being produced. To prove his point, he traces the evolution and development of the stage since Ancient Greek Theatre that began as early as the 6th century BCE in Athens. The plays were performed in huge circular amphitheatres, with the audience sitting in a circle around the stage that could accommodate as many as fifteen thousand spectators. The Ancient Greek stage had non-existent or minimal stage décor. Watson believes that Greek tragedies were performed on austere and uncluttered stages to reflect the gravity and amplitude of the plays, to show that these plays deal with characters that are extraordinary and who go through extraordinary events. Thus, the arrangement of the stage perfectly reflected the spirit of these plays.

Similarly, the Elizabethan stage of the 16th century was also circular, albeit smaller and enclosed from one side and much more intimate in its setting than the Greek theatre. Since the stage was smaller in size and much closer to the audience, it was a much more intimate experience as well. This encouraged the Elizabethan plays to be much more flexible in tone and the emotions it wanted to convey. Compared to Greek tragedies, Elizabethan plays were not bound by the extra intensities of unity of action, place and time and hence, more neutral and flexible. The Elizabethan drama, thus, was less formal than Greek drama.

However, neither Greek plays nor Elizabethan plays is naturalistic. By naturalistic, Watson means the realistic touches given to the stage by the late seventeenth century in England and Europe in general. What this meant was that the proscenium of the stage resembled a picture frame that imitates real life sceneries- like a common room or a garden. Thus, there was a strong emphasis on realism in both the plot of the play and its stage setting. Plays by Ibsen, Chekov, O' Casey et al are the epitome of naturalistic theatre and even used furniture onstage in order to convey a strong sense of the illusion of reality to the audience. This led to a new style of staging called 'fourth wall theatre'. Here, the audience is considered "the fourth wall of an imaginary room" and the actors deliberately ignore the audience during their performance.

Many contemporaries of naturalistic theatre – like Pirandello, Brecht, Shaw, Beckett, et al - objected to the 'fourth wall theatre' because they argued that it encouraged an illusion of reality contained within the stage for its own sake, thus making the theatrical art form less flexible than its predecessors. However, Watson argues that such a simplistic criticism and subsequent rejection of the form ignores its strengths because realism offered by the 'fourth wall theatre' gave playwrights the opportunity to communicate the emotions or situations that

characters found themselves in more accurately through their surroundings. For instance, the claustrophobia of a constricted life lived by a character can be communicated more strongly by placing them in a space that reflects this. Naturalistic theatre also helps playwrights to dramatize real social issues for stronger impact. Watson rightly observes, "naturalism is especially appropriate for plays of social comment."

Self-Check Questions

2.3.1 How has the stage conditions changed since the Ancient Greek Theatrical traditions?

2.3.2 What are the criticisms against naturalistic theatre?

2.4 The Physicality of the Stage

Even though stages have evolved over centuries, the physical nature of a stage performance itself remains an important part of drama. In fact, its physicality distinguishes it from other literary forms. According to Watson, "[…] the combination of actor, set, words, and movement gives to drama its special power, enabling it to work simultaneously on many aspects of an audience's sensibilities. Even the reader of a play-text, to experience it in all its fullness, must, as it were, perform the whole play in his imagination." (7)

Playwrights use this combination differently to achieve different impacts but it is clear that performance accompanied with music, song, dance and light are important elements of a drama. Wole Soyinka's *Kongi's Harvest* and Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1947) utilises sound to convey the urgency of some of the most significant moments in the plays. However, it is not to say that dramatic silence is not important. In fact, dramatic silence or non-verbal actions are artfully employed by playwrights for maximum theatrical impact in scenes that benefit from it. Shakespeare's *King Lear* serves as a perfect example of how silence is used to appropriately convey the tragedy of the moment when King Lear enters the stage with the dead Cornelia in his arms.

The physicality of drama mainly centres on its visual character. For example, colours are often used to show contrast and comparison between characters and situations or to communicate the emotional or mental state of characters. It remains a distinct characteristic of drama, "to show different things happening at once". (10)

Self- Check Questions

2.4.1 What does physicality of the stage mean?

2.5 Plot and Action

According to Watson, the very characteristics of drama that differentiates it from the other literary art forms is also what determines its form. The physicality of the stage, the action that takes place on the stage and the presence of an audience "impose certain limitations on the dramatic form." He states, "the plot and action must, of necessity, be highly selective and relatively bold and clear to accommodate what Shakespeare calls 'the two hours' traffic of our stage." The use of time becomes of utmost importance and so, one of the things that a dramatist must cut out is the long and flowy descriptive language used by prose writers. Watson calls this selectivity a virtue because "the selectivity of the plot, the brevity of the action, make for economy and intensity and a satisfying sense of interconnectedness and causality. […] The sheer concentration of effects in drama suits well with its natural tendency to deal with human beings in conflict and crisis of a passionate kind." This is what gives theatre its excitement.

Beginning with the critique of action in tragedies in Aristotle's *The Poetics*, which is a treatise on tragedy, critics of plays know and understand the importance of action (people doing things to themselves and others) in drama. Generally, dramatic action is five-fold: 1) the introduction or exposition gives the audience basic information; 2) the rising action; 3) crisis or turning point; 4) falling action and 5) climax. This is the basic structure of a play. But playwrights use these in their own way to create variations. Indeed, certain dramatists create their own signature and individual quality of their plays by deliberately flouting expectations of linearity of dramatic action. The plays of Brecht and Beckett flout the archaic notion of a "tight" plotting and concentrated action.

Self-Check Questions

2.5.1 What are plot and action in a drama?

2.5.2 What are the key elements of dramatic action?

2.6 The Language of Action

While Watson stresses on the importance of the physical aspect of theatre, he also acknowledges that, "the text is clearly the basis on which everything rests. The actor must begin his interpretation of a character from the dramatist's words; the director's vision of the whole work will equally be dependent on those words." (13)

Drama is a composite art and communication happens at several levels. While words are important, gestures, music, noise, etc. contribute in no small measure. Because the playwright

cannot indulge in descriptive language as poets and writers of prose, s/he employs dialogues to further the plot, add layers to the characters of the play and create the desired atmosphere and tone and to communicate the underlying theme and moral ideas of the play. All this, the playwright must do simultaneously. It requires a high degree of selectivity and concentration. It requires craftsmanship and work to "shape" and "polish" prose in order to create the appropriate dramatic effect in plays without compromising the appearance of naturalness. It also helps playwrights create realistic portrayal of characters of different social classes who use language differently. Language also helps in alleviating a comic scene through witticism. Such language delights as well as shade light on the artificiality of certain components of our society.

Some dramatists use words to enchant the audience with their beauty and magic. Watson cites Oscar Wilde's works as example. Of such dramatists, Watson says, "These dramatists are more than half in love with the butterfly worlds they create; and the very explicitness with which their dialogues measures and creates their artificial world." (14-15)

Watson points out the obvious difference between ordinary speech and dramatic language; the latter is much more "energetic" or animated. It is because of the "difference caused by the concentration and intensity of the mode". (15) "The dynamism of the language is itself intimately connected with the 'doing' aspect of drama, its stress on action." Another remarkable aspect of dramatic language is that it does not differentiate between prose and poetry, in fact it employs both poetic and prosaic language to make impactful drama. This is especially true for Elizabethan drama.

Poetry in drama can enhance the dramatic appeal of a scene or a play itself by revealing details of personality and motivations of characters, with its ability to capture the attention of the audience on the intensity of the action taking place on stage as well as transport it to some other realms imaginatively. Verses also enables the playwright to focus solely on the essential issues or ideas of his/her plays and reaffirm the moral tone of the play.

Self-Check Questions

2.6.1 How is dramatic language different from everyday language?

2.6.2 What importance does language play in drama?

2.7 Reading and Seeing

As a text waiting to be brought to life on stage, plays also exists in a study or library. Watson concludes the chapter with the acceptance of the interplay of reading and performing play.

"Good reading will help good seeing; good seeing will help good reading. The crucial thing to realise is to realise that drama is a hybrid art form. Its longevity through human history suggests it is a healthy one." (18)

3. SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

3.1 Write a short note on drama from your understanding of George J. Watson's *The Nature of Drama*.

3.2 What are the major components of drama according to George J. Watson?

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UNIT-III (11)

IT MUST FLOW: A LIFE IN THEATRE

HABIB TANVIR

Renu Koyu

STRUCTURE

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

It Must Flow: A Life in Theatre, is a loose autobiographical account of Habib Tanvir's life in theatre with prompts from interviewers Anjum Katyal and Biren Das Sharma.The text, like the title, flows through Tanvir's recollection of his earliest memories of theatre and his journey through the pioneering days of Indian Cinema in pre-independent Bombay to the theatres across Europe back to India and the moments that led him to his signature theatre style and his association with the folk culture of Chhattisgarh.

After reading this study material, you will be able to:

- Know about Habib Tanvir's life in Theatre
- Appreciate Habib Tanvir`s contribution to Indian Theatre
- Learn how Habib Tanvir tackled the arbitrary binary of high culture/low culture or classical traditions/folk traditions through his productions
- Get an insight on how Habib Tanvir developed his plays

2. INTRODUCTION

Habib Tanvir (1 September 1923 – 8 June 2009) was one of the pioneers in the theatre traditions of modern India. Besides being a playwright and theatre director, he was a poet, an

actor, a journalist, screenwriter and literary critic. He is best remembered for incorporating the Chhattisgarhi Nacha folk culture in his theatrical production and initiating a much-needed discussion on the perceived binary concepts of classical traditions and folk traditions of culture. Nacha is a traditional rural farce played in the Chhattisgarh region of India. It is secular in form. It combines song, dance, and drama. In fact, song and dance are vital to the play enacted in the Nacha tradition. Typically, actors divide up the parts, agree on a basic story line, and then improvise their lines. Various forms of Nacha exist in different regions of Chattisgarh. The stories performed in Nacha do not usually borrow from Hindu mythology; typically, they center on rural life and bring in references to real events and social evils. Comedy is integral to a Nacha theatrical performance. Habib Tanvir participated in this debate by practically incorporating elements of both classical Sanskrit theatre and folk theatre in his plays; proving that both are equally important cultural paradigms. Habib rejected European theatrical traditions in favour of a more fluid and dynamic theatrical experience that incorporated elements from Sanskrit classical theatre and the folk theatre. In his later years, he declared that the unity of *rasa* is the only unity one needs. Rasa - meaning nectar or essence- is a concept in Indian art that refers to the aesthetic flavour of any visual, literary or musical performance that evokes an emotion/feeling in the reader or audience. This feeling/emotion is something that cannot be described but is seen as important for the reader/audience to understand and appreciate the essence of the artist's work. This philosophy permeates Tanvir`s plays. Through the inclusion of songs and dance -a trait inherited from Nacha Theatre – his plays engage with the audience and cut across barriers of language and touches the universal human experience of life. This is the reason why his plays remain popular, even though most of them are performed in dialects of Chhattisgarh punctuated with some Hindi here and there, a language that the majority of his predominantly urban audience does not understand.

He infused new life to Indian theatre, combining classical tradition and folk tradition to create something that is uniquely and refreshingly Indian. Throughout his life in theatre, Habib has maintained a symbiotic relationship with the folk artists of Chhattisgarh. His plays provide commentary on socio-politico-cultural issues with humour and tinged with a rural sensibility- in the stories he chose to tell, the language he used and the humour he chooses to employ.

Some of Tanvir`s most important works include *Agra Bazaar* (1953); *Gaon ka Naam Sasural*, *Mor Naam Damad* (1973); *Charandas Chor* (1974*), Shajapur ki Shantibai* (an adaptation of Brecht's The Good Woman of Setzuan) in 1978, among others. *Charandas Chor* went on to win the Fringe First Award in 1982.

For his work in theatre, Habib won several national and international awards during his lifetime. This includes the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1969, the Padma Shri in 1983, Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in 1996, and the Padma Bhushan in 2002. He also served as a member of the Rajya Sabha from 1972 to 1978.

The lesson has been divided into three parts for easy reading and comprehension.

3. SUMMARY

Part I

Habib was born Habib Ahmed Khan, the son of a Pathan father and a Chhattisgarhi mother, in Chhattisgarh in 1923. His father was a religious and traditional man and made sure that the household lived a disciplined life. He emphasized the importance of religion and education to his children and was quite rigid. But his father's strictness did not stop Habib from having some exposure to the colourful world of theatre from an early age through Parsi theatres that predominantly performed Urdu plays. Despite their father's disapproval, his elder brother would perform in amateur Parsi plays held annually; mostly playing female roles. The Parsi theatre tradition had originated in Lucknow, from which it spread to other parts of the country due to its wide printing and circulation. Songs and dance were a major component of these plays. Song and dance were also used to entice potential customers to buy tickets to the plays and the plays were performed at any time depending upon the tickets getting sold, sometimes as late as 11 pm! Tanvir fondly remembers particular details of these Parsi plays: curtains going up revealing the feet of the actors first, the colourful costumes, the dramatic make-up, the stage décor, the opening song- called *vandana* – and the clever use of gunpowder to change scenes and the compulsory comic interludes "which had little, if anything, to do with the main plot of the play." He remembers that, often, the comic interludes outshined the main plot of the play.

Tanvir`s first acting experience was at 11-12 years of age, as Prince Arthur in a piece from Shakespeare's *King John*ō, a cultural revolution was taking place alongside the struggle for India's independence. When in 1945, most members of the PWA and IPTA were arrested for leading a protest procession, Tanvir was handed the responsibility to continue with IPTA. He says, "That's how I became the organiser, the secretary of IPTA, the playwright […] director-actor […] for two years." During this period, he produced plays on critical social issues and performed it in the chawls of Bombay. Exposure to amateur theatre and the progressive and political productions of IPTA and PWA had a strong influence on Tanvir`s development as a playwright. He remembers, "direction was imposed on me- it wasn't my

choice, acting was my choice." He continued to work on plays after IPTA broke up and eventually came to Delhi. He made this choice because he realised that in the "cinema of those days there was no autonomy for the artist- you could not act the way that you wanted." Realising that in films artistic freedom was sacrificed to appease the whims and fancy of producers; Tanvir took a life altering decision to pursue theatre: "for what I had to say, in aesthetics, in the performing arts, as well as what I had to say socially, politically- the medium was not the cinema, it was the theatre."

Self-Check Questions

1. Discuss theatre's influence on Tanvir`s early life.
2. What role does language play in the politics of culture?
3. Did Habib Tanvir always want to be a director? Discuss.

Part II

Habib Tanvir arrived at Delhi in the 1950s to pursue theatre as his creative medium. Initially, he worked for Elizabeth Gauba's school as a writer of children's plays. *Agra Bazaar* was conceived when an old friend approached him to write a feature to celebrate Nazir Diwas in honour of Nazir Akbarabadi, a18th century Urdu poet. Nazir, Tanvir found in his research for the feature, was not considered a poet by his contemporaries because he wrote in the everyday language of the common people. Tanvir says of Nazir's poetry, "It's fantastic, beautiful language, but they didn't like it." Nazir was spurned by critics, relegated to just a page or two by the modern scholars of Urdu literature and most of his work was never published. But he was accessible to the masses and through him poetry was made accessible to the masses; he wrote poems for the common men on themes of everyday life. To Tanvir, this made him a true poet. Because there was not much material on Nazir, Tanvir decided that the play *Agra Bazaar* will be a play on Nazir without Nazir in it. Tanvir reasoned, "[…] there wasn't very much known about his life […] but his poetry pervades the country, so let it permeate the stage." This play also saw the birth of Tanvir's personal approach to theatre, its language and subject matter.

It is with *Agra Bazaar* that Tanvir developed his distinct style of producing a play: he incorporated non-actors in his play and established a preference for the dialects in favour of chaste Urdu or Hindi. He recognises *Agra Bazaar* as the point where his signature style was cemented. The shift from the elitist languages of Hindi and Urdu to colloquial language of the

common people was also rooted in his political commitment to questioning the hegemony of cultures and languages.

Asked if Tanvir prefers comedy to tragedy, he explains that he is equally attracted to both comic and tragic plays, "but [his] folk actors have a predilection for comedy, though they acquit themselves with serious plays as well. But by and large, they have this natural gift for comedy." Tanvir Tanvir has a remarkable ability to adapt to his environment, his actors and his audience without compromising his creativity and his individuality as an artist. Playwrights like Moliere and Shakespeare used the poignancy inherently contained in comic moments effectively in their plays. Tanvir remarks, "A clown is an instrument for making people laugh, but at the same time there's something tragic about the clown." For Tanvir, this is true for tragedies in real life too. He adds that when he is not writing a comedy, he incorporates the comic for relief and to add more nuanced emotions to a scene and the play as a whole. The folk actors in Naya Theatre "have an extraordinary predilection for the comic and the ironic, and they do it marvellously. They're great improvisers and they know me by now, I know them by now, and on the mere hint they can come up and improvise in a very articulate and graphic manner." It is clear that Tanvir's evolution as a playwright has been deeply impacted by the folk actors in his Naya Theatre.

After the success of *Agra Bazaar*, Tanvir went to London on a scholarship because he believed that there was nothing new that theatres in India could teach him. So, he joined RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) in London for a two year course. But Tanvir was fed up with the rigidity of the course in a year. He observed that there was a fundamental difference in the concept of movement in Western Theatre and Indian Theatre: "I discovered that language is connected with speech, which is connected with movement and therefore, quite simply, a change of language makes a change of movement and character and cultural ethos." Seeing that the course they taught had no benefit for him, after some hassling with the academy and the Indian Embassy, he left RADA to study theatre in the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Here, he learnt about mask-making, stagecraft, writing and production; technicalities that helps playwrights without forcing a certain style on them. One of the biggest influences on him was a professor called Duncan Ross who taught Tanvir that "production is telling a story […] Telling the story is all the game in production. If it falters, it means the production is faulty, you've failed to tell the story".

Before he left for London Tanvir had founded Hindustani Theatre, one of India's first semi-professional theatre post-independence, with Qudsia Zaidi in Delhi. Qudsia Zaidi promised him that she will have a fund and translated adaptations of twelve plays ready for him to produce when he returns from London - 3 Sanskrit plays, some Brechts, some Ibsens

and a few others. However, after his two years were over, Tanvir took one more year to travel through Europe. He had a few adventures as he travelled across almost all the countries of Europe: grape picking in France; exchanging a Chhattisgarhi folk song for an Algerian one with an Algerian man which he later incorporated into his adaptation of Moliere's *The Bourgeois Gentleman*; performing Indian songs in the nightclubs of Budapest to earn money; and imbibing the different cultures and art that Europe had to offer. Tanvir`s main objective was to go meet Bertolt Brecht in Berlin but unfortunately, Brecht had died a few weeks before he arrived there. However, he was able to watch some of Brecht's most prominent plays performed by Brecht's original theatre group. Brecht was a major influence on Tanvir throughout his career as a playwright- from adopting Brecht's style of minimalist stage decor to his philosophy of making art accessible to the common people. Although Tanvir was offered the position of a director in Poland, he refused it as he had made up his mind to go back to India because his travels had made him realise that "culturally [he] belonged to India." He says, "If you're dealing with words and cultures, you belong where you come from, because that's where you'll be your most creative." Ironically, Tanvir`s European experience led him back to India and to Chhattisgarh.

Because he had not returned to India in two years as planned, upon his return he discovered that Qudsia Zaidi had given his position as the director of Hindustani Theatre to another director by the name of Moneeka Mishra. But on his return, he was reinstated as the director once again. Though this decision caused some problem between Tanvir and Mishra, they ended up developing a friendship that soon turned into love. On his return to Delhi, the first play he produced as director of Hindustani Theatre was *Mitti ki Gadi* (*Mrichchakatika* in Sanskrit). He struggled to adapt the play to the stage and in the process learnt another important lesson in production. Tanvir soon realised that the conflict existed between the Sanskrit theatrical form in which the play was written and his attempt to adapt it according to European theatrical traditions. He was able to finally overcome and resolve the issue by opting for a minimal setting as opposed to all the elaborate description in the script and adopting elements from Indian folk theatre. Incidentally, at about the same time, he went back to Chhattisgarh to visit his family and attended some Nacha theatre being performed in his town. So, he picked his first batch of folk actors- Madan Lal, Thakur Ram, Babu Das, Bulwa Ram, Jagmohan and Lalu Ram- who later became permanent members of his own theatre group. They were part of Tanvir`s production of *Mitti ki Gadi*. The production was attacked by Sanskrit scholars who accused Tanvir of reducing the play to *lokhdharm* (folk style) when it belonged to *natyadharm* (classical style). Ultimately, Tanvir had the last laugh when, "the same pundits, in the 1970s, when I sat with them in seminars, and I talked about

the curtains, paid attention to it. Then I talked about the *rasa* theory being the only unity which governs the Sanskrit classics- they paid attention to it; they repeat it now."

Due to differences, Tanvir was fired from the Hindustani Theatre by Begum Zaidi. So, he joined hands with Moneeka Mishra and started Naya Theatre with nine members in 1959. For almost a year they struggled to keep it alive, during which time Tanvir worked for other theatre groups and as a freelance journalist. Amidst this, Tanvir and Moneeka got married. After a few years of struggle, Tanvir`s luck started to change when in 1970 he was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi award and was asked to revive *Agra Bazaar*. For this, he again used Chhattisgarhi folk actors and incorporated some Chhattisgarhi folk tunes in the play. The play was a spectacular success and ran for almost two years. However, Tanvir was still struggling to make ends meet, with a daughter – Nagin Tanvir- to feed now as well. In 1972, during a rough phase in his life, he was nominated to the Rajya Sabha as an MP by the congress government. He accepted the position and the financial stability that this positioned brought him helped in sustaining Naya Theatre as a professional theatre group.

Self-Check Questions

1. How did Agra Bazaar impact Tanvir`s career as a playwright?
2. Write a short note on Tanvir`s understanding of language and movement and its effect on theatre.
3. Comment on Tanvir`s stand on the politics of culture. How did his plays participate in this debate?

Part III

By 1973, Tanvir worked almost exclusively with Chhattisgarhi folk actors in all his productions. Tanvir had to overcome a lot to continue working with them. The folk actors were unreliable and had no concept of plagiarism. Some of these folk actors formed their own Nacha group and performed Tanvir`s work as their own production. Initially Tanvir was hurt and wanted to sue them in court over copy right issues. But Haider Ali Vakil, a friend of his, advised him to go to the Panchayat instead and confront them directly; reminding Tanvir that he is not just a playwright but a social activist working for these folk artists and taking them to court would go against it. Tanvir was able to successfully resolve the issue in the Panchayat, reasoning with the rural folk artists in a way that they would understand. His stance as an activist playwright who worked on rural issues using folk art forms and folk artists made him realise that his plays should be easily accessible for the folk. He never again

had trouble with other Nacha groups performing his plays if they rightfully credited him as the playwright.

Over the years, Tanvir was able to retain his core group of Chhattisgarhi folk artists for decades without the theatre company or the plays going stale when most theatres dissolve after a few years. Initially Tanvir had trouble directing these folk actors, but he eventually realised that the problem was not with them but his approach itself. He was trying to make them perform movements unnatural to them and in a language- Hindi/Urdu- that they were not comfortable with. So, Tanvir let them retain their own movements and their own mother tongue during performance, even encouraging them to improvise their lines and expressions. From 1970-73, Tanvir experimented with Chhattisgarhi folk plays – mostly comedies- and some stories from the Mahabharata, incorporating song and dance from temple rituals. By now, the language barrier was no longer an issue even in Delhi. Tanvir had realised that though the plays might be based on scripts, but the experiences of the actors were not. They felt the power of the performance which in turn affected the audience. This aspect of performance was important to Tanvir`s understanding of theatre and the *Rasa* Theory.

Tanvir`s next big success was *Gaon ka Naam Sasural, Mor Naam Damad* (1973). This play was a result of a month-long workshop in Raipur in 1973 for Nacha groups, academics, and administrators. This was where he found his best actress, Fida Bai, during an audition. The play *Gaon ka Naam Sasural, Mor Naam Damad* is based on some anecdotes he heard during this time, and he had written three different skits that were ultimately combined to arrive at the final play. He initially produced the play in the villages of Chhattisgarh, gauging people's reaction to it and improving it, before he produced it in Delhi. This helped him to perfect his script. At Delhi, it was an instant hit despite the language barrier.

In 1974, Tanvir produced *Charandas Chor*. This was a turning point in his career. He had successfully introduced Chhattisgarhi as a language for a modern play with only folk artists in his theatre company. *Charandas Chor* was based on a Rajasthani oral folklore he had heard from villagers during his workshop, but he later found a written version of it in Vijay Detha's story collection. In 1982, the play was performed at the International Drama Festival in Edinburgh and was awarded the Fringe First award despite the language barrier, in front of an audience that was predominantly white. When asked by a journalist why Tanvir thinks he won despite the fact that most of the audience did not understand the dialogues in play, Tanvir replied;

"I found the actors so full of abandon, so totally lacking in any kind of inhibition in front of a white audience, they were totally confident that they were speaking a human tongue to a

human audience who could understand it. They made no difference between this audience and the village audience back home. And there was no difference between their performance in the village where their language is spoken and the one here. And that confidence, that self-assurance and lack of self-consciousness, that enjoyment they themselves get, was almost contagious-that's what got you."

By now, Tanvir had learnt the importance of using the "language of the body through improvisation … and [his] vocabulary of the visual language of the Chhattisgarhi players had increased." Tanvir always used minimalist stage decor so that it would not hinder the flow of the performance. This also helped his actors to adapt to the different spaces wherever they performed.

Bahadur Kalarin, another famous play by Tanvir is a tragic story of incest based on a Chhattisgarhi folklore. The plays Tanvir adapted to the stage were thematically wide-ranging. Most importantly, the plays dealt with themes relevant to the present times. Over the years, he has written plays that engage directly with urgent social issues like casteism, corruption, gender issues and plays that spread awareness about important issues like birth control, development, etc. Tanvir also wrote social satires by carefully researching these issues and interviewing villagers, the administration, assessing the situation and doing intensive research to make sure that he passed on the right information through his plays without making the play feel didactic or moralising.

Self-Check Questions

1. Write a short note on Tanvir's evolution as a playwright.
2. "It must flow." How do you understand this in the context of Tanvir Tanvir's works.
3. Write a short note on Tanvir`s politics as a playwright.
4. Write a short note on Tanvir`s method of writing plays.

4. ANALYSIS

Early exposure to theatre and his interest in it revealed an early predilection for theatre in the young Tanvir. He participated in theatrical production throughout his college years and when he arrived at Bombay, his desire to join the films kept his interest in theatre alive. As a member of IPTA and PWA, Tanvir worked with socio-political themes in the plays he was

part of and the plays he wrote. There, he began to appreciate the creativity and richness of the colloquial language of the working class and rural population. He cites the example of the air-conditioned train compartment as example. While the Hindi/Urdu word for air condition is difficult for everyday use, the coolies of Bombay simply called it *thandi gadi*, easy to remember and pronounce without losing the essence of the term. Very early on in his career, Tanvir learnt to appreciate the distinct characteristic of dialects and the ease with which they accommodate new words into their vocabulary: "Language is constantly getting coined by people who use it, who need it, who make their living by it." Tanvir saw "high culture" and "low culture" not as binaries and completely separate from each other but as a fluid space for culture to develop. This is evident in his own approach to theatre. He saw great potential in the strength of folk theatre.

He was sensitive to socio-political issues and the hegemonic tendencies of culture, and this is also the reason he choose theatre over films as it gave him the freedom to explore socio-political issues. Almost all of his plays have something to teach, a social message to give. The gradual shift from elitist languages of Hindi and Urdu to regional languages as his career progressed is also rooted in his political commitment to the folk culture that inspired his art. Tanvir recognised the musical potential in the everyday language of the people. He subverted the elitist discourse of language by placing dialects on the same platform as Hindi and Urdu. Through his plays about common people, in their everyday language, Tanvir challenged the gatekeepers of "culture". The everyday concerns and struggles of the common people, performed in their language and style of expression, held as much potential to be considered art as that of the elites. He asks, "I found that people in the rural areas knew their epics, crops and harvesting, properties of the soil, clothes and cuisine. If all this does not mean they are cultured then what else?"

In *Agra Bazaar*, Tanvir portrayed the perceived dichotomy of high culture and low culture on stage by dividing the stage into two spaces where two very distinct crowds gathered: the kite-seller's shop and the bookseller's shop. He showed how the power of Nazir's poetry, sung in the most ordinary language, dissolves this divide. Throughout his expansive career in theatre, Tanvir experimented with all kinds of theatrical forms: comedy, tragedy, tragi-comedy, epics, social satires, etc. Because folk theatre gravitates more towards comedy, Tanvir leaned more towards comedy. To him, comedy is not merely to get a good laugh out of the audience but it serves as a social commentary, a relief from the tragedy of life. About comic element in his plays, he said, "As a director, you try to give it another dimension, a fuller form, closer to life, closer to reality, richer in its texture, appeal, plausibility and communicability to the audience."

In London, Tanvir realised the interconnectedness of language and movement and the distinct difference between Indian and European theatrical movements. One important lesson he learnt during his study was that the play must flow. Nothing- dress, lighting, décor- must come in the way of the production. Another impactful event was Tanvir`s introduction to Bertolt Brecht's plays in London. Brecht's style of theatre made a big impression on his approach to theatre. The emphasis on minimalist set designs, plays with socio-political message and Brecht's championing of the working class and use of folk elements had a big influence on Tanvir`s own style of theatre. But most importantly, Tanvir was influenced by Brecht's alienation effect and his understanding that theatre's purpose is to disturb or unsettle the audience. This influence is reflected in Tanvir`s approach to theatre, in his thematic concerns, his politics of language and his understanding of art's purpose. Tanvir treats these serious issues with humour. Even his tragedies contain moments of pure joy and comedy. A critic has rightfully stated that, "Tanvir has fashioned a popular, utopic rather than revolutionary modern theatre from elements of rural dramatic traditions." Tanvir tackled complex socio-political and cultural issues with humour and a tongue in cheek manner.

During his attempt to adapt the classic Sanskrit play *Mitti ki Gadi,* Tanvir had realised that the difficulty in producing this elaborate play lay in his approach. Instead of trying to fit the play to Aristotle's theory of three unities of space, time and place; Tanvir used the fluidity present in Indian folk theatre. Ironically, the classical Sanskrit plays could be adapted on the stage only using elements from folk theatre. Only then did it uphold the inner harmony or *rasa*. To Tanvir, *rasa* was the most important aspect for the success of a play. Since Tanvir`s interpretation and adaptation of classic Sanskrit plays went against the traditional one, he initially drew the ire of Sanskrit scholars. His use of Chhattisgarhi actors and elements of Nacha theatre in *Mitti ki Gadi* was seen as highly unconventional.

He used Chhattisgarhi dialects unapologetically for most of his original theatrical productions and incorporated traits of Nacha theatre in his plays. Through his plays and the way he produced them and the language in his plays were performed, he challenged the idea of high culture/low culture. He consciously departs from the rigidity of definitions, established ideas and concepts of classical art/folk art. This was initially critiqued by purists, but Tanvir maintains that "the blend is harmonious despite what the purists might say about 'sudhata' alone creating harmony, and blending and mixing producing disharmony." Another person who agrees with Tanvir is Jyotinindra Moitra, who asserts that "you can have harmony with a blend of this kind because our experience and our ears told us that if our ears are pleased and we trust our own aesthetics, well then fine, we can trust the *darshak* to receive it." Tanvir believed that between the audience and the experts, the audience is always

right, dismantling the gatekeeping mentality of cultural elites. Tanvir adapted and produced a few classical Sanskrit plays, putting them in the modern context and engaging with relevant themes, in order to break the long established and seemingly impenetrable barrier created between high culture and low culture. Through his plays he asserts that the two are, despite distinct cultural practices with their own history, not necessarily opposites but part of a spectrum. He claims that historically there has always been a flow and sharing of ideas between the two. In fact, Tanvir believes that all classics borrowed from folklore- "Tulsidas, Mirabai, Kabir- all derived such strength from the people's dialects". However, Tanvir is also aware that folk traditions have their limitations. The *nacha t*radition is limited and static in its scope and theme(s). This is where he knows how someone like him can inject new life into it- by incorporating themes that are relevant to the modern world without losing the folk sensibility. The relationship between him and the folk is a symbiotic one. This is evident in the way most of his original theatrical productions have been conceived, the inspiration behind them and the medium of performance.

Tanvir`s approach to creating art was a democratic one. In his Naya Theatre, there are no stars, everybody is equal and everybody contributes from the conception of an idea to its final production. Tanvir created something new from something that already existed but was never given serious thought about. Folk song and dance are vital to Tanvir`s art and he uses Nacha to tell a story; they are not there merely as ornaments. Tanvir`s theatre is an unapologetic celebration of folk life. He was highly influenced by Bertolt Brecht's plays and his theatrical aesthetics. Like him, Tanvir rejected elitism in art in favour of one that is accessible to the masses. He broke the barriers of religion, language, high/low culture with his works and created a niche space for folk theatre.

Among his influences, Tanvir counted a diverse range of playwrights from Shakespeare to Brecht to ancient Sanskrit playwrights like Sudrak, Bhasa, et al. Although he dedicated his life to working with illiterate folk artists from the villages of Chattisgarh, Tanvir brought his modern sensibility and democratic spirit with him. He borrowed indiscriminately from everything that influenced him and appropriated it to a rural setting and sensibility. His theatre did not exclude the marginalised, rather it included and empowered them and made them part of a larger cultural discourse. The critic S. Despande observed that, "His touch is Midas's-reversed: whatever he touches loses its sheen, becomes rough, and turns to Chattisgarhi." He does not lose sight of what is important to communicate through his theatre: the celebration of folk life in all its rustic glory. The celebration of this fluidity and freedom is also his politics.

Self-Check Questions

1. Write a short note on Habib Tanvir's impact on modern Indian theatre.
2. What was Tanvir`s stand on the idea of high culture/low culture?
3. Write a short note on Tanvir`s contribution to folk theatre with reference to Nacha theatre.

UNIT-III (12)

CLASS

GARY DAY

Renu Koyu

STRUCTURE

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In the introduction to Gary Day's book *Class*, published in 2001, he discusses the development and evolution of the understanding of the term "class" from the late medieval period to the modern period. This study material aims to provide a comprehensive summary of the introductory chapter and help students understand:

- The evolving definition and understanding of the term "class" through history
- How Christianity and Capitalism influenced the creation and understanding of new social divisions
- The intimate connection between class and literature

2. COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The Origins

Gary Davis is a British academic and lecturer in English Literature at De Montfort University, Leicester, England. He is the writer of *Re-reading Leavis: Culture and Literary Criticism* (1996); *Class* (2001); *Literary Criticism: A New History* (2008); *The Eighteenth-Century Literature Handbook* (2009); *Modernist Literature: 1890-1950* (2010); and *The Story of Drama: Tragedy, Comedy and Sacrifice from the Greeks to the Present* (2016). Before starting, a reminder that Day has written this text in the historical context of England. However, it does help in our understanding of class in general.

Day acknowledges the fact that 'class' has multiple definitions across a range of disciplines like sociology, politics, cultural studies and 'literary criticism'. Though there are multiple understandings of 'class', Day states that "in very broad terms, the word 'class' refers to divisions in society." (Day 2001:2) He traces the origin of the term 'class' to the Latin word *clasis* (plural *classes*). One of the meanings of *clasis* was the division of the Roman people according to their estates and age. This system of division was invented by Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, in order to bring some stability to Roman society. His division resulted in the creation of two major groups: the patricians (or aristocrats) and the plebians (or common people). Roman laws were biased towards the patricians, and this created animosity between the two groups. Consequently, the laws were codified, and tribunes created in order to avoid its misuse. This led to a clear division of Roman society into four layers or *ordos*: nobles, other citizens, free man and slaves. In the English language, the word 'order' is equivalent to the Roman *ordo,* which translates as 'rank' as in rank of the armed forces. Thus, social status was expressed through words like 'rank' and 'order' till Marx came up with a new conception of class in the nineteenth century.

When Emperor Augustine of Rome converted to Christianity in 338 AD, he brought a new element to the understanding of social division in addition to 'rank' and 'order'. Known as the first Christian Emperor, he located the origin of social differentiation in the biblical fall of man- that is, the moment when humans were thrown out of the Garden of Eden. He claimed that this led to the division of mankind into "masters and servant" which gave legitimacy to the institution of private property, its consequent inequalities, and the necessity of laws to create a truly harmonious society. To understand the significant way in which St. Augustine's interpretation of division among men changed the already existing hierarchy in society, Day quotes Calvert:

"Society was no longer stratified horizontally between master and servant but vertically between ecclesiastic and layman." (Calvert 1982:44 in Day 2001:4)

This model supported the already existent estate model of society since the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment: the nobles, the clergy and the common people. In the Christian understanding of class, the society was compared to a body with each of its part vital for the proper functioning of the entire body, sanctioned by divine law.

As the system of social divisions evolved over time, the words associated with them also evolved. 'Rank' and 'station' were words used to give a more nuanced understanding of sub-divisions within these three divisions. Rank was used mostly by the nobility whereas station was used to designate a person's place in society. Station referred to a person's employment as well as their specified location. While class referred to a group, station referred to an individual identity. Day clarifies that 'order' was the more commonly used word for social divisions. This implied that "any other form of social organisation was a species of 'disorder'." (Day 2001:5)

Interestingly, though Christianity espoused social division, it also held a more egalitarian (equal) view of human relations. The Gospels preached that all men are equal before God. Day points out that though this proclamation over-rode social and racial distinctions, but distinctions based on gender remained. Another interesting observation is the correlation between the spread of Christianity and the growth of capitalism. In the seventeenth century, the Puritan Richard Baxton stressed on Christianity's abhorrence of idleness and therefore, the necessity for hard work in Christian society. This propagated the belief that the division of society into rich and poor was ordained by God. Thus, the idea that God rewarded hard work through material wealth in this world and a place in heaven in afterlife started taking root.

The word 'class' eventually entered the English language in the 17th century. There are two possible explanations for it. Firstly, as the act of classification became increasingly important to the natural sciences in the 17th century, an effort to classify human society in order to understand the social order was seriously undertaken. But such an approach set a dangerous precedent as 'class' made social division seem like a law of nature rather than an accident of history. Secondly, the growth of Capitalism in the 17th century led to the entry of the word 'class' into the English vocabulary. Day explains:

"The appearance of the word 'class', in other words, is linked to fundamental changes in the economy and to their effect on social relations. In brief, the older vocabulary of 'order' and

'station' projected an essentially harmonious view of society whereas the new idiom of class was an expression of social conflict." (Day 2001:6)

Self-Check Questions-1

1. Trace the historical basis of the term 'class'.
2. Write a short note on how the Christian interpretation of social division impacted English society?
3. How did Capitalism change the social organisation of English society?

2.2 Marx's Concept of Class

In the nineteenth century, at the peak of the English Industrial Revolution, Karl Marx defined the term 'class' in economic terms in a bid to locate the social conflict in English society. He recognised two distinct class: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie referred to the class that owned the means of production. The proletariat owned nothing but their labour power. The means of production encompassed resources like land, factories and machinery necessary to produce goods for selling and the money to invest in new equipment. On the other hand, labour power was the skills or physical strength of the workers to undertake specific tasks. In order to survive, the proletariats could offer nothing but their labour force. The nature of exchange between the two classes, based on exploitation of labour, led to antagonism or social conflict.

According to Marx, the social conflict between the two classes was because their interests were fundamentally opposed to each other. For the bourgeoisie, profit outweighs any other consideration. So, they pay the lowest possible price to the workers but in return expect the highest level of productivity.

Marx used the term 'social relations of production' to describe ownership and non-ownership of the means of production. The sum of the social relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society. Thus, the nature of the economy determines a particular society's politics, laws, culture and education.

To understand how much precedence Marx put on the economic basis of 'class', you only need to consider his understanding of the historical relevance of class: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles." (Marx and Engels 1848 & 1968:

35) The antagonism between the classes, based on their different relations to production, makes them conscious of themselves as classes and this leads to conflict and therefore change. (Day 2001:7)

Marx's contribution to the understanding of class remains one of the most significant attempts at understanding modern post-industrial human society and continues to exert influence even today; an entire discipline of study called Marxist Studies and a school of thought called Marxism holds relevance till today. But it is also true that Marx's division of class is ambiguous and so is his use of the term itself. In some cases, he has alluded to two classes and in others he has alluded to three classes. His use of the term 'class' as a synonym for a faction or group without any specific reference to its position in the mode of production is also confusing. Nonetheless, Marx's theory propelled a new and more dynamic understanding of the post-industrial English society.

Self-Check Questions-2

1. Write a short note on Marx's concept of class.
2. Write short notes on social relations of production.
3. Why are the two classes identified by Marx antagonist to each other? Explain with reference to the above passage.

2.3 Class and Status

For Marx's analyses of 'class', the transition from feudalism to capitalism was important. The reason for this, Day informs us, is because of change in the conception of the social order captured by the appearance of the word 'class' which formed a dynamic contrast to the more static 'order' or 'station' derived from the Latin *stare*, which means to stand. This did not, however, mean that 'class' entirely replaced the use of the word 'status'. In fact, the new and old views of the hierarchical nature of society co-existed side by side. They continue to be used in slightly different ways even today.

Naturally, with the introduction of new terms, confusion arose. Raymond Williams, in the 1980s, tried to clarify some of the confusion by stating that while *bourgeoisie* and *proletariat* describe a relation to production; *middle class* and *working class* is associated more with the old hierarchical relationships in society. This does not mean that middle class and working

class are excluded from the definition based on production. In fact, Williams claims that middle class was 'a self-conscious interposition between persons of rank and the common people' and is therefore more appropriate to a hierarchical view of society (Williams 1988: 64 as cited in Day 2001:8). By contrast, he argues that *working class* signifies a relationship to production and is therefore more applicable to a class view of society. However, this distinction is not as clear as it first seems, for both the middle class and the working class saw themselves as the productive groups in society compared to the 'idle' and unproductive aristocracy. The classes themselves saw internal divisions. The middle-class divided itself into upper and lower sections whereas the working class divided itself in to skilled, semi-skilled and labouring sections. Thus, the intra-class relationship was based on status considerations while the inter-class relationships was based on an opposition of economic interests: "In short, the internal relations of class existed in some tension with their external ones: the consciousness of belonging to a status group, we might say, inhibited the development of class consciousness." (Day 2001:9)

Though status and class are closely related, a historical analysis leads to the conclusion that 'status' refers to social groupings whereas 'class' refers to economic groupings.

Max Weber, the German sociologist's concept of class and status is a significant departure from Marx's but he did acknowledge that 'property and lack of property are the basic categories of all class situations' and 'class situation is ultimately market situation'. (Weber 1948 & 1993: 182 as cited in Day 2001:10) On the other hand, Weber understood status to be honour or prestige. So, a person can have high status and yet be poor. According to him, society has two groups: 'class' groups and 'status' groups:

"Status groups share the same values and style of life and their strong sense of group membership ensures that contact with other groups is kept to a minimum. Traditionally the identity of status groups was expressed through 'the privilege of wearing special costumes, [or] of eating special dishes taboo to others'." (ibid.: 11)

Naturally, the sense of group identity is more in status groups because people of same status group share a common 'style of life' or common 'mode of life'. And since mode of living can be seen as a cultural identity, status and culture are often seen as synonymous, but there are differences between the two.

Self-Check Questions-3

1. Write a short note on 'class' and 'status'. Can they be used interchangeably? Give reasons for your answer.
2. How is Max Weber's understanding of 'class' different from Karl Marx's understanding of the term.

2.4 Surplus Value, Labour, and Commodity

The term 'exchange' is short for the exchange relation which, along with production, is the 'foundation [on which] the bourgeoisie built itself up' (Marx and Engels 1848 & 1968: 40).

Day traces the emergence of class from the fourteenth century onwards. England was still a feudal society then. But traders (representative of bourgeoisie in that period) grew richer and more powerful than the feudal lords from trade and commerce, shifting the economy from a land-based system to a money-based system. According to Marx, the exchange relation is the process by which commodities are exchanged for money. Money serves as a common medium of exchange. According to Day:

"[Money] does so by representing commodities not as they are but by what they have in common, and what they have in common is the human labour that produced them. The difference in price between commodities expresses the different amounts of labour used to produce them. In order for money to represent what commodities have in common, it must ignore what is individual about them…It is simply a measure of the amount of labour time necessary to produce these different items. Money does not differentiate between different kinds of labour but views the variety of physical or mental work purely in terms of time. It is therefore an abstract system of representation dealing in quantities not qualities." (Day 2001:12)

In a capitalist mode of production, the labour adds value to a product over and above the value of the inputs by adding his labour. The value of this product, that is realised after selling the product, exceeds the cost of inputs and the cost paid for the labour. This excess value becomes the profit for the bourgeoisie and is not shared by the labour. Marx called this 'surplus value'. To achieve this surplus value, the capitalist pays the worker only for the labour that he puts in and not the value he creates. The surplus value then is the difference between the value that the worker creates and the cost of labour that went into creating the

value. To put it crudely, let's say that a worker spends 8 hours to produce a bucket and he gets paid 100 rupees for his labour. The input costs work out to 100 rupees. The bucket is then sold for 400 rupees in the market by the owner of the factory. Thus, the surplus value that the worker creates is 200 rupees and this surplus is the profit of the owner. This is how workers are exploited in a capitalist system and it is a common feature of this system. It is possible to give a history of class in terms of exploitation and this is what Marx had in mind when he wrote that '[t]he history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles' (Marx and Engels 1848 & 1968: 35). Even though the concept of class entered the English vocabulary in the seventeenth century, the exploitation of one group by another group is not something new. Human history is, as Marx observers, the history of class struggles. But because the groups were not collectively identified under one group, they never developed a consciousness of themselves as a class or their exploitation as exploitation of one class by another.

Day states, "There are, in other words, other factors to be taken into account when discussing class apart from exploitation, though that is its defining feature. The link between exploitation and exchange is that each is market-based: both labour power and the commodity are sold for money." (Day 2001:14)

Self-Check Questions-4

1. Write a short note on "surplus value" and its relation to labour exploitation in a capitalist society.
2. Explain the concept of money and its relation to commodity.

2.5 Literature and Exchange

After a thorough examination of the historical development of class and the concept of exchange, Day tries to understand the position of literature in relation to exchange in a capitalist setup. He does this by understanding the nature of the exchange of the two terms we have discussed in the previous sections, i.e., in relation to class and status.

Day reminds us that while both the exchange relation and literature are forms of representation where money represents commodities and literature 'reality'; they do not represent their respective objects in the same way. Money is an abstract concept as it "…pays no attention to the unique qualities of the commodity, only to what it has in common with

other commodities". (Day 2001:14) Whereas the many definitions and evolving understanding of literature's function in society has changed through the ages but unlike money, it is anything but abstract.

In order to understand the dynamism of the nature of 'literature', Day examines it in its historical context. 'Literature' is derived from the Latin word *littera* meaning letter. In early English, it was spelt 'litterature' and in meaning it meant someone who knew how to read. That is, the word was used in the way the word 'literacy' is used today. The meaning associated with it evolved over centuries and by the late eighteenth century, the term had come to mean the ability to discern qualities of artistic excellence, while in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it denoted creative or imaginative works, the 'best' of which constituted a tradition embodying the various aspects of 'British' identity. Many factors contributed to the changing definition of literature over the centuries. Day focuses on literature's relation to exchange and links it to the rise of the bourgeoisie. However, this does not mean that literature is only an expression of bourgeoisie values: "both literature and exchange are forms of representation, ways of structuring and imagining the world, whose relationship is sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory." (Day 2001:15)

Another prevalent idea attached to literature is its exclusivity. F. R. Leavis claimed that only an elite minority could judge true literary worth of any literature. Day clarifies that this perception of literature is aligned to seeing literature in terms of status whereas the perception of literature in relation to exchange/economy is in terms of class.

Day traces the relation of exchange and literature from the fourteenth century onwards when English became increasingly used as the preferred medium of writing in England. Another significant development around the same time was the increasingly important role money played in the feudal economy. This shows that development of 'literature' and the capitalist economy was happening simultaneously. Throughout history, literature played a significant role in the development of the capitalist economy: "'Literature' will be shown to be both the ally and the enemy of exchange." (Day 2001: 15) Sometimes, literature showed characteristics of the exchange relation while at other times, it acted in contradiction to it. "The second will be that, in the absence of a theory of economics, 'literature' itself becomes a means of imagining, negotiating and even institutionalising the mechanism of exchange." (Day 2001: 15)

Self-Check Questions-5

1. Write a short note on literature's evolving understanding in society.
2. What is the relation between literature and exchange in a capitalist set-up.

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Department of Distance and Continuing Education
University of Delhi