Bachelor of Arts

UGEN-101

Reading Poetry

Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon
Open University

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BLOCK

1

BRITISH AND INDIAN POETRY

UGEN-101

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

BLOCK-1 Consists of 3 Units

Unit-1 discusses Thomas Gray, a poet of the Second half of the 18th century. He marks the transition in English poetry from Neo-Classicism of the early 18th century to Romanticism of the early 19th century. We have included for your study Gray's " *Elegy Written in a Country churchyard",* one of the most popular elegy in English Literature.

Unit-2 discusses Robert Browning an important literary figure of Victorian English Literature. He was the Poet in the Victorian Age who was highly regarded in his time. We shall analyse Browning's optimistic poem *"Prospice"*. This poem reflects the poet's philosophy of life .

Unit-3 discusses Sarojini Naidu the most distinguished poetess , occupies a prominent place in history of Indo – Anglian Poetry. We shall analysa Naidu's lyrical poem *"The Flute Player of Brindavan"*.

UNIT-1 THOMAS GRAY : 'ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD'

Structure

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss the 18th century poet Thomas Gray with special focus on his most famous poem *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* a poem of transitional period, and then identify both the strains of Romanticism and Classicism in it. In the course of your study of Thomas Gray's *Elegy* you will notice that it is an elegy in the sense that it mourns the death not of great or famous people, but of common men, particularly the poor. Gray evokes the cycle of the natural world and meditates on the inevitability of death for all, including himself. We shall also discuss the features of landscape poetry which emphasize death, graveyard and gloom.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall introduce you to Thomas Gray and his well-known poem *Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard*. Gray wrote this

poem towards the second half of the 18th century. At the end of your study of this unit, you will be able to:

(i) Discuss the life and career of Thomas Gray.

(ii) Identify the strains of Classicism and Romanticism in Gray's *Elegy*.

(iii) Analyze the poem soundly.

(iv) Trace the poetic devices and techniques applied in the formation of the poem.

1.2 THOMAS GRAY : LIFE AND WORKS

Thomas Gray was one the most important poets of the eighteenth century. He was born on December 26, 1776 in Cornhill, London. He was the fifth of twelve children to his parents; all the others had died in infancy. He was son of Philip Gray, a scrivener and stock exchange broker who treated his wife with extreme cruelty. His mother Dorothy was a woman of affectionate temperament and she was running a business of millinery with the partnership of her sister. Gray' father refused to educate the lad, and the expense of Gray's education was borne by his mother. In 1727 or thereabouts, he was sent to Eton College, where he formed friendship with Horace Walpole, Richard West and Thomas Ashton. In December 1743 he took the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law (LLB) at Cambridge, but never practised.

Gray had shown brilliance from the very beginning of his education and had earned many scholarships. The scholarships and some financial assistance from his mother enabled Gray to complete his education in a very honourable way. Perhaps Gray was the most learned man of his time in Europe. He was equally acquainted with elegant and profound parts of science, and not superficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil, and had read all the original historians of England, France and Italy. Criticism, metaphysics morals and politics formed the principal part of his plan of study; voyages and travels of all sorts were his favorite amusement, and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architectures. He was also a good man, a well-bred man, a man of virtue and humility.

At the age of 23, Thomas Gray had toured continent along with his friend Horace Walpole. Although his trip was largely financed by Walpole, proved futile for some not very well known reasons. After his return from the journey of Europe, Gray undertook the assignment of a master at Peter house in Cambridge. After working in this job for two and a half decades, Gray joined Cambridge as professor of history and became a popular teacher.

Gray was separated from his mother at the age of eight, and this separation had an effect on the mind and temperament of the poet. By

nature Gray was a shy man and generally he would avoid unnecessary meetings with those who were not very well acquainted with him.

Gray's bosom friend Richard West died in 1742, when the farmer was very young. Gray shocked very much, but the hard luck was to prick one more thorn in the heart of the poet, Philip Gray, the father of Thomas Gray had abandoned the family when the financial position of the family was very poor. These two events had developed melancholic temperament in him. Gray like quite a few english poet did not live long and died on 30th July 1771 in Combridge. He was buried beside his beloved mother at Stoke Pages Churchyard.

GRAY'S WORK

Gray was endowed with a scholarly taste like Milton and Coleridge. Along with English language, he possessed proficiency in the fields of art, literature, history, philosophy and foreign languages. His major works are-

Ode on Spring (1742), Ode on Adversity (1742), Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College (1742), The Progress of Poesy (1754), The Bard (1755), The Fatal Sister (1768), Sonnet on the Death of Richard West, Elegy written in a Country Churchyard (1750), On the Death of Favourite Cat, A Long Story, Ode on the Installation of the Duke of Grafton, Ode to Mary Magdelence, and Hyme to Ignorance.

1.3 THOMAS GRAY : A TRANSITIONAL POET

Thomas Gray is widely considered the most important English poet of the mid-eighteenth century. He is the greatest poet between Milton and Wordsworth. He is a transitional poet because in his poetry the traits of both Classicism and Romanticism are found. He began his career as a classicist. He followed the rules of the ancient masters. He controlled fancy or emotion by reason sense or judgment. Like classicists, he laid empathisis on style and diction of poetry. He aimed at clarity and avoided the use of obsolete words. Other traits of Classicism, such as personification, allegory, intellectual element, artificial loftiness of diction and style, are also traced in his poetry.

Undoubtedly, he began his career as a classicist but ended it as a romanticist. Like other romantics, his poetry is subjective. After his death, he imagines that the epitaph that will be on his grave like this :

"Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,

A youth to fortune and to fame unknown."

As a precursor of English Romantic movement, Gray had no sympathy for the conventional verse. He tried to break through the bounds of the prevailing patterns of poetry. He stood strongly against the bondage of rules, conventions and customs. He sought and found inspiration in the literature of the past. He had love for nature, medievalism, hellenism and melancholy. He had sympathy for the weak and poor. These are the

prominent characteristics of the Romantics Poetry. As a great poet Gray showed his metrical excellence but he never sacrificed sense to sound. He was in habit of using antithesis personification, epigrams, allegories and compound words. His poetry is lyrical in form and refined in style. Thus, Gray is a great, matchless and immortal poet. He wrote poetry with a great degree of ease and comport. He will be remembered for ever for his simplicity, tenderness, human touch and universal feelings. In his poems he attained the sublimity of Milton and the harmony of Pope. Thus, he holds a singular position in English poetry.

1.4 THOMAS GRAY'S ELEGY

The word "Elegy" originated from Greek "elegos" and is the poetic expression of sorrow or mournfulness, which is usually associated with death. It has the tone of mourning and it is a song of lamentation. It was usually written to mourn the death of a friend of dear and near one. In the words of Coleridge, an elegy "is the form of poetry natural to a reflective mind."

Thomas Gray is a great and prominent writer of Elegy in English poetry. He indulged himself in the luxury of tears. The elegiac note or the tone of meloncholy is the distinguishing feature of his poems. His poetry is full of mourning, suffering and death. As a true melancholic poet, Gray mourns the tragic fate of mankind. He always deals with the mortality and meaninglessness of human life. His *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is a sincere song of mourning.

Gray's elegy is the best representative of the impersonal class of elegies. Here the poet doesn't lament at the death of a particular person, he rather mourns in a general manner for the lot of man. He mourns not the death of great or famous people, kings and lords as a classical poet did but of common, humble and nameless villager. The poet sees a country churchyard at sunset, which imples him to meditate on the nature of human mortality. He considers the fact that in death there is no difference between great and common people. He goes on to wonder if among the lowly people buried in the churchyard there had been any natural poet or politician whose talent had simply never been discovered or nurtured. This thought leads him to praise the dead for the honest, simple lives that they had lived.

Gray did not produce a great deal of poetry. *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, however, has earned him a respected and well-deserved spot in literary history. The poem was written at the end of the Augustan age and at the beginning of the Romantic period, and it has the characteristics associated with both literary periods. On the one hand, it has ordered, balanced phrasing and rational sentiments of Neo-Classical Poetry; on the other, it idealizes and elevates the common man. He provided a bridge between the Neo-classical style of his time and the Romantic style of Wordsworth.

A large part of charm of the *Elegy* comes from the poet's personal, sensitive approach to his subject. He lingers in the churchyard, noting the signs of approaching nightfall until the atmosphere of twilight musings is established, after which his reflections upon life and death have a tone of sadness and intimate sincerity of heart.

In style the *Elegy* is traditional and neo-classical. But in ideas and attitudes Gray breaks a new ground. He celebrates the worth and humanity of the common man in a way that foreshadows the Romantics like Byron and Wordsworth. He ruminates with romantic melancholy over "the short and simple annals of the poor." Moreover, in the later part of the poem where the focus shifts from the nameless dead to the poet himself, we get a strong subjective and introspective emphasis that is startlingly new.

1.5 ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

Thomas Gray's well-known poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* was written towards the second half the 18th century. Gray's *Elegy* marks the transition from the neo-classical poetry of Pope and Dryden and looks forward to the advent of the Romantic poetry of Wordsworth and other poets of the early 19th century. Gray's mind must have been filled with some behavioural and vitally philosophical issues like the fate of man and the inevitability of death. The inevitable hour waits alike for everyone and for everything. Even wealth, fame and pride cannot escape death. Flattery cannot soothe the dull cold ear of Death. This disillusion, plausibly, can be the reason for the origin of this poem.

1.5.1 TEXT

1 The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

2 The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,

3 The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,

4 And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

5 Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,

6 And all the air a solemn stillness holds,

7 Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,

8 And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

9 Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower

10 The moping owl does to the moon complain

11 Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,

12 Molest her ancient solitary reign.

13 Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
14 Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
15 Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
16 The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

17 The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
18 The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
19 The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
20 No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

21 For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
22 Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
23 No children run to lisp their sire's return,
24 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

25 Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
26 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
27 How jocund did they drive their team afield!
28 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

29 Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
30 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
31 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
32 The short and simple annals of the poor.

33 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
34 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
35 Awaits alike the inevitable hour.
36 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

37 Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
38 If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
39 Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault

40 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

41 Can storied urn or animated bust
42 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
43 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
44 Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

45 Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
46 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
47 Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
48 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

49 But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
50 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
51 Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
52 And froze the genial current of the soul.

53 Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
54 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
55 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
56 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

57 Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
58 The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
59 Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
60 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

61 The applause of listening senates to command,
62 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
63 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
64 And read their history in a nation's eyes,

65 Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
66 Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
67 Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,

68 And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

69 The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
70 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
71 Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
72 With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

73 Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
74 Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
75 Along the cool sequestered vale of life
76 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

77 Yet even these bones from insult to protect
78 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
79 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
80 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

81 Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
82 The place of fame and elegy supply:
83 And many a holy text around she strews,
84 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

85 For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
86 This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
87 Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
88 Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

89 On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
90 Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
91 Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
92 Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

93 For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured dead
94 Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
95 If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,

96 Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

97 Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
98 'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
99 'Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
100 'To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

101 'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
102 'That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
103 'His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
104 'And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

105 'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
106 'Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
107 'Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
108 'Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

109 'One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
110 'Along the heath and near his favourite tree;
111 'Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
112 'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

113 'The next with dirges due in sad array
114 'Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
115 'Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
116 'Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

The Epitaph
117 *Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,*
118 *A youth to fortune and to fame unknown.*
119 *Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,*
120 *And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

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

123 *He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,*

124 *He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

125 *No farther seek his merits to disclose,*

126 *Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,*

127 *(There they alike in trembling hope repose)*

128 *The bosom of his Father and his God.*

1.5.2 NOTES

Elegy – a mourning song. It is a poem written in elegiac verse. It typically laments or mourns the death of the individual. Elegy is derived from the Greek word ‘elegos’ which means 'song of lament'.

Churchyard– Thomas Gray refers to Stoke Poge’s churchyard in Buckinghamshire, the Churchyard near Slough, the place where his folk lived is an enclosed area surrounding a church, especially as used for burials or cemetery.

STANZA- 1

Curfew- The word comes from Fr. Couvre (cover) and (fire) The curfew was a bell rung at 8 o’ clock in the evening as a warning to put out all manners of domestic fires and lights. The curfew bell was introduced in England by William the Conqueror (1066-1087).

Tolls - ringing of a funeral bell.

Knell- the sound of a bell at a death or funeral. In the Christian countries, the church bell is rung at funeral etc.

Parting day- It means the time of sunset or the close of the day. It indicates the approaching night.

The lowing herd - the bellowing sound of cattle.

Wind… lea - passes over the great meadows in slow and zig-zag manner. 'Meander' can be another word for this.

Plods --- Moves slowly.

The ploughman… way--- the cultivators, very much tired due to labours of the day, in the evening walks back to their home with slow and heavy steps.

Leaves the world… to me- It means the poet (Gray) threatned with utter loneliness in the night as both the cattle and the ploughman will soon vanish into night.

STANZA-2

Fades - slowly disappear.

Glimmering…on the sight—The scene of the countryside is now slowly disappearing from the view.

Air a solemn stillness holds - It means a grave silence spreads over all the atmosphere.

The beetle drones his droning flights – The beetle is making the humming sound as it moves in a circle (a beetle means a sort of insect that makes the humming noise)

And drowsy…folds – The bells hung around the neck of the cattle produce a sound native to thing. Notice also the onomatopoeic effect created by the beetle wheels, droning and tinklings. There is another instance of transferred epithet in 'drowsy tinklings'. In fact the cattle are drowsy. The effect of sleepiness is created by the slow rhythm in the last line.

STANZA-3

Save—except.

Yo*n*der- there.

Ivy-mantled-tow'r- The covered steeple of the church (Ivy is a sort of climbing plant, having glossy ever green leaves).

The moping owl – A gloomy owl.

Complain- protests.

Her secret bower – An enclosed shaded recess of the owl where she feels comfortable and unmolested by an intruder.

The moping owl… reign – Gray introduces a highly poetic imagery. The owl has been in possession of the old tower for a long time, in fact, it is absolute possessor and ruler of that place and feel itself disturbed by beings roaming about its abode. She utters shouts of complaints to the moon, the queen of the night, for the redress of her grievance.

STANZA-4

Rugged elms– The elm trees having holes covered with a rough and uneven bark. An 'Elm' is a large and shady tree of America, Europe and Asia.

Yew-tree's shade– A yew tree is generally an evergreen tree or shrub. Here the reference is to the particular yew tree of Stoke Poges churchyard.

Heaves- rises, stands high.

Turf- patch of grass, sod.

On the graves there are the patches of grass having risen with the passage of time and they produce a mournful sound when the wind whistles over them.

Mouldering heap – heap gradually decaying.

Each in…laid – each man being buried in his own narrow grave.

The rude forefathers - The uncultivated, uncultured, rugged villagers.

STANZA-5

The breezy call of the incense–breathing Morn – The pleasant invitation of the fresh and fragrant morning air.

Swallow - a small migratory bird.

Straw - built shed – a nest made of twigs.

Clarion – the shrill sounds of the Cock particularly, those of morning.

Echoing horn – the sound of the hunter's horn which is distinctly echoed.

STANZA-6

For them - for the ancestors who are dead and buried.

The blazing hearth shall burn - Tthe fire place shall shine with warmth and brilliance.

Busy house wife ply her envying care- The house wives shall go busily about her household duties for the reception of her fatigued husband at the close of the day.

To lisp -- half articulate childish accents, to utter inarticulately and imperfectly like a child.

Sire's return - The father returning from the field after his hard daily toil.

The envied kiss to share - to have share of the father's kisses for which all the children equally and eagerly long.

STANZA-7

Oft- often.

The harvest- ripe crop.

Sickle yield – semi-circular knife with handle to cut the standing crop.

Furrow – A narrow channel trench made by a plough.

Stubborn glebe – the dry and hard soil which is ploughed with great difficulty.

Jocund–Joyfully.

Team–It consists of the peasants and their horses harnessed and oxen to gather in plough.

Sturdy stroke – the heavy and powerfull blows of their axes.

STANZA-8

Ambition- Here the word Ambition has been personified by the poet. It means the ambitious people. The abstract is used for the concrete. The figure of speech used in this context is Synecdoche.

Mock their useful toil - It was the general tendency of the highly placed or wealthy men to smile scornfully at the rustic life and ordinary routine and simple joys of the poor, but now such is not the case. Gray requests the highly placed ambitious people not to smile scornfully at the humble work of the tiller of the soil.

Destiny obscure - the lowly fortune.

Grandeur - Here the word 'Grandeur' is personified. The figure of speech is Synecdoche. The word Grandeur stands for highly placed people, aristocratic life.

Disdain smile - smile of contempt and sneers.

The short and simple annals of the poor – Short and uneventful narrative of the simple life of these poor rustics.

STANZA-9

The boast of heraldry - The pride of exalted or noble birth.

The pomp of power- The outer show of authority on the part of the exalted descendants of great persons.

Inevitable hour - Death.

The paths of glory lead but to the grave - This is the great line of Gray sounding an alarm for the rich and exalted that kinds of glory ultimately merge into death.

STANZA-10

Ye proud - Referring to men who are proud of their possessions and power or wealthy station of life.

Impute - ascribe; attribute to.

These - the poor dead village people.

Memory - Memory stands for the descendants of the dead.

Tomb - grave.

Trophies - monuments and memorials.

Where - in that place, suggesting the inside of the church.

Long drawn aisle - a passage way between rows of seats. Here Aisle means lateral division of a church.

Vault – the arched roof of the church.

The pealing anthem - The long voiced song in praise of the dead. It is generally taken from the psalm of Bible and is sung in chorus.

Stanza-11

Storied urn- tombstone inscribed with the life history of the dead man. An 'urn' is a vessal used to keep the ashes of the dead.

Animated bust- life like a statue of marble.

Its mansion- usually mansion means a large and impressive house. Here it means the body which is the abode of the soul.

Fleeting Breath - the short-lived breath of life.

Honour's voice - the funeral speeches in the honour of dead person.

Silent dust - metaphorically for the dead body.

Sooth dullear of death? - No amount of praise can evoke response from the dead body. It would be sheer flattery to talk of the dead when they cannot listen to it.

Stanza- 12

In this neglected spot- in this humble uncared –for churchyard.

Is laid – is buried.

Some heart - some responsive and inspired person who is also dead.

Pregnant - full of, crammed with.

Celestial life - heavenly inspiration.

Hands – (Parts for the whole – Synecdoche) the dead rustics who might have wielded power with scepter in their hands like king.

Swayed – wielded.

Walked to lyre – produced the most thrilling and transporting poem.

Stanza-13

Knowledge – Here knowledge is personified as a lady with a big volume (book) in her hand, recording the wisdom of all ages.

Ample page – The richly garnered knowledge from ages to ages.

Rich with the spoils of time - with the passge of time, the wealth of knowledge increases because of the ever new experiences.

Unroll- Unfolding of knowledge.

Penury – poverty, Poverty is so called on account of the very chilling effect it exerts upon the spirits of a man.

Their noble rage - noble impulses for doing great work in poetry or war or statesmanship.

Genial current – stream of kindness.

Stanza- 14

Gem – Literally 'gem' is a very precious stone jewel. Here 'gem' means the rustics possessing sterling qualities.

Of purest ray serene – of the most fault less brilliance and lustre.

Unfathomed – very deep. It is impossible to measured the depth of that part of ocean.

Caves of ocean – The deep hollow of ocean.

Full many a gem… ocean bear – The rustics are full of talented persons endowed with sterling qualities, but unfortunately they remain in great obscurity and their merits remain unexplored.

Stanza – 15

Hampden - John Hampden (1594-1642) was one of the leaders of the parliamentary party that had opposed King Charles I who wanted to levy illegal taxes. Here, it refers to some imaginary village hero, who might have opposed the village landlord for his petty encroachments. The village Hampden stands for the rustic who fights against the tyranny of the cruel villager. The despotic masters have a bad time as the heads of the village Hampden.

Dauntless breast - fearless and courageous soul.

The little tyrant of his fields - Some rustic landlord who happens to be a despot encroaching upon the rights of another with complete impunity.

Withstood- opposed the encroachment of his fields.

Some mute inglorious Milton- Among the dead rustics lying in the graveyard one may also find a person once alive as much talented as Milton was, but unfortunately he remained inglorious because he could not get proper opportunity to show his Miltonic worth.

Milton - John Milton (1608-1674) was a great English poet of England who wrote famous works like *Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, Comus, Lycidas Samson Agonists*, etc.

Cromwell – Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) was a great general and statesman during the reign of King Charl I. He became the Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, established in England after the Civil War.

Guiltless - Without the guilt of.

Country's blood - shedding the blood of the country men.

Stanza-16

The applause of listiening senates – The appreciation and administration of members of Parliament listening to their speeches with rapt attention.

The threats of pain and ruin to despire – The dead rustics are patriotically doing their duty in the cause of the country and scorn liberty threats of pain and ruin held out by tyrants. Patriots may be threatened by the tyrants, but they defy them.

To scatter plenty --- nation's eyes - The rustics are also restrained by their ill fortune from giving prosperity and happiness to their countrymen and then read their grateful acknowledgement in their happy look.

Stanza – 17

Their lot - the humble and obscure destiny of the villagers.

Circumscribed – narrowed, limited.

Their growing virtues – the growth and development of their virtues.

Their crime confined – they were also not guilty of crimes.

And shut the gates of mercy on mankind – These rustics escaped the horrors of slaughter as they did not indulge in such heinous acts that involve cruelty in shedding human blood.

Stanza -18

The struggling pangs… to hide – The villagers are of simple habits. Their conscience remains clean; like the statesmen they do not tell a lies. Others hide the truth and cover it up with falsehood; this gives them a bad conscience.

To quench… ingenuous shake – Their humble lot prevented them from becoming shameless flatterers and seekers of official jobs. Gray is referring to the unscrupulous place hunters.

Heap – Fill by frequent and liberal offering.

The shrine of luxury and pride – the temple of goddesses of Luxury and Pride burned in religious rites.

Muse's flame –Poetic fire. The Muses are the nine goddesses of poetry, music and the other liberal arts.

Here Gray says that the humble villagers are simple and sincere and have not learnt to tell lies or to flatter the great.

Stanza- 19

Far from the madding Crowd's ignoble strife – The village forefathers are very lucky in a way because they enjoy the quiet and tranquil life of the countryside and far away from the petty quarrels and dishonorable pursuits after riches and honour of the urban people. The noble living exists in the countryside.

Their sober wishes never learne'd to stray – The villagers are men of moderate wishes and they do not deviate from the moral course of life. They are not tempted by the paltry enchantments of city life.

Along the cool sequester'd… their way – The villagers passed their life calmly and peacefully. The smooth course of their uneventful life is likened to the soft noiseless flow of a stream passing down a valley of peace and quiet.

Stanza- 20

These bones – The remains of the villagers lying buried in the churchyard.

From insult to protect – To protect against desecration or humiliation.

Frail memorial – A monument of weak material.

Uncouth rhymes – Poor and awkward ill spelt memorial verses written by the village versifiers.

Shapeless sculptures – Figures carved and chiselled most unskillfully.

Deck'd- decorated.

Implores - appeals.

Passing tribute of a sigh - the tribute of a mere sigh from the passerby.

Stanza – 21

Their name…and -elegy supply– Their monuments bear only their names and dates of birth and death and even these are spelt wrongly and clumsily by the rustic artist. These brief inscriptions are found upon the graves of the rich.

And many a holy text… to die –The village Muse strews many biblical sayings to give proper courage to the dying person to die in peace.

The rustics should be moral enough not to suffer the agony of death and it could be done only through the contemplated virtues already exiting in the Bible.

Unlettered Muse… semi – Literate villages artist.

Fame and elegy – elegy embodying the fame and position.

Holy text – verses from the Holy Bible.

The rustic moralist to die – These biblical verses have the effect of teaching the rustics not to fear death, but to face it with a calm and pious resignation.

Stanza- 22

To dumb Forgetfulness – The rustics are completely forgotten after their death, but not so the eminent persons of the earth. They become a prey to forgetfulness. Here 'dumb Forgetfulness' has been used as a metaphor by the poet.

Pleasing anxious being - full of cares yet joyful life.

Warm precincts - joyful boundaries.

Longing - unwilling and reluctant to leave.

Look behind - throwing a look at the dear ones and at all the dying man is leaving behind.

Stanza- 23

On some fond…relies – Even simple, poor, country folks like the villagers in churchyard depend on their loved ones as they die.

The parting soul – One who is near to death.

Some pires drops… eye requires – The rustics need some pious religious friend or neighbour to close their eye for them as they die.

Even from the tomb the voice of nature cries— It appears as if when one dies one has the longing which is but a natural kin. The buried rustics desire to be remembered. Here 'Nature' has been personified by the poet.

Even in our ashes… fires—the passionate desire to be remembered after death continues to exist even in the dust and ashes to which the human body is at last reduced after death.

Stanza- 24

For thee… tale relate — Gray describes that it is redating the story of the common rustics through the lines written by way of on elegy. It is for those who are fully aware of the worth of rustics, though they die without getting due honour. They are the neglected forefathers who passed their simple and uneventful life.

If chance… inquire thy fate – Here the poet imagines that when he will die, there will be somebody to enquire about his death.

Stanza- 25

Haply – It is quite likely.

Hoary headed swain – Very old peasant.

Peep of dawn – At the break of day.

Brushing – Throwing away the dew drops on the blades of the grass.

Hasty steps – Swiftly walking on the lawn.

To meet the sun… lawn – To see the morning when the sun is rising upon the grassy hill where the church was situated.

Stanza- 26

There at the foot… nodding beech – There, under that bending and rising beech, the tree was waving in the wind.

Wreaths – Twisting and winding of the roots.

Fantastic roots –The roots of the beech tree jutted out themselves in fanciful shapes or strange manners.

Listless length — It refers to the tired and exhausted body of the poet.

Babbles by – Rhythmic flow of water.

Stanza- 27

Hard by yon wood - near the wood over there.

Now smiling as in scorn – The poet had a contemptuous smile on his face. The world is nothing short of a vanity fair.

Muttering – Speaking in indistinct words.

Way ward fancies – Incoherent thoughts.

Now drooping… hopeless love – Here the most pathetic figure of the poet is painted, particularly in his tiresome condition. Further, it has a romantic note of agony. The poet looks sorrowful and pale. He was in a melancholic mood. He appeared totally unhappy and dejected. He was mentally disturbed because his love may not be accepted by his beloved.

Hopeless love – 'Hopeless' is here used in an ‘anticipatory way’. Love becomes hopeless when the lover himself is disappointed.

Stanza- 28

One morn I miss’d… tree – One morning the poet was missing the ‘*kindred spirit*’ because he was dead now. He was not to be seen on the grassy hill where he usually used to come. He was not seen on the wasteland or near the favourite beech tree.

Beside the rill — by the side of the rivulet the brook of line 104.

Stanza- 29

Dirges - funeral songs.

Due in sad array - in a melancholy procession and funeral song.

Slow - the funeral procession moved slowly.

Lay - epitaph written on the tombstone.

Borne… carried – The poet was dead and therefore he was carried to the churchyard to be burried.

Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn —This line refers to the epitaph written on the tombstone and this is over that place where stands the howthorn tree.

Stanza- 30

The Epitaph

Epitaph - an inscription on a tombstone or monument.

Here rests… earth – The dead man, who was neither rich nor famous, is sleeping at this place upon the lap of the mother Earth.

A youth… unknown — A young man was both poor and unknown. He had neither wealth nor fame nor recognition. He remained blinded by obscurity in his life. *Here*, 'fortune' and 'fame' are personifications meaning the goddess of Fortune.

Fair science – The beautiful goddess of Science (Science is personified here)

Fair science… birth – Science is not used here in any restricted and specialized sense; It is used to mean knowledge and learning in general. The poet was of humble birth; he could never have had the advantage of the knowledge.

Stanza- 31

Large was his bounty… sincere – The poet's charity or generosity was unlimited. This was so because he gave to the miserable, the poor and the unfortunate, all that but a tear. The sincerity of his true soul would be felt by others. He had a plain good nature.

Heaven did… largely send – The poor poet was liberally charitable to the wretched and therefore, God equally liberally, rewarded him by giving him a friend.

He gave … all he had, a tear — As he was a generous person, he offered all that belonged to him to suffering humanity. But he had only tears for his generosity. He always gave the poor and suffering people sympathy and consolation.

He gained… friend – In return for his good nature and generosity God was kind enough to give him a true friend upon whom he could rely for 'pious drops.'

Stanza- 32

No farther seek – It is not the poet's desire to know anything more about the merits of simple rustic.

Frailties – faults and weaknesses.

Their dread abode - awful resting place.

There they alike… his God – The dead rustic remains a great suspense, thinking of the judgement of God, the Father, is favorable, or brash. Here poet totally surrenders before the mercy of God and his faith in Him hightens the tone of the elegy.

1.5.3 DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE POEM ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTY CHURCHYARD.

Thomas Gray is well–known for his *Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard.* It is believed that Gray might have begun writing this poem sometime in 1742 shortly after the death of his close friend Richard West. He completed the poem in 1750. It was published in 1751 in London.

Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is one of the most popular elegy in English literature. It is a typical elegy because most elegies are centered on the death of a person or persons. An elegy is by nature somber in tone. However, unlike a typical elegy, this particular elegy does not focus on the death of a single person, neither does Gray talk about the death of someone rich or famous or someone close to him. An elegy is typically lyrical rather than narrative, i.e. its primary purposeis to express feelings and insights about its subject rather than to tell a story. An elegy expresses feelings of loss and sorrow while also praising the dead and commenting on the meaning of dead person's life on earth. Gray's elegy reflects on the life of ordinary, humble people buried in the graveyard church.

Gray in this poem laments the lot of poor villagers who lie buried in the country churchyard. According to Douglas Bush, "It is the best known secular poem in the language in which a tender heart beats under the stiff brocade of style." There is a strain of both classicism and romanticism in this poem. As a matter of fact, the poem has the characteristics of Graveyard School of poetry. The poem can rather be called a sort of bridge between classicism and romanticism.

Even Dr. Johnson, who was not very much pleased with Gray's Pindaric Odes, acknowledges the beauty and greatness of the elegy when he remarks, "The elegy abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind and with sentiments to which every bosom returns on echo."

In this elegy, we find the romantic spirit manifesting itself in lyricism, treatment of nature, melancholic mood. Other features of romanticism found in the poem are love of nature, rustic life, the ideal of intensity, subjectivity and democratic spirit. The freshness in the poem, something strange to the time, strengthens the case of romanticism. The style at times becomes classically hard and rugged. It has the ordered and balanced phrasing and rational sentiments of neo-classicism. Thus, the transitional trend is felt by us in this elegy.

The themes dealt with in the elegy are familiar and there is nothing original in them. According to Douglas Bush, “the elegy is a mosaic of traditional motifs classical and modern.” The elegy can have more than one theme. Death is a major theme of this particular poem. There are many symbols related to death: “The curfew tolls”, “the knell of parting day”, and all the air "a solemn stillness holds.” Death is, of course, projected as a great leveller and a great equalizer; even the proud, the great and mighty must one day die and lie beneath the earth like humble men and women now buried in this country churchyard. The poet attempts to show to all “the paths of glory lead but to the grave.” In fact, he is able to express how all must die one day, and it does not matter if one is rich or poor, noble or common. Death is a great leveller and it equalizes every one.

Gray’s elegy also expresses the theme that people have equality of gift, if not of opportunities. As he writes many a “mute inglorious Milton” lies buried in an obscure grave unknown, because life never offered him the opportunity to develop his gifts. Gray depicts this lack of opportunity as a gain as well as a loss, fortunately for them none of these people leads to bloodshed and to shut ‘the gate of mercy.’

The *Elegy* is characterised by a melancholic note. The dominant mood of this elegy is one of gloom and sadness. The shadow of death hovers throughout the poem and the regret over the frustration of human efforts and hopes is inherent in it stlone. The opening scene of this is steeped in melancholy and the musings on human desting in the later parts of the poem are also of melancholic nature. The description of the rustic poet also gives a gloomy picture of their life. Thus, the whole atmosphere and mood of the poem is tinged with melancholy.

In the opening lines of the monumental elegy Gray paints a solemn background of nature. The evening bells are ringing in the church to announce the close of the day, which is a symbol of death. The cattle are slowly moving on the field in a zig-zag manner the exhausted farmer after his hard day’s work is labouring his way back home, suggesting failure of senses at the close of life. Darkness is spreading all around the atmosphere. The atmosphere is filled with deep silence. The poet is left alone engulfed in darkness like the rest of the world. All this description is highly pictorial in manner and conjures up beautifully the gloomy atmosphere of the evening.

The stanza that follows continues the description of calm and quiet atmosphere of the evening. The darkness slowly spreads over the atmosphere, “the glimmering landscape fades.” This gloomy silence is disturbed by only the humming sound of the encircling beetle in the air and the tinkles of bells of the drowsy cattle in the distant fold. The breaking of the gloomy silence of the evening is also caused by the ‘moping owl’ from the ivymantled tower, who complains to the moon about the solitary traveller who has encroached into his solitary kingdom of solitude.

Here the introduction of the owl and her hoot are significant because these are symbolic of melancholy and are enevitable associates of death.

Gray tries to create a vivid picture of the country churchyard where the village forefathers have been buried beneath the shade of elm and yew trees. The poet says that these dead villagers are enjoying a lasting sleep and cannot be aroused by the touch of morning breeze. They will not be able to listen to the twittering of shallows or crowing of the cocks in the morning. The dead villagers will now not enjoy the comforts and privileges of domestic life, that they enjoyed while they were alive.

The poet offers a brief account of the simple life and useful toil of the village forefathers who were now sleeping in their narrow cells in the churchyard. The poet narrates that often the ‘rude forefathers of the hamlet', used to plough the hard fields and reap the harvest with their sickles. They happily drove their cattle to the fields and they felled great trees with powerful strokes of their axes.

The description of the humble life of the villagers is important as it is in contrast with the complicated life of proud ambitious people who boasted of their heraldry and took pride in their power. In fact, the village forefathers seemed to be happy with their life and their useful toils.

Thomas Gray tries to transmit a message to the privileged class that the ambitious and highly placed people should not make fun at the ‘useful toil’ ‘homely joys’ and 'destiny obscure' of the weak and poor villagers. Here the poet advises the ambitious and proud men not to laugh at the simple and ordinary routine, the simple joys and ways of poor forefathers who lived a neglected and unrecognized life. The poet remarks that nobody can escape death. Death is a great leveller. All must die all alike, high or low. Death divests all men of their pride, power, physical charm and riches. All paths of glory lead but to the grave.

The next seven stanzas present the poet’s about the overpowering of life by death, which makes any human achievement by the poor people impossible. The rude forefathers buried in the church had much possibility for development. If chance had been given, they might have become a great poet, a great statesmen, a great musician. But poverty strangulated their noble desires, aspirations and sentiments. Like the coldness of death, poverty made them insensitive to their own emotions and feelings and also to those of others.

The poet believes that thousands of people whose diamond-edged brilliance remains undiscovered or unknown, like gems that lie hidden in the deep caves of the ocean and like many a flower which grows in the desert where its beauty and fragrance remain unenjoyed and unadmired. Similarly, among those forefathers of the village, there might be somebody who would have become great like Hampden, Cromwell and Milton. But their merits remained unrecognized and their talent unutilized.

Although the lace of opportunity curbed the growth and development of the virtues and talents in village forefathers, the poet argues that it also put a restraint on their crimes. They were prevented from rising to a throne by the atrocious cruelty and bloodshed of their people, as the more favoured died. Their humble destiny never provided them any chance to become cruel and merciless towards their kind.

The poet describes the simple and happy life of the dead forefathers. According to him, they always kept themselves away from petty quarrels and dishonorable pursuits after riches and honour, unlike the city people. They led a retired life in seclusion and peace. They never allowed their homely desires to run wild in 'paths of glory' and this kept them forever happy and tension free.

Though there are no grand monuments over the graves of these poor rustics, yet their relations have built some simple memorials near the graves. These memorial stones ask the passers-by to have a sigh as a mark of respect to the memory of the dead villagers. Some verses from the Bible are written on these memorial stones. These verses give some spiritual consolation to the villagers and teach them to face death peacefully.

The last three stanza of this elegy constitute the epitaph supposed to have been engraved on the grave of the poet. The poet referred to in the epitaph 'A youth to fortune and fame unknown', who may be his friend Richard West in whose memory the Elegy is said to have been written. With regard to the merit of the epitaph, Gray's critics have offered different opinions. Dr. Johnson concluded by saying, "what now remains of the elegy, partakes of nature of an often piece." Lander deprecates the poem for "the tin-kettle of an epitaph tied to its tail."

Sutherland writes," All that can be said is that the narrator and the subject of the epitaph are the same person and that person is described as an educated young gentle man, not as an unlettered village stone cutter." The tone of the epitaph is sentimental and suggests self-pity.

Thus, Thomas Gray's poem *An Elegy written is a Country Churchyard* does not lament the death of a particular person, but feels for the lot of common man. It shows the critical situation of the poor and also social and economic injustice happening in their lives. Gray very clearly expresses the fact and tells the living upper class people that ultimately it does not matter what glory they achieve or how elaborate the eulogy upon their tombstone is. Death is inevitable. It comes to all and at the end they will also die just like the poor. In this elegy, we find a staining from the neo-

classical poetry of the Augustan age towards the Romantic poetry. The elegy is remarkable for the simplicity of its expression. I.A. Richards calls it. “The triumph of an exquisitely and jested tone.”

1.5.4 POETIC DEVICES

Gray wrote the poem in four line stanzas (quatrains). Each line is in iambic pentameter, meaning: Each line has five pairs of syllables for a total of ten syllable.

In each stanza, the first line rhymes with the third and the second line rhymes with the fourth. The rhyme scheme is: *a b a b.*

Gray’s poetic style is classically elegant without being pedantically old. In his own words, his style is “pure, perspicuous and musical”. Uses of transferred epithets and alliterations are galore in this poem, like in the line *"The plowman homeward plods his weary way."* And also onomatopoeic words like toll, knell, tinkling and drowning etc. are abundantly found in it.

Those of Synecdoche in ‘woods’ (line 27) and heart (line 46) etc. is very pleasing.

Gray’s usage of personification of abstract nouns such as *Ambition, Grandeur, Honour, Flattery*, etc., and the use of compounds like, ‘ivy-mantled-tower,’ ‘incense breathing morn’ etc., are very impossible.

The poem uses the figure of speech, especially metonymy as in “mute inglorious Milton”, “village- Hampden,” and these figures make it highly arresting.

1.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

Q1:-Discuss Thomas Gray as a poet of Elegy.

Answer:- See Section.1.4

Q2:- Discuss Thomas gray as a transitional poet. Give answer in your own words.

Answer:-Refer to Section 1.3.

Q3:- What is the theme of the poem Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard?

Answer:-Read carefully Section 1.5.3

Q4:-Write a critical appreciation of the poem Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard?

Answer: - Refer to Section 1.5.3

Q5:- What is the significance of ‘Epitaph’ in Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard?

Answer: - Refer to Sections 1.4, 1.5.3

Q6:- According to Gray his poem Elegy Written in A Country Churchyard what ambitious people should not do?

Answer:-See Section 1.5.3

Q7:-What is the most attractive feature of Gray's poetry?

Answer: - See Section 1.4 and 1.5.3

Q8:- Explain the following excerpts from the poem with reference to the context :

a) The curfew tolls ……..and to me.

b) Beneath those …….hamlet sleep.

c) Let not ….. the poor.

d) The boast of ……..grave.

e) Nor you ye ……of praise

f) Far from the ……..their way.

g) Their Names, their…….to die.

Answer:- For explanation carefully read Sections 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3 and 1.5.4.

1.7 SUMMING UP

In this unit we have discussed Thomas Gray's *Elegy* and you have learnt that :

1) The biographical sketch of Thomas Gray.

2) The salient features of Thomas Grays *Elegy*.

3) Thomas Gray as a poet of transitional period

4) It is also remarkable for blending landscape with funeral elegy.

5) The poetic devices show Gray's mastery over language. This is exemplified by his diction, style and figures of speech-all of which contribute to the heightening of emotional effect of the elegy.

1.8 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT–2 ROBERT BROWNING : 'PROSPICE'

Structure

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss Robert Browning a prolific Victorian poet and playwright. He is widely recognized as a master of dramatic monologue and psychological portraiture.

Browning was never as popular as Tennyson in his own age, although he had attracted the attention of many thoughtful readers. His technique was too original to make him popular. Besides, he was not interested in the contemporary events and problems, as Tennyson was. While Tennyson was insular, Browning was cosmopolitan. Browning was

a convinced optimist, while Tennyson was inclined to be melancholic and pessimistic.

Browning was a very original poet. He experimented with new forms of poetry, but the form which suited his genius best was the dramatic monologue. He was interested in human character and selected many types from many lands and ages. The problem of failure in life interested him very much. His subtle analysis of the human motives and feelings is admirable indeed.

Let us briefly look at the poem we will read in this unit. We will read the poem 'Prospice', a dramatic monologue. You will recall that a dramatic monologue is a psychological revelation of the character and situation by character himself. It is the study of a character's mental state and his mental and moral crisis. In this kind of poem, the poet does not speak in his own voice but the situation is described by an imaginary character.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall introduce to the eminent Victorian poet Robert Browning. We have selected one poem for you which will give you an idea of some aspects of Browning's poetic art. After reading this unit carefully, you will learn about :

- The life and career of Robert Browning.
- Dramatic monologue as a form of English poetry.
- The poetic genius of Browning.
- Browning's poem, "Prospice"
- His Philosophy of life or Optimism.
- The poetic devices and techniques applied in the formation of the poem.

2.2 ROBERT BROWNING : LIFE AND WORKS

2.2.1 LIFE

Robert Browning was born on 7 may 1812 at Camberwell. His father was a clerk in the bank of England and his mother Anna Browning was a woman of professed piety, and religion was the main inspiration of her emotional life. Browning was deeply attached to her and there is no doubt that he inherited from his devout mother strong religious habits. He was familiar with the classics from a very young age and was sharp and highly imaginative child. He was privately educated and from an early age

he was allowed to study the unusual subjects that he liked. In 1828, Browning joined the London University but left it without taking a degree.

He was very much influenced by the Romantic poets, such as Byron, Shelley and Keats. Under the influence of Shelley, for two years he converted to atheism and vegetarianism. In Browning's works we can roughly discover Shelley's theory of life and his interest in the mystery and the development of human soul and his faith in religion and God.

He began to write poetry at the age of twelve, but the first poem that he published came out in 1833. In 1834 he paid his first visit to Italy, the country which became later on his home for many years. When he came back from there, he read the poems of Elizabeth Barrett. He fell in love with her without seeing her and subsequently married her on September 12, 1846 at Mary Lebon church and lived with her in Italy until her death in 1861. The grief was s overwhelming that he became a semi-recluse and his life, as he himself said, was "as grey as the London sky". Afterwards, he settled in London. In 1889 when his health was failing, Browning went back to Venice where his son had permanently settled. It was here that on December 12, 1889, he died peacefully as a result of heart-failure. His body was taken back to England to be laid to rest in the Poet's Corner at Westminster Abbey.

2.2.2 WORKS

Browning's first poem "Pauline" (1833) is crude and immature and reminiscent of Shelley. "Paracelsus" (1835) deals with the medieval scholar and physician who being full of inordinate ambitions aimed at the attainment of universal knowledge. The poem "Paracelsus" dramatically expresses the philosophy of life that knowledge without love and power without beauty is only incomplete. Browning's plays *Strafford* (1837) and *A Blot on the Scutcheon* (1843) are tragedies. *Sordello* (1840) is full of obscure and allusions.

Bells and Pomegranates : The series of poems under this title includes: "Pippa Passes", "The Pied Piper", "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent," "The Lost Leader", "The Lost Mistress", "Home Thoughts from Abroad", "Home Thoughts from the Sea", "Evelyn Hope", "Incident of French Camp" and "My Last Duchess."

Browning's other dramatic works are – *King Victor and King Charle* (1842) *Colombe's Birthday* (1844) and *A Soul's Tragedy* (1846).

Men and Women (1855) and *Dramatic Personae* (1864) present dramatic monologue and pulse of great power

The Ring and The Book (1869), is Browning's longest and greatest work.

The Inn Album (1875), *Pacchiarotto* (1876), *Dramatic Idylls* (1879-80), *Asolando* (1884), a swansong, are his remarkable poems.

2.3 PROSPICE

"Prospice is a poem which reflects the poet's philosophy of life. It is auto-biographical in nature and reflects his optimism, his courage and fearlessness.

This poem was composed in the autumn of 1851. It was first published in *Atlantic Monthly* and later it was included in *Dramatic Personae* (1864). 'Prospice', a Latin word, means looking forward. Its tone is optimistic. It reflects the poet's belief in the immortality of soul. In this poem, Browning discards the fear of death. He is determined to fight with death. This fight will be the best and last battle of his life. He is a man with heroic soul. Death is a blessing in disguise for him. It is only after death that Browning can hope to be restored to his belloved wife in Heaven. In this poem, we find a sample of Browning's optimism.

Let us now read the poem as many times as necessary. The glossary that follows will be helpful in reading it.

TEXT

FEAR death? – to feell the fog in my throat,

The mist in my face,

When the snows begin, and the blasts denote

I am nearing the place,

The power of the night, the press of the storm,

The post of the foe;

Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible from,

Yet the strong man must go:

For the journey is done and the summit attained,

And the barriers fall,

Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,

The reward of it all.

I was ever a fighter, soone fight more,

The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,

And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole if it, fare like my peers,

The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold.

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,

The black minute's at end,

And the elements rage, the fiend-voices that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,

Then a light, then thy breast,

O thou soul of may soul! I shall clasp thee again,

And with God be the rest!

2.3.1 GLOSSARY

Fear Death = Do I fear Death?

Feel the fog in the throat – at the time of death a person feels suffocation in throat.

Mist – fog.

Blasts – violent gusts of wind.

Post- place or position of death.

Foe- enemy, that is death.

Arch Fear- great fear, death is personified here.

Ere – before.

Visible form- a a form which can be seen.

Guerdon – reward, prize.

Attained – gained, archieved.

Forbore – pear, refrain.

Bade – ordered, commanded.

Creep past – slip away.

Taste – experience.

Brunt – burden,

Peers- equals.

Arrears – dues, debts.

Black minute – dark moment of life.

Element's rage – fury of the blast.

Fiend- voices – the sounds of evil spirits.

Rave – talk wildly.

Dwindle – die down, finish.

Soul of my soul – refers to his beloved wife.

Clasp – embrace.

2.3.2 SUBSTANCE OF THE POEM

The poem starts with a rhetorical question 'Fear Death?' Clearly, the poet does not fear Dark. The poet is never afraid of Death. He is always ready to face Death with all its physical troubles. He wishes to face death boldly and bravely. He will not be afraid of things like suffocation in throat, coldness of the body; the breath becomes fast and the light grow dimnat the time of death. He is a brave man and will face it bravely. He has to reach the highest peak of success before gaining the end of his life. He has to fight the last battle with Death.

The poet thinks that life is a battle. He has always been a fighter in his life. It is the last battle of life which he has to fight to gain the best reward. He never wishes that Death should bandage his eyes. He never likes to lie down prostrate He should bear all the pangs that come to a man at the time of death. As a brave warrior and like the heroes of the older times, he is ready to suffer the burden of the time. He will fight bravely so that all pains, all ignorance and cowardice will come to an end. The different kinds of furies, the cries of hostile people and all pains of life will come to an end. Each grief and misfortune and unhappiness will change into peace and goodness. After his death, he will reach the kingdom of God. There he will meet his beloved wife. He will embrace her again. Hence everything will be good for him and he will be remitted with his beloved wife in the kingdom of God.

In this poem the poet gives a message of hope and optimism. According to him Death is not an enemy, but a friend. Death is a friend because it will take him to God's kingdom where he will meet his beloved wife.

2.3.3 DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

"Prospice" was published in *Dramatic Personae* (1864). This poem was a tribute to the memory of Robert Browning's wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning. This poem is most inspiring and original on the subject of Death. "Prospice" is a Latin word, and it means "Look Forward", that is the poet looks forward to death. The poet expresses his determination to face death. He looks forward to seeing his wife again. So he wants to reach the kingdom of God where peace and joy will greet him. He will meet his wife, love, eternal peace and happiness. Throughout the poem, the poet speaks of his bravery, valour and determination.

The poem begins with a question 'Fear Death?' – Clearly the poet does not. In the opening lines of this poem, the poet compares death to climbing a mountain. A climber must experience a feeling of suffocation and hard breathing as he climbs through mists. As he goes higher up the mountain, the cold rush of wind and snowfalls signify he is nearing the top of mountain. In the same way, a man feels difficulty in breathing, blurred vision, suffocation and choking in his throat before he comes face to face with death. Here the poet personifies to death. The poet presents death as the enemy. In the line -

"The post of the foe;

Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form."

The poet thinks that this foe is none other than 'Arch Fear' i.e. Death. Death is the enemy that all human beings fear when they are near to death. It appears to the dying man that death in person is standing before him in a fearful form. But even the strong and brave must finally succumb to him. Just as the journey ends when the climber reaches the summit after facing all difficulties, the poet hopes to overcome all the difficulties and sufferings and face death bravely because it is the gateway to Heaven.

In the next lines, the poet considers that life is a battle and throughout his life he has been a great fighter. Even in life one achieves the highest goal at the end of a difficult journey which one must face with many obstacles or difficulties. The reward can only be had after a great struggle, so the poet faces all the pangs and sufferings at the time of death in a final and glorious battle. He wants to embrace death bravely and will not have his eyes bandaged . In other words, he would not like to die as a coward. He wants to face boldly every pangs and suffering during death-time. He would not like death to gently take him away. He doesn't want to slink away quietly.

The poet wants to see and know all of death, even the grotesque aspects, and face it like his fellow soldiers in their heroic manner. He would bear the pain in his death in order to balance the pain he escaped throughout his life. He believes that the worst things like death turn the best men into valorous ones when they are facing their last minutes of life. All pain and struggle that accompany death will disappear and become sweet as they dwindle. After the tumult, there will be peace and calm. It seems as if the poet will then emerge from darkness and despair to light and hope. He will be able to hold his beloved again, and leave whatever happens next up to God for he is with his love once again--

'The soul of my soul'

To sum up, the poet literally looks beyond death to eternal and joyous life. Death thus is rendered powerless and in effective. He wants everyone to face death bravely and turn the disadvantage into advantage, for death is God's will and there is nothing to be afraid of it. He tells the readers that death is not something to be feared, but rather to be embraced, because then it becomes easier to accept it in the end.

2.3.4 POETIC FORMS AND METRE

The poem is a dramatic monologue. The whole poem is made up of 28 lines. The speaker's statement has not been divided into stanzas. 'Arch Fear' in it is personified in Death to suggest a 'visible form' that inspires fear. The images of mists, storms and darkness create the fearful aspect of death. He makes extensive use of alliteration- "guerdon be gained" and "Bear The Brunt" etc.

The rhyme scheme of this poem is *ab ab cd cd ef ef.* The pentameter lines alternate with trimetre lines, thus creating an impression of quick forward movement that ties up with the journey metaphor.

2.4 BROWING AND THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

The dramatic monologue is 'dramatic' because it is the utterances of a character and not of the poet himself. In it the character is not developed directly by the poet but through a conflict between the opposite thoughts and emotions. It is a 'monologue' because it is the conversation of a single individual with himself. So we can say that the dramatic monologue is essentially a study of character, of mental states, moral crises made from the inside and its mode is predominantly psychological or analytical, meditative or argumentative. "The Last Ride Together", "Rabbi Ben Ezra", "Prophyra's Lover" are the finest dramatic monologues written by Browning.

The dramatic monologue was peculiarly suited to the genius of Browning. He uses this form for the study of character, of particular mental states and moral crisis in the soul of characters. In his monologue

the poet depicts a variety of characters taken from all walks of life-cowards, rouge, artists, scholars, beggars, murderers, saints, etc. His characters belong to a number of countries and ages.

In each of his monologues, one character is at the centre and the substance of the monologue consists in passages within his soul. Cazamian calls it, “Soul-Reflector or studied in practical psychology.” They provide us with a peep into the inner working of the mind and soul of these characters. Besides these main figures, there are some minor figures who are briefly but distinctly sketched. They are listeners, but they put questions from time to time. They provide the reasons for the speaker’s self-analysis.

In each monologue the speaker opens himself at most critical situation of his life. The reactions of the character are analyzed in detail and his soul laid bare. The attention of the reader is fixed on the crisis.

The language of the monologue is according to the thought process of the speaker; it is the language of informal talk and rules of grammar and syntax are ignored. The language is often telephonic and the hesitancy of the speaker is indicated by the use of phrases and dashes. Sometimes its manner is lyrical and emotional, sometimes narrative and destructive, and at other times reflective and thoughtful.

The speakers expose their follies and weaknesses in the monologues, but they justify their action. Hence they are in nature of self-defence, "The Last Ride Together" is a defence of lover, and "Andreadelsarto" offers an excuse for the painter’s mal-treatment of his paints. In his earlier monologues, Browning is primarily conserned with the character’s portrait. In his later monologues, he is interested in defending them. He is not contnt meenly with depicting sinners, he tries to assert the essential goodness of such sinners, and so it becomes argumentative, prosaic, dull, and difficult to fallows.

"Rabbi-Ben-Ezra" is another great dramatic monologue of Browning where Rabbi is the speaker, he is the mouthpiece of Browning and expresses the poet’s optimism. Hugh Walker rightly says--

‘Browning’s monologue is the most practical and profoundly original contribution of the poetic literature of 19th century.’

Browning has adopted a simple method for presenting action in the poem. He has done it into two ways. He has presented his plot, character and scene through a single man’s speech. In some of the monologues, he describes the events in a logical manner. Simultaneously, the speaker tells his whole story unconsciously. "Prophyria’s Lover" is such an example. Secondly, he keeps the reader in suspense and the secret is revealed in the end.

Browning did not invent the dramatic monologue, but he made it especially his own. These monologues reveal Browning’s matchless dramatic genius and occupy a significant place in the history of English poetry.

2.5 BROWNING'S OPTIMISM/PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Robert Browning a major poet of the Victorian era, has composed many of his poems where we find lots of optimism. Very aptly remarks a critic, "Browning is emphatically the poet militant, and the prophet of struggling manhood. His words are like trumpet calls sounded in the van of man's struggle, wafted back by winds and heard through the din of conflict by his meaner brethren, who are obscurely fighting for good in the throng and crush of life." Very aptly remarks a critic.

The beauty of Browning's philosophy or his view of life is that he has mirrored faithfully the practical tenets or ideals of life in his poetry. Browning was basically a thinker and he had conceived certain philosophical ideas about God, Soul, Man, Life, Success, Failure, Work, and Reward. He had firm belief in certain doctrines or principles and these form the very basis of his so-called philosophy of life.

Browning is a very consistent thinker of optimistic philosophy of life. His optimism is based on life's realties. Life is full of imperfection and despair, according to Brownings philosophy. He does not challenge the old beliefs. He accepts the conventional view of God, the immortality of soul, and the Christian belief in incarnation.

Browning's optimism is founded on the realities of life. It is not 'blind', as he does not shut his eyes to the evil prevailing in life's routine. He knows that human life is a mixture of good and evil, of love and ugliness, of despair and hope, but he derives hope from this very imperfection of life. His optimism is founded on imperfections of man. In the famous lines of "Pippa Pases", he says,

'God is in his Heaven,

And all is right with the world.'

He knows that this life is full of misery and pain. From his study of the past history of mankind and of the contemporary of life, he comes to realise that life on this earth is not perfect. But he does not conclude, by all that he sees, that life is not worth living. He is of the opinion that life should not be judged on the basis of efforts :

"What I aspired to be

And was not, comforts me.

A brute I might have been,

But would not sink in the sea."

Browning's optimism is firmly based on his faith in the immortality of the soul. The body may die, but the soul lives on in the infinite. He says in his poem "Prospice":

"O thou soul of My soul! I shall clasp thee again,

And with God be the rest."

Thus, Browning takes a positive vision of life as a whole. He does not believe in weeping over the harsh realities of life but, suggests to try our best to overcome them. We should try to take what is good in human life and leave the rest to the will of God.

Browning believes that when the soul is immortal, man should not fear or feel dejected in the face of disappointments. Even death cannot quench the "Divine spark" of the soul. God is the potter and our soul is the clay, both of them are immortal:

"Time's wheel runs back or stops;

Potter and clay endure".

2.6 BROWNING'S TREATMENT OF LOVE

Robert Browning initiated composing love poetry early in his career and continued to write it till his death. He is a typical Victorian in his treatment of love. For Browning, love is the supreme principle, both of morality and religion. He frankly deals with both physical and spiritual aspects of love. For him, physical love is essential for a happy married life and it can only lead to the spiritual union of the two lovers. He is concerned with the development of the human personality as a whole which includes both the physical and spiritual sides.

In Browning's theory of love, the 'moment' is important. Even a finally rejected lover derives consolation from the fact that he has been granted one last favour by his lady love, that of having a last ride with her.

"I and my mistress, side by side,

Shall be together, breathe and ride,

So, one day more am I deified,

Who knows but the world may end to-night."

Browning's love poems do not deal with love of truth or love of mankind or of one's motherland. His love is purely a passion which draws a man to a woman or a woman to a man. For him love unites not only man and woman, it unites God and man, and it is the supreme principle both of morality and religion.

A study of his major love poems reveals the nature and quality of his art as a love poet. Frankly speaking, Browning has writen two kinds of love poems personal and dramatic. His personal poems are few as his bent of mind is fundamentally dramatic. "He was interested more in looking at others with an objective eye than in indulging in self-analysis."

So his genius was not suited to personal love poetry which essentially requires a lyrical bent of mind on the part of the writer. Still, as we have stated, Browning under the influence of the inspiring love relationship with his wife wrote a few brilliant poems of personal love.

2.7 ROBERT BROWNING'S OBSCURITY

Robert Browning has been considered an obscure poet. In his own age, he was considered very difficult and obscure and hence could not achieve popularity and recognition like his contemporary Tennyson. Obscurity in Browning's poetry results not from any one reason but from a number of reasons.

Firstly, Browning was a very learned poet. His schooling was mostly private, and so his learning was more profound and thorough than of those who have been educated at school. He often supposed that his readers could easily understand his vast range of allusions that he introduced in his poems. Secondly, there is a frequent use of Latin expressions, short sentences and rhetorical questions in his poems. It may then become difficult to the readers to keep pace with these quick questions. Thirdly, He makes excessive use of parentheses and broken half-finished sentences. It may become difficult to his readers to understand the thoughts and feelings of Browning.

"Sordell" is full of obscure allusion more-than any other poem in English language. Mrs. Carlyle read the poem and could not judge whether 'Sordello' was a man or a city or a book. Douglas Jerrold, after reading it, said: "My God! I am idiot; my health is restored, but my mind is gone."

All these factors contribute to some extant to the obscurity Browning. But when the initial difficulty has been solved, we find the reading of Browning's poetry a rewarding experience.

2.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have read about the poetic genius of Browning, and critically appreciated Browning's "Prospice", a lyric on love and death. Here the poet expresses his wish to face death bravely and without fear. For death would only help to unite him forever with his departed wife. We have discussed the philosophy of his life his optimism and his attitude to life, and also we have studied him as a love poet.

2.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q.1 Write a note on Browning's optimism in the Poem "Prospice".

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.3.2, 2.3.3

Q.2 What is Dramatic Monologue?

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.4.

Q.3 critically evaluate the poem Prospice?

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.3.3

Q.4 Do you think Browning is difficult to understand?

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.7.

Q.5 Discuss Browning's philosophy of life?

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.5

Q. 6 Discuss Browning as love poet.

Ans. Read carefully Section 2.6.

Q.7- Explain the following excerpts from the poem with reference to the context.

a) Fear death? .....The post of foe.

b) I was ever a fighter…….. The heroes of old.

C) The black minutes…….the rest.

Ans. For the explanation, carefully read Sections 2.3.2, 2.3.3 and 2.3.4.

2.10 FURTHER READINGS

Miller Betty. *Robert Browning, A Portrait.* London : John Murray, (year)19--.

Blackburn Thomas. *Robert Browning- A Study of His Poetry*. Eyre and Spottis Woode, (year)19 .

G.K. Chesterton. *Robert Browning, English Men of Letters.* London: Macmillan, (year).

UNIT-3 SAROJINI NAIDU : 'THE FLUTE PLAYER OF BRIDAVAN'

Structure

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In the two Units of this Block we have discussed Thomas Gray's *Elegy* as a poem of Transitional period and these identify the strains of both Romanticism and Classicism in it and also we have examined Robert Browning's optimistic poem *'Prospice'* in detail. In this Unit we shall discuss Indian poetess Sarojini Naidu and her lyrical poem *"The Fluet Player of Brindaban"*.

Sarojini Naidu, popularly known as the *"Bharat Kokila"* or *"Nightingale of Inida"*, is the most famous Indian poetess. Many of Sarojini Naidu's poems are infused with political and social commentary, but quite a few are simply musings on life, meditative and halcyonic. Sarojini Naidu wrote poetry where images and metaphors came really out of her imagination. Her poetry is intensely emotional and passionate. The influence of the British Romantic poets can be perceived in her poetry, but what makes it interesting and relevant to the Indian tradition is the sustenance from the indigenuous sources. Her poetry continues to delight the reader by its sheer simplicity and sweetness.

In this unit we shall study a short lyric poem, *The Flute Player of Brindavan.* The poem ends with the sentiments of a worshipper of Lord Krishna.

3.1 OBJECTIVE

After reading this Unit carefully, you will be able to:

- Describe the life and works of Sarojini Naidu.
- Evaluate Sarojini Naidu as a poetess.
- Analyse *The Flute Player of Brindavan.*
- Appreciate her language, imagery and form.

3.2 SAROJINI NAIDU : LIFE AND WORKS

Life:- Sarojini Naidu was a prominent figure of Indian English Literature. She was born on 13th February 1879 in Hyderabad. Her father was Dr. Aghornath Chattopadhyaya, was the founder of Nizam College, Hyderabad, and also a professor and scientist. Sarojini was chiefly inspired by her father and always addressed him with the deepest admiration. Her mother, Varada Sundari , was very talented, accomplished and cultured. She wrote many beautiful lyrics in Bengali and was a good musician. She was a religious minded woman. She was gentle, quite and unassuming. Sarojini inherited her qualities from her parents.

Sarojini Naidu was the eldest among the eight siblings. Her brother Birendranath was a revolutioanary and her other brother Harindranath was a poet, dramatist and an actor. For studies Sarojini was sent to Madras where she passed her Matriculation examination in 1891 at the early age of twelve. She not only secured a first class but also was topper in the list of successful candidates in the entire Madras Presidency. She took four years from her studies due to ill-health. In 1895, she was sent to England to study first at King's College, London and later at Griton College, Cambridge.

Naidu began writing at the age of 13. She wrote "The Lady of the Lake", a poem 1300 lines long. When her father saw that she was more interested in poetry than mathematics or sciences, he decided to encourage her. With the support of her father in 1892 Sarojini wrote the play Maher Muneer in Persian language. Reading a beautiful play written by young girl, the Nizam was very impressed and offered for the poet the scholarship and the passage to England in 1895.

During her stay in England, Sarojini fell in love with a young doctor named Govindarajulu Naidu. At the age of 19, she got married to him. At this time, intercaste marriages were not allowed, but her father approved of the marriage and her marriage was very happy one. The couple had four children.

In England, Sarojini remained for three years. These three years were very significant in every respect for her. Here in England she came in

contact with two great literary figures, Arthour Symons and Edmund Gosse. They helped a lot in shaping her poetic genius.

During the World War I in 1914, she met Mahatma Gandhi. This changed her whole life and career. She became a freedom fighter. In 1925, she was elected the President of Indian National Congress. In 1927, she helped in founded the 'All India Women Conference'. She went Honoluln as a delegate of the All India Women Conference and the Pan Pacific Women Conference in 1928. In March 1930, she became the President of All India Woman Conference. After independence, she became the first Governor of uttar Pradesh in India. She died of a heart attack while working in her office in Lucknow, dated March 2, 1949.

Works Sarojini Naidu's first major collection of poems, *The Golden Threshold* was published in 1905 by William Heinemann Londan. The book was dedicated to Edmund Gosse who first showed me the way to *The Golden Threshold"*. It has forty lyrics on different subjects, and its famous poems are:-

Innovation to India

Lord Buddha Sated on a Lotus

To My Children

Ecstasy

To My Fairy Francies

Past and Future

To Death

Life and Youth

The Pardah Nashin

Autumn

In the Forest and Leilli

Her second collection of the poems *A Bird of Time*, was published by William Heinemann of London in 1912. The title of this collection is taken from Fitzgerald's rendering of one of the rubiayats of Umar Khayyam. It has 46 lyrics on the themes of love, sarrow and death, spring and mysticism. Some famous poems are.

A Love Song from the North

At Twilight

A Rajput Love Song

Dirge

Love and Death

Songs of the Spring Time

The soul's Prayer

The third collection of poems, *The Broken Wing* was published in London in 1917. It has 61 lyrics. Some famous poems in it are:

In Salutation to My Father's Spirit

The Flowering Year

The Offering

The Flute Player of Brindavan

The Prayer of Islam.

The Sceptred Flute (1943) is a compilation of the First Three collections. Sarojini's Poems.

The Feathers of Dawn (1961) is a post humous Publication. This forth volume of Sarojini's Poetry was brought out by her daughter, Padmaja Naidu, ho was at the time the Governor of West Bengal. Her most famous poems are the following :

Indian Weavers

The Palanquin Bearers

The Gift of India

Bangle Seller

The Anthem of Love and Village Song.

3.3 THE FLUTE PLAYER OF BRINDABAN (TEXT)

WHY didst thou play thy matchless flute

'Neath the Kadamba tree,

And wound my idly dreaming heart

With poignant melody,

So where thou goest I must go

My Flute-player with thee?

Still must I like a homeless bird

Wander, forsaking all-

The earthly loves and worldly lures

That held my life in thrall,

'And follow, follow, answering

Thy magical flute-call,

To Indra's golden-flowering groves

Where streams immoratal flow,

Or to sad Yama's silent Courts

Engulfed in Lampless woe,

Where'er thy subtle flute I hear

Beloved I must Go!

No peril of the deep or height

Shall daunt my winged foot;

No fear of time-unconquered space,

Or light untravelled route,

Impede my heart that pants to drain

The nectar of thy flute!

3.3.1 GLOSSARY

Thou– you. Here it refers to Lord Krishna.

Thy – your.

Matchless – Unique, Unequal.

Neath – Beneath, Under.

Poignant – emotional, Passionate.

Still must I like homeless bird …… world lures– Here the poetess mentions that her soul becomes homeless bird to abandon all worldly joys and materialistic things and to strive to meet her love.

Lampless woe – Unlightened or great sorrow.

Peril – hazard, danger.

Nectar – The divine wine of oneness.

3.3.2 SUBSTANCE OF THE POEM

The poem *"The Flute Player of Brindavan"* depicts the restlessness of poetess to be relieved with the poignant melody of the flute player Lord Krishna. Her heart was already brimming with the Divine love. Lord created ripples in the simmering sea of her divine quest. She tells that she was wounded now by pain of love and devotion to Lord Krishna. She takes instructions to move every nook and corner by the thrill of the rhythm and harmony of the melodious flute. She decides to follow Him wherever He goes in playing upon his flute. The flute playing converted ordinary mortals into constant meditation on the divine presence of Lord Krishna.

3.3.3 A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

This highly devotional poem "The Flute Player of Brindavan" is penned by the 'Bharat Kokila' or the 'Nightingale of India', Sarojini Naidu. She tries to express the Hindu tradition of love for the Soul Over or God. Here a devotee pours her emotion and deep love for God. The devotee is Radha, the beloved of Lord Krishna, who is influenced strongly by the melodious tune of Krishna's flute.

The poetess begins the poem where devotee (Radha) asks a question to Krishna for his hypnotizing divine tune of the flute. She is asking a question to lord Krishna as to why he has played the flute so melodiously beneath the Kadamba tree. She is spell-bound by his melodious tune that wounded her idle heart which was dreaming in earthly joys and materialistic things. She further says that she should go to meet him because she wants to hear the mesmerizing tune of the flute. In the next stanzas the poetess has become a *'homeless bird'* by hearing the melodious tune of Krishna's flute. She abandons all her earthly love, materialistic joys and worldly desires which controlled her life so far. By this attractive tune she is so much impressed that she wants to follow him and answer the call of his magical flute. In the third stanza, the poetess says that she will follow lard Krishna wherever he goes whether he is in Indra's golden flowering groves where immortal stream is flowing or he is in the sad silent court of Yama which is very dark because there are no lamps. So, wherever she can hear his incomparable flute, she wants to go there. In the fourth and Last stanza, the poetess remarks that no kind of danger, no matter how deep or dangerous it is, can stop her winged foot. She does not fear about time -unconquered space or even light untravelled route because nothing can prevent her impatient heart to follow Krishna how has mesmerize by it the sweet sound of His flute.

This is a mystical and symbolical poem. Mrs. Naidu describes the spiritual hunger of her soul which is struggling hard to reach its divine destination. Krishna's flute keeps away from mortal's care and attachment. The soul completely wants to merge in the flame of divinity. Mortal's worldly attachment is swept away completely by this divine union.

3.4 SAROJINI NAIDU AS A POETESS

Sarojini Naidu has emerged as one of India's leading English poets. She has won recognition at home as well as abroad. Her poetry is read all over the English-speaking world. Sarojini Naidu's first collection of poems was published in 1905 under the title *The Golden Threshold.* It was followed by the publication of two other collections of poems — *The Bird of Time* (1912) and *The Broken Wing* (1917) and his posthumous work *The Feathers of the Dawn* (1961) presents a clear picture of Indian scenes, sights and experiences transmuted into fantastic vision of colour, sound and rhythm.

Sarojini Naidu was a very versatile genius. Her versatility in the realm of poetry is reflected in the variety of themes. Her poetry is replete with lyrics of love, beauty mysticism, nature and so on.

NATURE IN SAROJINI'S POETRY

Nature plays an important and significant role in Sarojini's poetry. She depicts Nature in all its beauty and magnificence and also in its variety, Nature in her poetry also serves as the background or as a foil to the prevailing mood of the poet or the object under depiction, and so it partakes of human feelings. The spring and flowers, groves and stream predominate in her poetry.

The Spring has a special significance for the poet as it is characterised by renewal and regeneration in every sphere of life and the entire scene around us undergoes a change:

"Young leaves grow green on the banyan twigs,

And red on the peepal tree.

The honey-birds pipe to budding figs,

And honey blooms call the bee."

THE PICTURE OF INDIANNESS IN SAROJINI 'S POETRY

The most skriking feature of Sarojini Naidu's poetry is its native flavour. Her poetry takes us to the voluptuous richness of an Indian landscape with its pomegranate buds and *sirisha*, and *neem*, the liting melody of bulbuls and koels and colourful noisy Indian bazzars especially Hydrabad. Her poetry paints the panorama of life in all its colours and moods. The

life of the Indian people fascinated and inspired Sarojini the most. She loved to be among them and shared their hopes and despairs, joys and sorrows which reflect their delicacy of emotion and luxuriance of imagination. Her love poems with enthral us their range and depth of passion, and her folk songs are miraculously powerful, for to them almost all the aspects of her genius contribute. She is admirably successful in setting a rural or pastoral scene in her poems.

MYSTICISM IN SAROJINI'S POETRY

Mystic awareness is a part of Indian religious temperament and Sarojini is no exception. Nature is to her a mystic garden, a symbol of mysterious forces breaking into the life of the individual as well as the race. It is a manifestation of the Cosmic Being, Purusha, revealing himself as Prakrit. It is a retreat from strife and conflict, encouraging solitary contemplation and renewing man's harmony with the world. In the poem "Quest" Sarojini's mysticism appears interlaced with her abstract thought. The "Quest" shows Radha's hectic search for Krishna right form dawn to dusk. When no information is received, she starts weeping. The soul separated from its sources experiences utter grief and pain. Suddenly Radha hears Krishna's hidden laughter mocking her. He tells her that with her doubt and distrust is uselessly seeking for him outside whereas he is always within her. The soul yearns for its total merger in the Infinite.

'I bowed my weeping face upon my plam,

Moaning — o where art thou, my Ghanshyam,

Then like a boat that rocks from keel to rafter.

***** ***** *****

**** ***** *****

The secret that within thyself dath of well?

I am of thee, as thou of me a part.

LOVE IN SAROJINI'S POETRY

Sarojini Naidu is one of the leading poets of love in the field of Indian English poetry. She deals with different modes/states of love in her love poetry. Her love poetry covers almost the whole range of love. Except for the naked sex. Her concept of love is antitraditional. Sarojini approaches love from a liberal perspective and considers it as the natural urge and basic need of life. Love sustains life and gives it a sense of direction. For, a person- life is incomplete without love. Sorrows and frustrations are implied in love, but the lovers do not give up the hope of being finally united with the object of their love. Sarojini is a confessional poetess-who fearlessly reveals her relationship with her lovers in love poems. Love is not a unilateral but a bilateral relationship. Physical love is a must for the realization of spiritual ecstasy. There is no fear of death in

divine love. Sarojini's loves to introduce many conventional elements in her love poetry.

Sarojini Naidu crafted her art of writing very well. She was aware of the high standards of English poetry and was a good critic of her own poetry, therefore even after getting the approval of a known English critic like Arthour Symons for publishing her first collection of poems,she replied to him in one of her letters thus : "Is it possible that I love written verses that are filled with beauty and is it possible that you realy think them worthy of being given to the world?''

Sarojini Naidu's style unique. Though she sought inspiration from the English Romantics, her poetry reveals her individuality and originality. She combined her imagination, feelings and sophisticated diction in an artistic manner which made her poetry glow with life and fire of passion. A.N. Dwevedi rightly remarks, "Sarojini was actually two things in one, a supreme artist and a fine melodist with the background of an intense thinker."

3.5 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit we have discussed the following:

Sarojini Naidu was prolific poet in p Pre- Independence India. She is considered to be a dream er born in a dreamless age.She is also an ardent, versatile and dynamic genius unsurpassable for her sweet and melodious in the entire range of Indian English poetry. Her poems are a magnificent and colourful album of Indian life.

The short lyric 'The Flute Player of Brindavan' deals with sentiments of a worshiper of Lord Krishna. The poem is full of devotional tone. The poetess only aspires to enjoy the magical note of Krishna|s flute to the full and she is ready to take all risks to fulfil her wishes.

3.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWER

Q.1. Discuss Sarojini Naidu as poet in your own words.

Ans. You will find the answer in Section 3.4.

Q. 2. Critically evaluate the poem 'The Flute Player of Brindavan'.

Ans. Read carefully Section 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.

Q.3. Write a note on the theme of the poem 'The flute player of Brindavan'.

Ans. Read carefully Section 3.3.2.

Q.4. Discuss Sarojini Naidu as a love poet.

Ans. Read carefully Section 3.4.

Q.5 Explain the following excerpts from the poem with reference to the context

(i) Why didst thou..... melody.

(ii) Still must I ..... lures.

(iii) To Indra's Golden..... lampless woe.

(iv) No fear of time ..... thy flute.

Ans. For explanation, read carefully Sections 3.3, 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.

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Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon
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Bachelor of Arts

UGEN-101

Reading Poetry

BLOCK

2

BRITISH POETRY

UGEN-101

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

BLOCK-2 Consists of 2 Units

Unit-4 discusses Matthew Arnold's great melancholic poem *Dover Beach*. Matthew Arnold stands eminently , embellishing the British line of Poet, Scholar, critic and thinker – rolled in one; Starting from Milton and continuing through Johnson, Coleridge , himself to T.S. Eliot. He holds a singular distinction as the representative writer of Victorian Age.

Unit-5 analyse G.M. Hopkins' poem *Pied Beauty* along with social and religious influences that shaped it.

There are some in text questions in each unit which will help you to assess your progress.

UNIT-4 MATTHEW ARNOLD : 'DOVER BEACH'

Structure

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 1, Unit 2 and Unit 3 of the Block 1, we discussed Thomas Gray's famous poem *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* and Robert Browning's optimistic poem *Prospice* and Sorojini Naidu's lyric *The Flute-Player of Brindavan*. In this Unit we shall discuss Matthew Arnold's great poem *Dover Beach*. Among the Victorian poets, Matthew Arnold is hailed as the most seriously concerned with the state of affairs. His serious involvement in social, cultural, religious, and political affairs most probably shaped him into an elegiac poet, critic, and philosopher. His pessimism had entered into consciousness.

We would like you to read the poem at least two or three times and try to interpret lines of the poem with the help of notes given in Section 4.4.2 and literary devices explained in Section 4.4.4. After having read and understood the poem, write down answers to the questions reading carefully the relevant Section as hinted in Section 4.6.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit on Matthew Arnold, learners will be introduced to Arnold's most anthologized and read poem *Dover Beach* along with social, cultural, and historic influences that shaped it. Actually Arnold's

work is a true storage of ideas related to all aspects of Victorian era. At the end of the Unit, learners will be able to:

- Analyze the poem soundly
- Correlate ideas put forth in the poem and the existing social and cultural values and thoughts of the Victorian era
- Trace the poetic devices and techniques applied in the formation of the poem.

4.2 MATTHEW ARNOLD : HIS AGE AND LIFE

Matthew Arnold was born on 24th of December in 1822 at Laleham, a small village in the valley of the Thames in Middlesex. He was the second child and the eldest son among nine children of his father. His father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, was a famous educationist, historian, and the headmaster of Rugby school where Matthew Arnold was admitted as a student at the age of six. Before entering the Rugby school, he had spent a year at Winchester school. In 1841 he entered Balliol College, Oxford. His mother, Mary Penrose, played a crucial role in shaping him as a poet. After completing his undergraduate course with second class at Oxford, he went back to Rugby to teach in 1845 as an assistant teacher. The same year he was selected for a Fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford. The same position was with his Rugby-days friend Arthur Hugh Clough before him. In 1847 he became private secretary to Lord Lansdowne, then President of Council during the ministry of Lord John Russell (1846-1852). On 10th of June, 1851 he married Frances Lucy Wightman, the daughter of a prominent English judge of the Queen's Bench. The same year Lord Lansdowne appointed him Inspector of Schools, a position he held for 35 years until his retirement in1886. During his tenure he was recognized as an authority on elementary education. Oxford was very close to his heart as London was to Dr. Samuel Johnson. Two years after his retirement, Arnold running to catch a tram-car at the Dingle in Liverpool overtaxed his poor heart and died right away on April 15, 1888 at the age of 65.

The age in which Matthew Arnold was born is called the Victorian Age. It is called so after Queen Victoria, the Empress of Great Britain. She ruled over her country from 1837 to 1901. It is an era that saw the rise of democracy, industrial progress, and scientific advancements. Consequently, there arose social unrest in large scale. Charles Robert Darwin by his 'evolutionary theory' propounded in his book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* published in 1859 shook the religious faith of people to the very root badly. It is in fact an era of conflict; conflict between science and religion, democracy and aristocracy, rationalism and romanticism, materialism and spiritualism, capitalism and socialism, skepticism and pessimism, so on and so forth. Things were happening rapidly. In fact it was an Age of Faith, of Doubt, of Morality, of Hypocrisy, of Prosperity, of Poverty and of Dirt and Squalor, of Order, of Balance, and of Compromise.

The Victorian poetry also could not escape without being affected by quickly changing attitudes of people towards politics, economics, science, and religion. The Victorian poetry is largely marked by a changed attitude towards life, nature, moral values, pessimism, and precision in expression. Unlike the Romantic poets, the Victorians live in an actual world and deal in state of affairs. Tennyson in his poems is largely seen showing and justifying order and balance in all walks of life- social, cultural, economic, scientific, political, educational, and religious. This attitude of Tennyson is popularly known as "Victorian Compromise". Matthew Arnold is famous for his social criticism and resultant pessimism, though Tennyson also not free from elegiac notes.

4.3 ARNOLD'S LITERARY OUTPUT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Matthew Arnold is famous both as a poet and as a critic. His social achievements actually blanket largely his literary attainments and successes, as most of the time he was seen busy writing socio-cultural and religious views and dissertations. He had deep interest in poetry since Rugby school-days where he wrote a poem *Alaric at Rome* that bore him Rugby prize-poem and a scholarship to be given by Balliol College, Oxford, where he entered in 1841. In 1843 at Oxford, he composed a poem Cromwell that bore him the Newdigate Poetry Prize. During his stay in Switzerland from 1848 to 1849, he met a French lady named Maurguerite and fell in love with her but failed to marry her, and she appears in a number of poems. In 1849 he having assumed the name 'A' published a thin volume *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems,* followed by *Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems* by 'A' in 1852. "To Marguerite: Continued" is a poem which was first published in the volume *Empedocles on Etna*. In 1853 and 1855 he brought out two collections of poems titled simply ***Poems*** including *The Forsaken Merman, Sohrab and Rustam, Balder Dead*, and *The Scholar Gipsy*. In 1858 he wrote a play, *Merope*. Years between 1857 and 1867 he served as a Professor of Poetry at Oxford. In 1867 he published *New Poems*, including *Thyrsis* and *Dover Beach*. In 1869 first collected edition of his poems came out. Thereafter, he completely dedicated himself to writing critical essays. Here we are producing a list of his critical essays:

LITERARY CRITICISM:

On Translating Homer (1861-62).

Essays in Criticism 1st S*eries* (1865).

On the Study of Celtic Literature (1867).

Mixed Essays (1877).

The Study of Poetry (1880).

Essays in Criticism 2nd *Series* (1888).

EDUCATIONAL CRITICISM:

Popular Education in France (1861).

A French Eton (1864).

Schools and Universities On the Continent (1868).

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CRITICISM:

Culture and Anarchy (1869).

St. Paul and Protestantism (1870).

Friendship's Garland (1871).

Literature and Dogma (1873).

God and the Bible (1875).

Last Essays on Church and Religion (1877).

Irish Essays (1882).

Discourses in America (1885).

Margaret Drabble writes about his essays thus : "In his critical essays, Arnold sharply criticized the provincialism (lack of sophistication or localism), Philistinism (materialism), sectarianism (narrow-mindedness), and utilitarian materialism of English life and culture and argued that England needed more intellectual curiosity, more ideas, and a more comparative European outlook". Arnold had, no doubt, a cosmopolitan view of life and art.

4.4 DOVER BEACH (TEXT)

The sea is calm to-night.

The tide is full, the moon lies fair

Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!

Only, from the long line of spray

Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,

Listen! you hear the grating roar

Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,

At their return, up the high strand,

Begin, and cease, and then again begin,

With tremulous cadence slow, and bring

The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago

Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought

Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow

Of human misery; we

Find also in the sound a thought,

Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.

But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,

Retreating, to the breath

Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear

And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true

To one another! for the world, which seems

To lie before us like a land of dreams,

So various, so beautiful, so new,

Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,

Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;

And we are here as on a darkling plain

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,

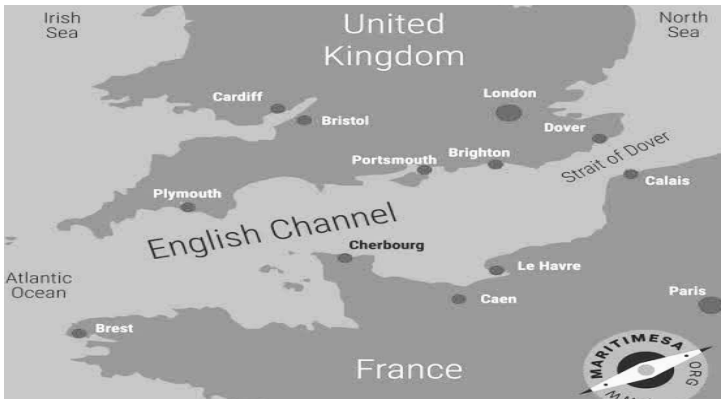
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

4.4.1 BACKGROUND TO THE POEM

This poem was perhaps written sometime in 1851 the year he visited Dover with his wife he twice and spent a night there. Dover is a seaport of Kent in the south-east of England. It is the same place where Lear had taken refuge to his youngest daughter Cordelia married to the King of France, having been misbehaved by her all other sisters in

Shakespearers play *King Lear*. Wordsworth wrote a sonnet *By the Sea* on October 15, 1802 on the French side of the same sea near Calais just opposite to Dover. Perhaps these two references inspired him to compose *Dover Beach* poem. But it appeared for the first time along with *Thyrsis* in the volume simply titled *New Poems* in 1867. This is one of his meditative poems as it embodies the essence of his attitudes towards life around. Melancholy is the keynote of this poem like several other poems. In this poem the poet emerges at his best in giving expression to the existing social, spiritual, and intellectual unrest of his time. Herbert W. Paul points out, "Profoundly melancholy in tone, it (the poem *Dover Beach*) expresses the peculiar turn of Arnold's mind, at once religious and skeptical, philosophical and emotional, better than his formal treatises on philosophy and religion." It is veritable 'criticism of life'. This poem is often hailed by critics as the first modern poem. Structurally, it is put in unequal verse paragraphs decorated with apt uses of figures, images, and catchy phrases and expressions.

Let us see geographically the image of the Straits of Dover:



The Straits of Dover (Courtesy: Wikipedia)

4.4.2 NOTES

The sea : the straits of Dover.

beach : sea-shore.

the straits : a narrow passage of the sea between two areas of land joining usually two seas. The Strait of Dover edges the coastal sides of both England and France and hence it is called 'straits' by the poet.

on the French coast : across the English Channel there lies the famous port, the French coast of Calais.

gleams : shines, radiates.

cliffs : the steep high face of rocks.

glimmering : shining faintly or dimly.

tranquil bay : the peaceful English Channel.

come to the window : The poet is here requesting his lady love, most probably his wife Frances Lucy Wightman, to come to the window to enjoy the peaceful sea.

spray : the rising foamy sea water dashing against the sea-shore.

moon-blanch'd land : the land appearing white in the presence of moon light.

grating roar : loud clattering sound produced by the rolling of pebbles.

fling : throw.g

high strand : the sloping seashore.

tremulous cadence slow : slow quivering rhythm of sound.

The eternal note of sadness :Here the poet expresses his deep melancholic feelings. He visualizes the sea as someone weeping through its permanently breaking waves.

Sophocles : the poet's favourite Greek tragic poet and playwright famous for his plays such as *Oedipus the King*, *Azax*, *Antigone*, *Electra*, and *Philocetes*.

the Ægean : the sea lying between Greece and Asia Minor. It is named after the King Athens Aegeus. He had told his son Theseus that if he came off victorious having slain the Minotaur, he would unfurl a white sail on his ship so that his father watching from the Acropolis would know of his well being as soon as it was possible. Theseus unfortunately forgot to change the black sail with which he had left home. His father thinking him dead fell off the ship and drowned. Thereafter the sea came to be called Aegean.

turbid : disordered or confused.

turbid ebb and flow/

Of human misery : unclear or muddled rise and fall of human sorrows.

distant northern sea	:	Here it may mean either the North Sea or the English Channel which is far off the Aegean Sea.
The Sea of faith	:	here the poet sees faith as a sea.
girdle	:	a belt worn round the waist.
furl'd	:	folded.
Bright girdle furl'd	:	'the sea of faith' as a belt had once covered the entire humanity.
retreating	:	withdrawing or going back.
breath	:	blowing.
vast edges	:	wide expanses of sea shores or borders.
drear	:	gloomy, cheerless.
shingles	:	a pile of pebbles well-shaped by constant rolling.
certitude	:	certainty.
darkling	:	in dark, that is, a state of half light and half darkness that signifies uncertainty.
swept	:	surrounded.
confused alarms	:	unclear or disorderly signals of fear and terror.
ignorant armies	:	Here is perhaps an allusion to Thucydides's description of night-battle in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, where the Athenian invaders flew at Sicilians by night and got confused for darkness soon after they began their operation and killed many of their own armies and hence they described *ignorant armies.*
clash	:	fight, was.
by night	:	during night, that is in absence of knowledge and religious faith.

4.4.3 A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

To look upon gradual constriction in the volume of religious faith and humane values, the poet felt deeply shocked. Those hurt feelings took the shape of the poem *Dover Beach*. In fact, it is an epitome of his thoughts and attitudes long cherished and celebrated in his poetic and prose works throughout. He saw mass of the public running after material pursuits, ignoring ethical and moral values as conceived in religious or

theological texts. Essentially, it was the non-religious order of his time and society that shaped his melancholic mood.

The poem consists of four verse paragraphs of unequal size or length. In the first verse paragraph, the poet puts forth the vivid view of the sea from the Dover Beach where he was staying most probably with his wife. He says that the sea, that is, the straits of Dover, is tranquil on this night as no storms are seen there and the sea waves are rising and falling at regular velocity or speed. It being the full moon night (पूर्णिमा), the moon was appearing as a circle, looking very fair and shining, very bright upon the both sides of Dover. To the poet the French coast appears dimly bright from his staying place, that is, the English, side but the images and faces of high and steep rocks of the English side appear relatively enlarged and twinkling in the water-mirror of the still sea because the poet from his staying-place is able to see them more clearly. Feeling overwhelmed, the poet asks his beloved to come to the window to enjoy fresh breezes. And, moreover, asks her to hear carefully the loud clattering of stones brought and left on the sea-shores appearing white in the presence of the moonlight. As the sea waves rise, they wash stones ashore forcefully, and as they recede, they carry stones back along. This process of moving stones forward and backward goes on endlessly. Out of this process of to and fro, there arises a harsh clattering amongst pebbles which signifies to the poet the everlasting pain and suffering of human beings. Thus, the poet understood the rhythm or sound of grating and clattering of pebbles as the song of suffering. In this verse paragraph, the picture-drawing ability of the poet through words is evident.

In the second verse paragraph, the poet associates himself with Sophocles who too had the identical thought and meant the clattering of stones as the voice of human pain and misery sitting by the Aegean Sea long ago. Arnold too feels the same sitting by the English Channel which is far off the Aegean Sea. In this paragraph, the poet seems to establish his view that misery is a universal phenomenon. The reference to Sophocles, a great Greek tragedian, verifies that he had widely read and studied the world classic literature.

In the third verse paragraph, the poet likens faith in religion to the boundless and fathomless sea. It was a time when there was nothing unsacred in England. Faith in religion had its reach to every nook and cranny of the English culture and life. Every action was bound by religious precepts. It has surrounded the English culture and life like a belt worn round the waist. But in the Victorian England, the poet finds the hold of religion gradually weakening, constricting, and relieving the English culture and society. As such, the English life and pattern is getting cheerless and hopeless which is one of the causes of the poet's melancholic attitude. According to him, the Victorian people are getting shameless being unguided by faith in religion. This verse paragraph is distinct for vivid image, sonorous phrase and word, and a figure of speech, metaphor.

In the fourth and concluding verse paragraph, the poet suggests a cure to the disease (social, cultural, economic, political, and educational) rampant widely in the Victorian England. It is faith in love and fraternity. By the magic of faith in love and fraternity, it seems to the poet that the English society can be redeemed and restored to its lost glory. With this conviction, the poet appeals to his lady-love to have faith and reliance in each other. Going by this conviction, they can have a peaceful, joyful, and happy life. The poet wishes his own life fully saturated with love and faith as an example to show to his countrymen.

How did he come to this unfailing remedy? It is answered and explained beautifully in the concluding few lines of the poem by the poet. The world we live in appears outwardly full of promise and hope, glamour and glory, beauty and brightness. In this illusory world, everything appears fresh and fair in colour and of its own type. But the truth of this world is just opposite, provided it has been examined inwardly. Inwardly the poet finds it having nothing as such that could ensure true love, true happiness, and real knowledge. The Victorian England has become dreary and unviable for the growth of religious faith. People have become altogether unreliable, insensitive, and unsympathetic towards their fellows. Out of such cruel atmosphere they have become so for the absence of religious faith; none has time to console and soothe hearts in suffering. People are simply running after material pursuits without having due knowledge about the end of their pursuits. They do not properly know the goal of their lives. The poet compares the people of this hostile and inhuman world to 'the ignorant armies' of Athens and the English society to a battlefield where things are hardly visible for darkness. Sheer scepticism has swept across the entire English life, culture, and society. By the concluding two lines Arnold wishes to convey his sceptic and melancholic view of the English life and society marked by the state of uncertainty, fears, doubts, and disputes that had taken over the Victorian mind. In fact, such situations occur wherever there happens and begins the phase of the loss of faith irrespective of place and time. In this way, to get rid of 'uncertainty, fear, doubt, and dispute', love seems the only hope and the only consolation, and the only remedy. This last verse paragraph bears all the qualities of preceding verse paragraphs.

4.4.4 POETIC DEVICES

Earlier in the Section titled 'Background to the Poem' it is hinted that the poem *Dover Beach* is noted for its vivid use of imagery, figures of speech especially metaphor and simile, catchy phrases and their musicality, relevant references, and moreover for its brilliant criticism of the then society. Without the proper use of poetic devices, no thought can be presented effectively and impressively. Let us mark and identify the poetic devices that have been applied into the texture of the poem:

- The poem is cast in four verse paragraphs. The first is consisted of 14 lines; the second 6 lines; the third 8 lines; and the last verse

paragraph made up of 9 lines. The shortest line of the poem is “The Sea of Faith” of two feet. The accent of the poem is *iambus*.

- Arnold has used a beautiful metaphor in the first line of the third paragraph, i.e. “The Sea of Faith”. In it the religious faith is compared to a sea.
- In “Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl’d” Arnold has used two figures of speech. In the beginning of the sentence, there is *Simile* and in the phrase ‘bright girdle furl’d’ a figure of speech mostly it was used by Milton is called *Miltonic Inversion*. In it a noun is placed between two adjectives. The word ‘girdle’ is used between ‘bright’ and ‘furl’d’.
- In lines “To lie before us *like* a land of dreams” and “And we are here *as* on a darkling plain” we see the use of *Simile*.
- The sea imagery is predominant in the poem. In fact, he made the sea the vehicle for the elucidation of his deep sad feelings. The use of figures, allusions, and references add charm to the images used in the poem.

4.5 SUMMING UP

Now it has become clear enough that the poet in the poem laments the weakening hold of religious faith on the English society. To drive home his feelings of sadness forcefully, Matthew Arnold took the help of sea imagery. He interpreted the movement of waves backward and forward, carrying pebbles in large numbers giving out harsh noise as the ‘ebb and flow of human misery’. He was not satisfied with the state of affairs. According to him, art should not be for art’s sake. It must bear social purpose that could serve as correctives to existing ills of the society. It was the reason that prompted him to turn from poetry to the works of criticism. The elegiac tone of the poem identifies itself with modern poetry. His failure to adjust with the fast changing conditions of time caused the development of pessimism in him. And it was his dissatisfaction with the affairs of the state that perhaps led him to stand out as the weeping philosopher and poet of England.

4.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 Discuss *Dover Beach* as a mirror of the Victorian England.

Ans. For answer read carefully Section 4.2 and 4.4.3.

Q. 2 Comment on the imagery in "Dover Beach."

Ans. Read carefully Section 4.4.4 for answer.

Q. 3 Discuss Matthew Arnold as an elegiac poet with reference to the poem "Dover Beach."

Ans. Read carefully Section s 4.2, 4.4.1, and 4.4.3.

Q. 4 Explain the following excerpts from the poem with reference to the context:

a) The sea is calm……sweet is the night-air!

b) The Sea of Faith……..shingles of the world.

c) Ah, love, let us……clash by night.

Ans. For the explanation, carefully read Sections 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, and 4.4.4.

4.7 FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT-5 GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS : 'PIED BEAUTY'

Structure

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit you read Matthew Arnold's poem *Dover Beach*. In this Unit we shall discuss and analyze Hopkins' poem *Pied Beauty*. In it he appears as a man of religious faith observing nature keenly and delightfully. He praises colourfulness of the nature. He has actually great obsession to see beauty of things in their interiority.

We would like you to read the poem at least two or three times and try to interpret lines of the poem with the help of notes given in Section 5.4.2 and literary devices explained in Section 5.4.4. After having read and understood the poem, write down answers to the questions given in Section 5.6 reading carefully the relevant Sections as hinted.

5.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit on Hopkins, learners will be introduced to his famous 'curtal sonnet' *Pied Beauty* along with social and religious influences that shaped it. Hopkins is more noted in his works for his experiments with the poetic forms. At the end of the Unit, learners will be able to:

- Analyze the poem soundly

- Correlate ideas put forth in the poem and the state of the poet's mind
- Trace the poetic devices and techniques applied in the poem.

5.2 HOPKINS, HIS LIFE AND AGE

Gerard Manley Hopkins was born on the 28th of July, 1844 at Stratford, Essex (now in Greater London) to an Anglican couple Manley and Catherine. His father Manley Hopkins was a marine insurance officer and an occasional poet and mother Catherine Smith Hopkins was the daughter of John Simm Smith, a physician and friend to John Keats. After home education, his regular schooling began in 1852 at Hampstead. Two years after he was admitted to a Grammar School at Highgate where he stayed for some ten years; thereafter he entered Balliol College, Oxford in October 1863. In 1866 under the influence of Cardinal John Henry Newman, he joined the Roman Catholic Church and converted to Catholicism. After completing graduation, he accepted the post of a teacher which Newman had offered him in 1867. On becoming a Jesuit (one who is a member of the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus established by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1534, dedicated to missionary and educational work), he burnt all his poems written before except a few poems, such as "The Alchemist in the City", "Heaven-Haven", and "The Habit of Perfection". Hopkins on 23 September 1877 was ordained a priest. In 1884, he became the professor of Greek and Latin at the University College, Dublin. He died of typhoid fever when he was just 44 years old, on 8th June, 1889, in Dublin.

Gerard Manley Hopkins is a Janus-faced poet, and critics readily associate him with both the Victorian and the Modern poets. It means, he was partly Victorian and partly modern in his outlook. The Victorian poetry is identified for its propagation of a changed attitude towards life and nature, pessimism, and pinpointed poetic presentation of thought. Hopkins, like other predecessors, continued the romantic lyricism. Hopkins also could not escape the existing force of religious faith and doubt for the rise of science that impelled him to do experiments with prosody. In the Victorian period, man-made order and system supporting uniformity was valued and acknowledged more than the divine diversity and variety. Science had jolted the very root of religion, yet Hopkins extolled religion and believed in the existence of God everywhere and in everything. When Robert Bridges brought out Hopkins' poems in a collection in 1918, T. S. Eliot immediately welcomed him as an honorary modernist. His bold experiments with versification connect him modernist poetry. Sometimes such inventions generate obscurity that makes him a difficult poet.

5.3 HOPKINS' LITERARY CAREER AND ACHIEVEMENT

Gerard Manley Hopkins was temperamentally meditative and intellectual. He wrote two poems while studying at Highgate School, namely "The Escorial" in 1860 and "A Vision of the Mermaids" in 1862 that bore him the school prize. In 1868, on becoming a Jesuit, Hopkins completely left composing poems at least for seven years. In 1875 after seven years' long poetic silence, he resumed his great poem *The Wreck of the Deutschland* at the request of his rector who wished someone to write a poem dealing with the drowning of five Franciscan nuns who were banished from Germany at the mouth of The thames River, London, in the winter of 1875. Among his early survived poems such as "Heaven-Haven" and "The Habit of Perfection" we see his inclination towards priesthood. Years between 1876 and 1879, he wrote a few poems popularly known as 'Wreck poems' that include *The Wreck of the Deutschland, The Loss of Eurdice* and some ten more religious poems. Years between 1879 and 1883, he composed *The Poems of Priesthood* in 15 numbers. He is often hailed by literary historians as the first really great religious poet of England after John Milton. "The Windhover" (falling paeonic rhythm, sprung and outriding) and "Pied Beauty" (a Curtal Sonnet), "Duns Scotus's Oxford" (Sprung, out-riding rhythm), "Felix Randal" (Sonnet, six feet lines), "As Kingfishers" (Scotist' Sonnet) are all sonnets composed sometime years between 1876 and1883. From 1883-1889 came out what we now call 'Terrible Sonnets', dealing with the wreck of his own life. Actually, he was undergoing bad health, doubt, and despair and was badly paralyzed physically and emotionally. Robert Bridges chose a few sonnets written between 1885 and 1888 calling them "Terrible Sonnets". These are: "Songs of Desolation", "My Own Heart", "Carrion Comfort", "No Worst, There is None", "So Seem the Stranger", "I Wake and Feel the Feel of Dark", "Patience, Hard Thing", and "Thou Art Indeed Just Lord". The poems like "The Windhover", "The Soldier", and "In Honour of St. Alphonsus Roderigues" were inspired by St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus.

Broadly, his poems can be classified into two kinds: romantic and experimental poems in content and style. The poems such as "The Caged Skylark", "Felix Randal", "Pied Beauty", "Inversnaid" belong to the romantic tradition. The poems like "The Wreck of the Deutschland" and "The Windhover" belong to the second category.

Like William Blake, he was ignored except a few friends during his lifetime. About his poetic genius, his two friends Robert Bridges and Coventry Patmore were well familiar. Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold were definitely unique in their own ways. But among the Victorian poets, Hopkins was the most bold and original poet. His poetic output is in fact the result of the conflict or tension between Hopkins as a poet and Hopkins as a priest. Edmund Spenser, John Keats, and the Pre-Raphaelite poets influenced him considerably. He is appreciated and remembered

often for his prosodic experiments, such as *Sprung Rhythm*, *Inscape*, and *Instress*. He has great command over rhythm. For *Sprung Rhythm*, he suggested one stressed or accentuated syllable usually followed by three unaccented or unstressed syllables, however the number of unaccented and accented syllables vary according to the need of thought. It is a rhythm in which stresses are counted not the syllables. It is called so for it runs like a coach on springs. He has a surprising obsession to look into the interior patterns in nature what he called *Inscape*. He tries to convert interior or inner patterns of nature into language. To see or perceive the interiority of nature, one should evolve a peculiar capacity what he called *Instress*. And, moreover, his frequent use of compound words and original imagery endow his poems with distinction and prove Hopkins a most original poet of the Victorian era. His poems remained unpublished during his life-time. It was the initiative of Robert Bridges who brought out the first edition of his collected poems in 1918 and Charles Williams brought out the second edition in 1930.

5.4 PIED BEAUTY (TEXT)

Glory be to God for dappled things–

For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;

For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;

Fresh-firecoal chestnut–falls; finches' wings;

Landscape plotted and pieced–fold, fallow, and plough;

And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;

Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)

With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;

He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:

Praise him.

5.4.1 BACKGROUND TO THE POEM

In the summer of 1877, the poem *Pied Beauty* was composed. It is a song of praise for everything in Nature that is parti-coloured. It was the occasion when he was studying theology at Pantasaph in North Wales. The countryside beauty of North Wales lightened him up and he turned to muse on Nature and its art of beautifying itself. He appreciates colourfulness of it through some beautiful visual images. In this poem, Hopkins emerges as a keen observer of Nature and as a religious man relatively in a happy and delightful mood. The poem is in a catalogue form that shows how things keep changing. Structurally, it consists of ten and a

half lines what he named *Curtal Sonnet*. The first six lines correspond to 'octave' of eight lines and the last four and a half lines to 'sestet' of six lines of 14 lined *Italian Sonnet*. It was the outcome of one of his experiments with 'prosody'.

5.4.2 NOTES

Pied : having two or more different colours.

dappled things : things marked with the patches or spots of different colours or things coloured variedly.

couple-colour : twin-colour or different colours of the sky.

brinded cow : a cow having light dark spots on a gray or light brown background.

rose-moles : pigmented red spots on the skin partially looking like roses.

all in stipple : moles painted as a design or pattern in the form of small dots.

trout : a fish having pink spots on its back that lives in rivers and lakes and is often used as food.

Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls : an edible nut when it falls down from the chestnut tree and it looks as fresh and bright as a piece of coal aflame.

finches' wings : small song-birds having wings of contrasting colours, however few finches do not have such wings.

Landscape plotted and pieced : an area of land appears from a distance or from a certain

block of hill as turned into pieces and plots– *fold, fallow,* and *plough*.

fold : a certain area of land to confine sheep.

fallow : a ploughed land but left for the season without sowing it.

plough : a cultivated land having harvest.

trades : occupations.

gear and tackle and trim: these denote tools and instruments used in various occupations.

counter : opposite, contrasted

original : to be of one's own kind.

Spare : rare or unique for low availability.

Strange	:	unusual, uncommon.
fickle	:	easily changeable in colou and form.
Freckled	:	coloured or spotted.
Adazzle	:	amazingly bright.
Dim	:	faint or dull.
fathers-forth	:	engenders, brings forth, gives birth.

Notes on some Non-Text words/Phrases –

Janus-faced	:	having two faces–one looking to the future and one to the past.
Ordained	:	appointed or decreed.
Jesuit	:	a man who is a member of a religious group called the Roman Catholic Society of Jesus.
Imagery	:	word pictures.
Motto	:	a short expression used to guide the behavior of a particular person or group.

5.4.3 A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

As a typical Jesuit priest, Hopkins opens the poem with a proclamation: “Glory be to God for dappled things” which is the variation of Jesuit motto ‘to the greater glory of God’ and the last line ‘Praise Him’ is the variation of another motto ‘praise be to God always’. Thus the poet extols God for the creation of things of different colours and qualities. In the following lines the poet gives examples. First, there is the blue sky where sun, moon, stars, and clouds appear and their presence makes the sky of twin-colour or colourful. Here the word ‘skies’ may mean climate or atmosphere. The twin-colour of the sky, the poet likens to a cow of light brown fur with light dark spots. He gives another example of trout fish that swims in the water having pink spots on their backs. These pink spots in the water appear as a pattern or design of roses. In the fourth line, the poet gives an image of a fresh chestnut fruit appearing dark and dull by its outer crust when it falls down from the tree and breaks open; it looks as fresh and bright as a glowing piece of coal. The poet gives another example of finch bird. 'Finch' is a small song bird but it has eye-catching wing of contrasting colours.

The poet turns to a landscape in the fifth line. How is it made beautiful and distinct by God? Let us see, the division and distinction of a landscape or an area into ‘fold’ that is, an enclosure for sheep; ‘fallow’ that is, a land left idle after tilling for cattle to graze upon; and ‘plough’ that is, a cultivated land with harvest, the poet thinks as the part of God’s work. This is the way God colours a particular region variedly. In the sixth

line, the poet holds God responsible for making available various occupations along with their separate tools. The poet thanks God for providing men with various tools as natural wonders. Such is the approach of a man of religion who usually sees the presence of God in each and every thing around.

The final four and a half lines show the poet's devotion to God and they establish and justify that God is indwelling or inherent into everything. He sees everything differential by its own divine nature. And hence everything is of its own type. Everything is rare, original, unique, unusual, and singular. In fact, it becomes the matter of constant query how things distinguish themselves from other co-things and who should be held responsible for all this. There are certain things that change easily. There are certain spotted or coloured things, certain things grow fast, certain slow, certain sweet in taste, certain bitter in taste, certain appear glowing, and certain look faint and dark. For all these creative variations, the poet holds God as the begetter. It is God who is the father of colourful nature of everything. In fact, it is God who is the very essence of beauty. The nature and colour of natural things is beyond change. Change is effected into man-made things. Man only imitates things made by God. God creates everything colourful by the magic of His own prepared unchangeable colour and grace and so the poet asks all to praise and seek shelter in God and religion.

5.4.4 POETIC DEVICES

Structurally, the poem "Pied Beauty" is a curtailed or shortened sonnet as he had called it. 'Curtal' is an archaic form of modern 'curtailed'. So it is called *Curtal Sonnet*. The poem is an expression of the wonder-struck mood and tone of the poet. In this poem, the poet has used several words for suggesting the idea of things colourful such as, *pied, dappled, couple-colour, brinded* etc. The following prosodic features are fond in this poem.

- It is written in *Sprung Rhythm*.
- Use of archaic words such as *brinded, adazzle*.
- Use of compound words such as couple-colour, rose-moles, fresh-firecoal, chestnut-falls, and fathers-forth.
- The first six lines form two *tercets* as they beautifully rhyme *abc abc* and the final four and a half lines rhyme *dbcdc*.
- In the second line "For skies of couple-colour *as* a brinded cow" the poet has used *Simile*.
- In the line "With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim" the poet has used kinetic imagery. We see here movement.
- In this poem the poet tries to represent the inner pattern of nature through language which is technically called *Inscape*. His belief in

all-pervading God lends authenticity to his idea of *Inscape* which is called *Instress* that is, an ability to perceive the *inscape*.

- In compound words like 'couple-colour' 'fickle-freckled', the poet has used assonance and alliteration simultaneously.
- The poet has in this poem regularly changed the syntax, making it difficult to understand.
- The metre of the poem is irregular.
- The poem is picturesque.

5.5 SUMMING UP

Now, it has been become clear that the poem is a sincere tribute of the poet to the greatness of God. Hopkins by this poem responded to all those who did not have faith in the existence of God. He in his own way has proved that God is all-pervading authority. The need is to develop one's skill to see Him. In this poem the poet emerges as an experimentalist with a religious bent of mind. Usually critics hail him as a modern poet, but he was above both Modernists and Victorian poets. He centrally focused on religious beliefs, self-suffering, and renunciation of worldly pleasures. His poetry is free from the elegiac note of Matthew Arnold. His sadness is an outcome of self-suffering. His different approach to Nature, God, and life and their treatment in new forms shaped him into a most original poet of the Victorian period.

5.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 What is a Curtal Sonnet?

Ans. Read Section 5.4.1.

Q. 2 Comment on the language of the poem.

Ans. Read Section 5.4.4.

Q. 3 Whose beauty is 'past change'?

Ans. Read Section 5.4.3.

Q. 4 Discuss G. M. Hopkins as a Victorian poet with reference to the poem "Pied Beauty".

Ans. Read Section 5.2.

Q. 5 Why is Hopkins often linked with modern poets?

Ans. Read Section 5.2.

Q.6 What is *Sprung Rhythm*?

Ans. Read Section 5.3.

Q. 7 What are *Inscape* and *Instress*?

Ans. Read carefully Section 5.3.

Q. 8 Explain the following extracts with reference to the context:

a) Glory be to God…….finches' wings.

b) All things counter……...past change.

Ans. Explain in the light of Section 5.4.3.

Q. 9 Why is Hopkins called the most original poet?

Ans. Read Section 5.3.

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Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon
Open University

Bachelor of Arts

UGEN-101

Reading Poetry

BLOCK

3

AMERICAN POETRY

UGEN-101

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

BLOCK-3 Consists of 2 Units

Unit-6 We discuss Robert Frost as an American Poet and in his Poem *The Road Not Taken.* His Poetry Portrays the disintegration of values in modern life and the disillusionment of the modern man in symbolical and metaphysical terms.

Unit-7 We discuss the poem *Success is Counted Sweetest* by Emily Dickinson written during an age of great ferment in the field of intellectual action ties.

There are some text questions in each unit which will help you to assess your progress.

UNIT-6 ROBERT FROST : 'THE ROAD NOT TAKEN'

Structure

6.0 INTRODUCTION

In Block 3 we shall study about American poetry and in Unit VI of this Block we shall discuss Robert Frost's poem *The Road Not Taken.* Robert Frost is one of the most popular and most honoured poets of America. He has been called by Robert Graves 'the voice of America'. He is as great a poet of Nature in America as Wordsworth in England. Frost emerged during the period of transition when America was coming out of the old and entering into the new order. *The Road Not Taken* is one of the finest and most popular lyrics of Frost. Here the poet tells us that once when he was travelling he reached a point where the roads diverged into two different directions. It is an eternal condition which a man has to face in his life. He is in a state of dilemma about the choice of road. Ultimately, he decided to move ahead on the road which was less travelled by. And this choice made all the difference. The poet's difference is in him from the beginning, long before he sets out on his career. The road that he took was not only the 'different' road, the right road for him, but the only road he could have taken.

You should read the poem. And then read it again with the help of the Analysis given in 6.3.2. After you have followed the Analysis, read the note on Poetic Devices in 6.3.4. After you have read and understood the poem and critical comments, write down the answers to the exercises. Your answers should be checked by the suggested points of the Unit given at the end of the Unit.

6.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit on Robert Frost, you will read one of his best known poems, *The Road Not Taken.* It was collected by Frost in the volume of verses entitled *Mountain Interval* in 1916. It was first published in the August 1915 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly.* Frost has been recognized as the first great poet of the twentieth century. He is the product of the New Poetry Movement in American Literature. He is the most distinguished poet in the era of Transition. He looked at natural phenomenon with an absolutely fresh approach. His poems depict frustration, loneliness and alienation clearly and sincerely. His poetry is not of escape from life but of escape into life. At the end of your study of this Unit, you will be able to:

- discuss Frost's *The Road Not Taken* in detail
- understand the situation of dilemma in Frost's *The Road Not Taken*
- appreciate the poetic techniques used by Frost in this poem.

6.2 ROBERT FROST

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874 in San Francisco, California. He took up various jobs for earning. His experience in husbandry and craftsmanship influenced his poetry both in subject matter and style. His poetry has the honesty and simplicity of the countryside. In 1892 he sold his farm and went to England with his family. He met the Georgians whose aims were much like his own. He met Lascelles Abercrombie, Wilfred Gibson and Edward Thomas. Ezra Pound introduced him as a Yankee poet and wrote the preface for Frost's *A Boy's Will* published in 1913. *A Boy's Will* bears the unmistakable stamp of Frost's personality. He depicts clearly the New England scenes and represents the poet's search of a personal idiom. His *North of Boston* was published in 1914. He came back to America upon the outbreak of war in 1914. He was appointed a Professor at Amberst College and a poet in residence at Michigan.

Nature is portrayed as indifferent and blind towards the faltering steps of the poet between birth and death in *Stars.* It is hostile and bestial, a malevolent force in *Storm Fear* .Nature is kind and generous and has a divine plan in *A Prayer in Spring.* Some of his poems deal with the

disintegration of the village community under the stress of industrialization. He attained excellence in dramatic monologue and he can be compared with Browning and E.A. Robinson. In *Mountain Interval (1916),* he uses this technique with great excellence. *The Oven Bird* is a fine example of meditative poetry. Many new facets of Frost's poetic genius emerged in *New Hampshire (*1923). His style is lucid, clear, epigrammatic and sententious. *West-Running Brook (*1928) contains poems noticeable for symbolism. He deals with the theme of resistance and heroism. *A Further Range* (1936) presents the poems on morality and has sermonizing quality. *A Witness tree (1942), Come In and Other Poems (1943), A Masque of Reason (1945),* and *Steeple Bush (1947)* deal with abstractions. His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1949 and *The Clearing* appeared in 1962. In later poems he meditates on man's imminent end in war-torn and bombshadowed world. On January 20, 1961 he read before the world viewers of television his famous poem "The Gift Outright" on the occasion of the inauguration of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States.

He received the Pulitzer Prize four times (1924, 1931, 1937 and 1943). Robert Graves in his introduction to the *Selected Poems of Robert Frost* presents a just assessment: "Frost was the first American who could be honestly reckoned a master-poet by world standards." His approach to man and human life is equally sincere and transparent. Frost, a lover of the world, studied the phenomenon around him with complete detachment and objectivity. Like Keats, he developed a negative capability. Frost's poems realistically depict the countryside of New England. New Hampshire was to Frost what Lake District was to Wordsworth. His poems reveal his knowledge of this region-Northwest and Northward of Boston. He is also called a regional poet. Frost died in sleep peacefully in 1963 at the ripe age of eightyeight.

Frost employed traditional patterns, but his ideas were new or it can be said he chose 'the old- fashioned way to be new'. He is popular for his shorter lyrics. Most of his poems are composed as the antithesis between fact and fancy, reality and imagination, pleasure and purpose, nature and civilization, country and city. He presents the best picture of reconciliation. He discusses complex social and philosophical themes in his poetry. He is matchless as he usually employs a kind of moral lesson after describing a scene or an incident.

6.3 THE ROAD NOT TAKEN (TEXT)

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

6.3.1 NOTES

Line-1 *Diverged*: went in different directions, separated.

Line-5 *Undergrowth*: shrubs, bushes and low trees.

Line-6 *The other*: the other road.

Line-6 *Just*: exactly the same.

Line-6 *Fair*: beautiful, lovely.

Line-7 *Better claim*: preferable.

Line-8 *Wanted wear*: had not been used and worn so frequently.

Line-9 *Passing*: the passing of travellers.

Line-10 *About the same*: equally.

Line-11 *Equally lay*: lying in the same manner.

Line-12 *Trodden*: walked on.

Line-16 *Sigh*: deep breath of sorrow.

6.3.2 AN ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

"The Road Not Taken" appears as a preface to Frost's *Mountain Interval*, which was published in 1916 when Europe was engulfed in World War I; the United States would enter the war a year later. The present poem deals with the dilemmas that man faces in life. The two

roads serve as a metaphor for the choices we make in life. Life gives many alternatives. Man being an individual cannot take up all choices. The choice has a far-reaching consequence and our future depends on it. Steps once taken cannot be retracted.

The poet while travelling on foot in the woods reaches a junction where two roads diverge. Immediately, he realizes that as a traveller travelling both the roads is impossible. Here two roads signify two ways of life. The woods are yellow, which means that the leaves are turning yellow. As it is impossible to travel both the roads, the poet stands there trying to choose which path he's going to take. However, the poet wants to go down both paths and is thinking about it hard. He is staring at one road, trying to see where it goes. The small plants and greenery of the woods block his view. It seemed to have been travelled by many people.

Then the poet decides to check the other path because he finds the other road to be less travelled and grassy one. The poet is tempted to walk on it. He keeps on thinking for a long time and comes to a conclusion that he cannot walk on both. That is the irony of life. No one can travel all the available roads, no matter how much he may wish to. Here, again, the poet finds both the paths looking the same. Perhaps, he goes in the flashback. It tough for him to recognize the real road as in the morning he is the first person to walk on the road. He couldn't decide the right path as no step has smashed the leaves on the roads to allow him to go for the right one. These lines are an example of symbolism.

The speaker chooses one, telling himself that he will take the other another day. Yet he knows it is unlikely that he will have the opportunity to do so. Finally, he starts moving on the second road. Then the poem shifts to the last stanza and the poet becomes completely philosophical and talks as if he has travelled for a long era and looks back at the choices that he has made in life and their consequences too. He feels that life has been completely different. He also feels that his life has been very different from others as he has always chosen the path not followed by others. It shows the poet as an adventurous man ready to take risks in his life.

"The Road Not Taken" shows Frost at his best as a pastoral poet who combines rustic simplicity with hidden, indirect and implied meanings. This has got to be among the best-known, most-often-misunderstood poems on the planet. The road is the symbol of the choice made by us.

One of the attractions of the poem is its archetypal dilemma, one that we instantly recognize because each of us encounters it innumerable times, both literally and figuratively. Paths in the woods and forks in roads are ancient and deep-seated metaphors for the lifeline, its crises and decisions. Identical forks, in particular, symbolize for us the nexus of free will and fate. We are free to choose, but we do not really know beforehand what we are choosing between. Our route is, thus, determined by an accretion of choice and chance, and it is impossible to separate the two.

This poem does not give us advice. It does not say, "When you come to a fork in the road, study the footprints and take the road less travelled by". Frost's focus is more complicated. First, there is no less-travelled road in this poem; it isn't even an option. Next, the poem seems more concerned with the question of how the concrete present (yellow woods, grassy roads covered in fallen leaves) will look from a future vantage point. The title of the poem hovers over it like a ghost: "The Road Not Taken." According to the title, this poem is about absence. It is about what the poem never mentions: the choice the speaker did *not* make, which still haunts him. "The Road Not Taken" also means "the road less travelled," and the road most people did not take.

6.3.3 POETIC DEVICES

"The Road Not Taken" is a personal lyric, so the conventions of the dramatic lyric–parentheses, dashes and pauses etc. – are not employed by the poet. It is characterized by simplicity, clarity, epigrammatic wisdom, and terseness. 'The road' is the symbol of the choice made by us in life. Many times, we regret the choice made by us but what is done once cannot be undone. Man yearns for what he has denied himself in life, rather than what he has chosen. Hence the poet has given the title "The Road Not Taken". The two roads described by the poet are the symbols of the challenges and choices that life offers. The beaten track symbolizes the easier path and the less travelled road is a more challenging path. The selection of the difficult road by the poet symbolizes man's urge to live life boldly.

This is an inspirational poem and quite tricky, according to the poet himself. The poem presents an antithesis. The traveller comes to a fork and wishes to take both, which is impossible. Alliteration has been used in line 8. 'W' sound is repeated in 'Grassy and wanted wear'. It gives a musical effect and also enhances the poem's stress.

"As just as fair" is an example of a simile (line 6). ***"Wanted wear"*** is an example of personification (line 8).

Defining the wood with one feature prefigures one of the essential ideas of the poem: the insistence that a single decision can transform a life. One forest has replaced another, just as—in the poem—one choice will supplant another. The yellow leaves also evoke a sense of transience; one season will soon give way to another. The speaker briefly imagines staving off choice, wishing he could "travel both/ And be one traveller." (A fastidious editor might flag the repetition of *travel*/*traveler* here, but it underscores the fantasy of unity—travelling two paths at once without dividing or changing the self.) The syntax of the first stanza also mirrors this desire for simultaneity: three of the five lines begin with the word *and*.

Having made his choice, the speaker declares, "Oh, I kept the first for another day!" The diction uptil now has been matter-of-fact, focussing

on straightforward descriptions and avoiding figurative language. This line initiates a change: as the speaker shifts from depiction to contemplation, the language becomes more stilted, dramatic, and old-fashioned. As the tone becomes increasingly dramatic, it also turns playful and whimsical. "Oh, I kept the first for another day!" sounds like something sighed in a parlour drama, comic partly because it is more dramatic than the occasion merits.

6.3.4 FORM

"The Road Not Taken" consists of four stanzas of five lines each. The rhyme scheme is *abaab*; the rhymes are strict and masculine, with the notable exception of the last line (we do not usually stress the -*ence* of *difference*). There are four stressed syllables per line, varying on an iambic tetrameter base.

6.4 SUMMING UP

"The Road Not Taken" shows that life is a continuous journey full of divergence every now and then. The important thing is to move on without looking back whether the choice of paths taken is right or wrong. The right and the wrong are relative terms. We cannot get everything in life and we have to make choices. Whatever direction our life takes is determined by the choice made by us. Make a wise choice and be firm to keep on moving without being in a dilemmatic condition. Be confident in your choice. The protagonist prefers the road less travelled by, and that has made the difference. He is extraordinary in his ordinariness. Frost is both edifying and joy-giving. He imparts wisdom in a delightful manner. He meets all readers at their level and each one of them discovers a meaning in his poems in accordance with his mental development.

6.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

Q.1. Why does the poet feel sorry?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.

Q. 2. What does the 'yellow wood mean?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 3. What is the rhyme scheme of the stanza?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.4.

Q. 4. What does the narrator regret?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 5. Why did the second road present a better claim than the first?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 6. In which sense were the two roads similar?

Ans. See the Unit 6..3.2.

Q. 7. Why did the poet leave the first road?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 8. What is the theme of the poem?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 9. Which road did the narrator finally decide to take ?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2.

Q. 10. What is the main problem or the dilemma of the poet?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

Q. 11. What is the moral presented in the poem "The Road Not Taken"?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

Q. 12. Justify the title?

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

Q. 13. Bring out the symbolism in the poem "The Road Not Taken".

Ans. See the Unit 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

Q. 14. Write a brief note on the works of Frost?

Ans. See the Unit 6.2.

Q. 15. Frost chose a road that was less travelled by. What does this choice show about his character?

Ans. See the Unit 6.0, 6.1 and 6.2, 6.3.

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UNIT-7 EMILY DICKINSON : 'SUCCESS IS COUNTED SWEETEST'

Structure

7.0 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 6 of this Block you studied Robert Frost as an American poet and his poem *The Road Not Taken*. In this Unit we shall discuss the poem *Success is Counted Sweetest* by Emily Dickinson written during an age of great ferment in the field of intellectual activities. A generation before the Civil War of 1861-65, the air of change had started to blow in America. Up to this time Puritanism had a strong hold on the minds of the people. She remained untouched with the horrors and calamities of the war. For Dickinson the outer world did not exist at all. Her universe was that of the soul. She did not 'father' any movement in American poetry because of her complete isolation from all contemporary life.

We would like you to first read the poem. Then you should read it again, with the help of an analysis of lines and words given in 7.3.2. After you have followed the analysis, read the note on poetic devices in 7.3.3. When you have read and understood the poem and critical comments, write down the answers to the exercises. Your answers should then be checked with the answers given by us at the end of the Unit.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit on Emily Dickinson, you will read the poem *Success is Counted Sweetest*, which is one of the most anthologized of her poems and one that is held to be representative of her attitude and genius. Emerson, and in some degree, Thoreau, were the earliest influences on her. Actually like Emerson, Emily was from the beginning and she remained all her life a singular mixture of Puritan and the free thinker. Although she was influenced by the spirit of the age, Transcendentalism, Calvinism and the hymns of the churches of New England, the hymns of Isaac Watt, the Metaphysical poets of seventeenthcentury England, she is a modern poet. Dickinson wrote this poem towards the second half of the 19th century. At the end of your study of this Unit you will be able to:

- discuss Dickinson's poem *Success is Counted Sweetest* in detail.
- identify the moral philosophy of this poem
- appreciate the poetic techniques used in the poem

7.2 EMILY DICKINSON

Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830, in Amherst, a quiet village in the farming district of Massachusetts. Edward Dickinson, Emily's father, was an orthodox, as the Puritan tradition was dominant in the Connecticut River Valley. In spite of strong devotion to her father's will, she often tried to break away from his Puritan clutches. She rebelled against all conformist ideas, as they would impede her free thinking. She imparted a new realism to the experiences of an ardent Puritan. She was born Puritan and lived in an atmosphere of brooding Calvinistic religious consciousness. Early in life, and long before she came under the sway of Wordsworth, Emily was influenced by two men in her struggle in establishing her identity. These were Benjamin F. Newton and Henry Vaughan Emmons. Reverend Charles Wadsworth of Philadelphia also inspired her. She has regarded him as her "dearest earthly friend". He accepted a call to the Calvary Church in San Francisco and was separated from her.

Emily Dickinson is a major American poet whose poetry is conspicuous for originality. She is an original poet both in theme and technique. She is a detached artist. Poetry was the personal affair for Emily Dickinson. She did not want name and fame .Her poems have not been written in a pre-planned way, these came in flashes illuminating suddenly the darkness within or clearing the confusion that covered her soul. Her concern for immortality, eternity and soul expresses her Puritanic leanings. Her best poems reveal the clash of her perspective, inquiring mind with the rigidly orthodox community. Transcendentalism and the scientific spirit of the age also influenced her. Despite Dickinson's prolific writing, fewer than a dozen of her poems were published during her lifetime. In 1884, she fell ill and was advised to take complete rest.

Then on, she never fully rallied and gently slipped from unconsciousness to eternal sleep in the afternoon of May 15, 1886.

While Emily Dickinson was extremely prolific as a poet and regularly enclosed poems in letters to friends, she was not publicly recognized during her lifetime. The first volume of her work was published posthumously in 1890 and the last in 1955. She died in Amherst in 1886. Upon her death, Dickinson's family discovered forty handbound volumes of nearly 1800 poems, or "fascicles" as they are sometimes called. *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson* (Belknap Press, 1981) is the volume of her poems. The standard edition of the poems is the three-volume Variorum edition, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Variorum Edition* (1998), edited by R.W. Franklin. He also edited a two-volume work, *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson* (1981), which provides facsimiles of the poems in their original groupings. *The Gorgeous Nothings* (2013), edited by Marta L. Werner and Jen Bervin, presents facsimiles of Dickinson's so-called envelope poems, written on irregularly shaped scraps of paper. *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, in three volumes edited by Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward (1958), was reissued in one volume in 1986, and it is still the standard source for the poet's letters. *Open Me Carefully: Emily Dickinson's Intimate Letters to Susan Huntington Dickinson* (1998), edited by Ellen Louise Hart and Martha Nell Smith, is a selection of the poet's correspondence with her sister-in-law. Facsimiles of the letters to "Master" and Otis Phillips Lord are presented in *The Master Letters of Emily Dickinson* (1986), edited by R.W. Franklin, and *Emily Dickinson's Open Folios: Scenes of Reading, Surfaces of Writing* (1995), edited by Marta L. Werner. *Emily Dickinson's Reception in the 1890s: A Documentary History* (1989), edited by Willis J. Buckingham, reprints all known reviews from the first decade of publication.

7.3 SUCCESS IS COUNTED SWEETEST (TEXT)

Success is counted sweetest

By those who ne'er succeed.
To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need.

Not one of all the purple Host
Who took the Flag today
Can tell the definition
So clear of Victory

As he defeated--dying--
On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Burst agonized and clear!

7.3.1 NOTES

Line 1. *Counted* : understood.

Line 3. *nectar* : the drink of Gods, sugary fluid secreted by flowers that bees collect and make honey.

Line 4. *sorest* : greatest.

Line 5. *purple* : purple is the colour of royalty, victory.

Line 5. *host* : army.

Line 10. The dying man's ears are not forbidden. Transferred epithet.

Line 11. *strains* : sounds of victory.

Line 12. *agonized* : painful, tortuous.

7.3.2 AN ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

Success is counted sweetest is a lyric poem of Emily Dickinson which was one of the only seven published poems during her lifetime. It was written in 1859 and published anonymously in 1864 in the *Brooklyn Daily Union*. It consists of only 53 words, original both in content and technique. The uses of the images of a victorious army and one dying warrior cater the meaning that only one who has suffered defeat can understand the true value of success.

The poem unveils her keen consciousness of the intricate truths of human desire. The poem affirms that we learn only through failure, through 'negative example', and renunciation and deprivation are the real path to ultimate triumph and success. One experiences its taste and the other knows its meaning. Suffering is an act of dignity, and one who learns to suffer without expecting to partake of the fruit of suffering is really learning through experience.

The scene is set in the first stanza to dive into the core elements of the poem—that, basically, you must fail to have something in order to truly understand its worth. Specifically for this stanza, only someone who has "ne'er succeed[ed]" will "count" "success" at the "sweetest" level, and only through "need" can a person "comprehend a nectar."There is rationalization in this concept in that people who have things they "need", without question, may often take those things for granted, which would indicate that they do not appreciate those elements on a higher level.

The speaker begins the poem with a message stating that those who never succeed really crave for success the most. Those who fail count the success sweet. This is rational if a person considers something as simple as water. If all we need to do is open a bottle or turn a faucet to get it, we could assume it will be accessible. If a person were lost in a desert, however, that same water would be escalated in worth so that it would potentially be at its "sweetest" value. To understand the sweetness of

nectar, one must be thirsty. Without knowing what the thirst is, one cannot really understand the sweetness of nectar. Then the speaker provides us with the imagery of war. The victorious troops experience the glory of success, but they cannot tell you any clear and precise definition of what victory is. The one who is defeated and is on verge of death can tell you the definition of victory. He is agonized at his own defeat, but he alone knows clearly what triumph is.

Her theme was precisely the perception of value won through deprivation. It was not sight, she knew, that could be won out of blindness, but a full appreciation of the miraculousness and preciousness of sight. So to 'comprehend' a nectar, to 'tell the definition' of victory, one must suffer thirst and defeat. Generally, people tend to desire things more intensely when they do not have them.

7.3.3 POETIC DEVICES

The speaker chooses the language of paradox to drive the point home into the reader's heart. The poem is built upon a paradox of success and defeat, the victor and the vanquished. While the victor experiences and basks in the glory of success, the vanquished clearly comprehends and can tell the definition of victory. The imagery drawn from war is most appropriate to the paradox and to the theme of the poem. The alliteration happening in the first two lines of the poem shows these discussed topics to be strong ideas, even though the sound being repeated is a soft "s" through "Success," "sweetest," and "succeed." What this indicates is that this is an ongoing situation, like the "s" sound keeps recurring, but it is not an automatic harsh trait from a person. If it were, perhaps a harder sound would be repeating, like a cutting "c" or a blunt "b." Here, though, the gentle nature of "s" makes the human nature to never truly value something until experiencing "sorest need", to feel like a commonality that is not necessarily a fault. Rather, it is only a trait we have yet to escape. For the last two lines of this stanza, "nectar" is being used to describe the situation. This connects to the earlier lines of the stanza since "nectar" is "sweet," but it is also worth noting that "nectar" is was mythologically connected to Roman and Greek deities. By bringing in a food that is connected to such a high idea of existence, Dickinson has provided something that should automatically be amazing because it is so out of reach, but still, a person will only "comprehend" that greatness if he/ she is in "sorest need." This indicates that no matter how grand the natural element or object is, people will only appreciate it to its fullest if they drastically "need" it.

As well, the *a b c d* rhyme scheme of this poem grounds these concepts in an expected pattern that mimics how common these ideas are to Dickinson. A person, to her, will not appreciate something as grand as "nectar" without "need" of it, and she can anticipate that concept as faithfully as a person can expect a B line to follow an A or C one. The speaker says that "those who ne'er succeed" place the highest value on success. (They "count" it "sweetest".) To understand the value of a nectar,

the speaker says, one must feel "sorest need." She says that the members of the victorious army ("the purple Host / Who took the flag today") are not able to define victory as well as the defeated, dying man who hears from a distance the music of the victors.

7.3.4 FORM

The three stanzas of this poem take the form of iambic trimeter—with the exception of the first two lines of the second stanza, which add a fourth stress at the end of the line. (Virtually all of Dickinson's poems are written in an iambic meter that fluctuates fluidly between three and four stresses). As in most of Dickinson's poems, the stanzas here rhyme according to an *a b c b* scheme, so that the second and fourth lines in each stanza constitute the stanza's only rhyme. Like imagist and romantic poets, she uses inexact rhymes and the irregular iambic pentameter. There is also a peculiar use of dashes (line 9) and erratic capitalization (line 5, 6, 8). Dashes have been used frequently in the place of formal and conventional punctuation.

7.4 SUMMING UP

Many of Emily Dickinson's most famous lyrics take the form of homilies, or short moral sayings, which appear quite simple but that actually describe complicated moral and psychological truths. "*Success is counted sweetest*" is such a poem; its first two lines express its homiletic point, that "Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne'er succeed" (or, more generally, that people tend to desire things more acutely when they do not have them). The subsequent lines then develop that axiomatic truth by offering a pair of images that exemplify it: the nectar—a symbol of triumph, luxury, "success"—can best be comprehended by someone who "needs" it; the defeated, dying man understands victory more clearly than the victorious army does. Dickinson emphasizes on how the fallen soldier understands and appreciates the value of success more than the victorious one, because he (defeated soldier) has sacrificed his life for victory but he could not achieve, only he can imagine. He hears the drum beats, the sign of victory, and the drum beating makes him want it more. The soldier who is celebrating his victory can never understand the real value of victory because he has not lost what the defeated soldier has lost. Only a thirsty man can realize the value of water and a hungry man can realize the importance of food. For the true experience of life, failure is inevitable. For, what we learn from our failures success can never teach us. The poem exhibits Dickinson's keen awareness of the complicated truths of human desire. Dickinson is such a terrific writer that she has no time to give titles to her poems, she directly hits the subject. The opening lines of her poems are used as titles. She frequently uses half-rhymes and dissonant qualities like the Metaphysical poets. As a craftsman, she is a precursor of the imagist school of poetry. Her efforts to pack verse with intense meaning,

remind us of Hopkins' imagist poetry. Like him, Dickinson too discarded all poetic conventions.

7.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS

Q. 1. What is the paradox in '*Success is counted sweetest*'?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.3.

Q. 2. What does the poem '*Success is counted sweetest*' mean?

Ans. See Unit -7.3.2 and 7.3.3.

Q. 3. What is the theme of '*Success is counted sweetest*'?

Ans. See Unit -7.3.2 and 7.3.3.

Q. 4. What do you mean by the word 'purple host'?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.1 and 7.3.2.

Q. 5. Comment about the rhyme scheme of the poem '*Success is counted sweetest*'.

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.3.

Q. 6. What is the significance of Nectar?

Ans. See Unit - 7.3.1 and 7.3.2and 7.3.3.

Q. 7. According to the speaker, who is likely to count success as sweetest?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.2 and 7.3.3.

Q. 8. Whose ear is mentioned in line 10?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.2. and 7.3.3.

Q. 9. What does the image of the army show?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.2 and 7.3.3.

Q. 10. How would you define success?

Ans. See Unit- 7.3.2 and 7.3.3.

Q. 11. Comment about the age of Emily Dickinson.

Ans. See Unit- 7.0 and 7.1, 7.2.

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Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon
Open University

Bachelor of Arts

UGEN-101

Reading Poetry

BLOCK

4

PROSODY, FIGURES OF SPEECH AND FORMS OF POETRY

UGEN-101

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BLOCK INTRODUCTION

BLOCK-4 Contains 4 Units on Prosody, Figure of Speech and Forms of Poetry.

Unit-8 discusses the general concepts related to rhetoric and prosody and briefly touch upon the distinction between them. Its aim to give you an understanding the basic elements of the poem and formal and rhetorical devices.

Unit- 9&10 we shall discuss the various figures of speech, that is, the use of words in ways other than their ordinary literal meanings. Unit 9 will deal with simile , Metaphor, Antithesis, Oxymoron, Paradox , Personification . Unit-10 with pathetic fallacy, irony, onomatopoeia, alliteration, metonymy, synecdoche.

Unit-11 discusses forms of poetry. After completing this unit you will be able to understand basic differences among them. This will enable you to understand and critically analyse the poem both in or outside your course on poetry.

UNIT-8 PROSODY

Structure

8.12 Suggested Readings

8.0 INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric is usually used along with *prosody* in the syllabi of most of the Indian universities. Both terms are not the same. The Classical and Medieval educational curriculum was based on the 'Seven Liberal Arts' broadly divided into *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*. The 'trivium' was elementary in nature and so studied first. It has three subjects namely Grammar, Dialectic or Logic, and Rhetoric. The *quadrivium* consisted of Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy. In this Section we shall talk about the principles of *prosody*.

After having read and understood the principles and elements of 'prosody', we want you to write your answers to the questions as suggested in Section 8.9.

8.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Uunit, it is attempted to introduce learners doing their study through distance education to some general concepts related to rhetoric and prosody and briefly touch upon the distinction between them. At the end of this Unit learners hopefully would be able to:

i) comprehend the basic elements of a poem

ii) understand the stylistic or formal and rhetorical devices and their application into a piece of poem

iii) have an idea about various forms of verse.

8.2 WHAT IS PROSODY?

The term *Prosody* is derived from the Greek word *prosodia* meaning a song sung to the music. It refers to the systematic study of versification or lines of poetry. It teaches fundamental laws and principles which help making difference between prose and poetry. It includes the study of *meter, rhyme, rhythm, stanza forms*, and *sound patterns*. It may be aptly called the grammar of verse. The study of *prosody* may prove very much useful to those who bear natural poetic potential. Thus the knowledge of *prosody* will help them realize substantially their poetic feelings in the shape of verse. It teaches the craft of poets. It tells how to mould a particular but powerful feeling or emotion into a rhythmic and musical composition. Metre is the central study of *Prosody*.

8.3 WHAT IS RHETORIC?

Rhetoric deals with "questions of structure and style, methods of presentation and devices of literary embellishment" (Harry Blamires). It is

derived from the Greek word *rhetor* which means a public speaker. His art of speaking is called in Greek language *rhetorike techne*. The French *rhetorique* was derived from Latin *rhetorice*. In ancient Greece and Rome, the study of Rhetoric was aimed at making speeches effective, impressive, forceful, and persuasive. Substantially, it helps impress others. Recently, it came to mean any elegant and effective art or composition written or spoken. The ancient classical rhetoric was popularized and furthered by Aristotle and others. Aristotle postulated three modes of persuasion as three proofs: *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. *Logos* as a persuasive technique, the orator applies it to make oratory logical and impressive to audience and reader. It is in fact the logic behind an argument. *Ethos* in Greek means 'character' generally used to characterize a community or nation based on personal experience and expertise to be perceived by the audience as reliable or not. *Pathos* usually used in rhetoric, literature, film, and other narrative arts to work up emotions of audience; for instance metaphor, simile, pun, alliteration, etc. The orator attempts to make the audience feel certain emotions. In order to establish his/her credibility as an author, it is expected to deploy *pathos* alongside *logos* and *ethos*. For powerful, persuasive and effective speech, the ancient rhetoric suggested five constituents: i) *inventio* (invention or creative faculty); ii) *dispositio* or *ordo* (arrangement or form and structure); iii) *elocutio* (diction and style, patterns, images, rhythms etc.); iv) *memoria* (memory); v) *pronuntatio* (delivery). Classical theorists also suggested three kinds of rhetoric: the forensic (judicial oratory especially used in the court of law either to approve or disapprove of opinions of someone's works), the deliberative (legislative oratory used to persuade people towards a particular course of action as a public policy), and the epideictic (histrionic or ceremonial or demonstrative oratory usually applied to praise or blame a person or a group of persons for making a show off of orator's individual talent and skill).

In this way, we see persuasiveness is the central concern of rhetoric. In effect, the study of *rhetoric* establishes the beauty and force of style.

8.3.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RHETORIC AND PROSODY

In modern usage, these two terms are usually used simultaneously. *Rhetoric* since its days of origin has been used pejoratively for its sole concern of persuasion. It had paid little attention to the gravity of thought. A person grounded in *rhetoric* looks for the language of pleasing sound getting almost unmindful to the sense and substance. A rhetorician engrosses his/her mind in the use of figures seriously. He uses *rhyme, rhythm*, and *figures of speech* for the achievement of pleasing sound in his oration. On the other hand, 'prosody' tells how to put up thoughts grave and deep in nature effectively using *metre*, *rhyme*, *rhythm*, and *figures*. Thus 'prosody' gets distinct itself from *rhetoric* in the use of *metre* and

substance. A creative genius fruitfully uses principles and laws of 'prosody'.

8.3.2 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RHETORIC AND GRAMMAR

The in-depth study of Grammar ascertains the accuracy pertaining to form and construction of words, sentences, pronunciation, punctuation etc. A well-grounded scholar in Grammar rules can write flawlessly. But mere setting-up of grammatical accuracy cannot make the composition perfect. Grammar aims at the correctness in language and *rhetoric* the art of putting words effectively in a composition. Thus *rhetoric* is an adjunct to grammar. The study of *rhetoric* teaches how to present ideas impressively. As such, an artist is hoped to have mastery in *rhetoric* and grammar equally.

8.4 METRICAL PATTERNS

In this Section, we shall dwell on various constitutive units of metrical composition. For any metrical composition, the knowledge of rhyme, rhythm, meter, feet, and accent is required foremost. It will help them understand poetry better, and so to enjoy it fully.

8.4.1 SYLLABLE

A *syllable* is a part of a word that can be pronounced in one breath or puff and in one effort. A *syllable* may be a vowel or a combination of vowels and consonants. Every *syllable* contains at least one vowel which is not always pronounced; for instance, morning. The word 'morning' is pronounced as '*mor*' and '*ning*'.

8.4.2 ACCENT

Accent requires a particular stress or effort of the voice usually to be applied on certain syllables of words. It is 'accent' that makes a particular syllable eloquent and prominent. A word may have more than two syllables but one among them certainly would be accented one.

8.4.3 RHYME

In English versification, rhyme signifies the repetition of similar vowel sounds usually at the end of verse lines. Rhyme is not essential to poetry. Many poets diligently observe rhyme and many like John Milton took it of barbaric origin. A few main types of rhyme can be suggested:

End Rhyme: On the basis of final words' rhyming of lines in a poem, there may be monosyllable rhyming as *more/bore*. It is also known as *Masculine Rhyme* or single rhyme. We see in masculine rhyme single

stressed syllable. There may be disyllable rhyming like *bending /ending*. It is also called *Feminine Rhyme* or double rhyme. In it we see stressed syllable is followed by unstressed syllable. There may be tri-syllable rhyming *such as glamorous / amorous.* It is called *Triple Rhyme.*

Internal Rhyme or Middle Rhyme or Leonine Rhyme: It is a poetic device by which two or more words rhyme within the same line of a poem; for instance "Which *alters* when alternation *finds*" (Shakespeare's Sonnet No.116).

Slant Rhyme or *Half Rhyme*: This poetic device is called variously such as imperfect rhyme, partial rhyme, near rhyme, oblique rhyme, off rhyme, or pararhyme. In it two words simply share either a vowel sound (as *heart* and *star*) or consonant sound (*milk* and *walk*). Two figures assonance and consonance observe slant rhyme.

Rich Rhyme: Through this poetic device homophonic words are used, such as *raise* and *raze*.

Eye Rhyme: There are certain words whose endings look and spell alike but they are pronounced differently, for example dough and tough, daughter and laughter, put and but, do and so etc. Let us examine Shakespeare's Sonnet no. 18–

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

Thou art more lovely and more *temperate*:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,

And summer's lease hath all too short a *date*:

Let us mark the pronunciation of *temperate* and *date* at the end of second and fourth lines.

8.4.4 RHYTHM

Rhythm is derived from the Greek word *rhuthmos* which means measured flow or movement. Thus it refers to a measured flow of words established by stressed, unstressed syllables, and pauses in a line to generate harmonious or pleasing effect. Rhythm differs from metre. When pauses and accents are organized with a dominant foot, it is called metre. Rhythm is essential to verse. It is intensified by rhyme though rhyme is not necessary to verse. Rhythm may occur in prose and poetry equally. In verse, rhythm is regular that is, stressed syllables fall at regular intervals whereas in prose stressed syllables occur more casually and irregularly. There may occur rhythm in prose but no metre. Largely rhyme, rhythm, and metre are interrelated to one another. Devices like parallelism, euphony, repetition are also used to enrich and improve rhythm. For the accentuation of rhythm, poets use figures of sound like assonance, alliteration, consonance, and onomatopoeia. Even they artfully choose

words beginning with certain alphabets for specific rhythm; for instance words beginning with *f* suggest motion; *g, k, j, ch, t,* suggest harsh sound; *h, m,* emanate lulling effect; *l* produces a gentle movement; sound of *s* adds sonority and resonating effect.

8.4.5 METRE

The term metre is derived from Greek word *metron* which means a measure. One *syllable* is pronounced with one puff of breath. While defining the metre of a particular line of a verse, all the syllables of it are simply enumerated without minding stress and un-stress accents of syllables with mathematical exactitude. The rhythm of prose is not governed by numerical law, though one or more sentences of a prose piece may be rhythmic. In fact, it refers to a regular pattern of accented and unaccented syllables in a line or lines of verse. There are four kinds of metre: *quantitative, accentual, syllabic,* and *accentual-syllabic*. English verse follows the last metric pattern– *accentual-syllabic* that is, the number of syllables and the number of stressed and unstressed syllables are put consistently from line to line. A metric line is named according to the number of feet it is made of. Two syllables stressed and unstressed form a foot or measure.

Greek names for various feet:

Monometre:	One foot (two syllables)
Dimetre:	Two feet (four syllables)
Trimetre:	Three feet (six syllables)
Tetrametre:	Four feet (eight syllables)
Pentametre:	Five feet (ten syllables)
Hexametre:	Six feet (often called Alexandrine made up of 12 syllables)
Heptametre:	Seven feet (often called Fourteener is made up of 14 syllables)
Octometre:	Eight feet (16 syllables).

8.4.6 STANZA

A *stanza* is a group of lines that formally divides a particular poem. When we have a *stanza* of two lines with rhyming, it is called *couplet*. If this couplet makes a complete sense, it is called a *Distich*. When two lines of four *iambic* feet rhyme together, it is called *Octosyllabic Couplet*. Similarly, three-line *stanza* with consecutive

rhyming is called *triplet*; and four-line *stanza* with rhyming of different order is called *quatrain*. A *stanza* of five lines with rhyming of various orders is called *Quintette*. A *stanza* of six lines with rhyme scheme *a b a b a b* is called *Sextain* or *Sestain*. The *stanza* may have rhyming or un-rhyming.

8.5 KINDS OF FEET

English feet are classified according to the sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables they contain. There are mainly four kinds of standard feet: *Iambic*, *Trochaic*, *Anapaestic*, and *Dactylic*. Two other feet namely *Spondaic* and *Pyrrhic* are variants of standard feet. Feet or measures can be divided into classes–*disyllabic* and *trisyllabic*. *Disyllabic* foot contains one unstressed and one stressed syllable. *Disyllabic* feet are of two types–*Iambic* and *Trochaic*. *Trisyllabic* measure consists of one accented and two unaccented syllables. *Trisyllabic measures* are of chiefly two types–*Anapaest* and *Dactylic*. In this Section, deliberately I shall restrict my discussion to only two metrical patterns: *Iambic* and *Trochaic*.

8.5.1 IAMBIC

Iambic or *iambus is* derived from the Greek word *iaptein* which means to attack verbally. Actually *iambic* trimester was first used by Greek satirists. Iambic foot consists of two syllables, one unstressed or weak denoted generally by the mark (˘) followed by stressed or strong denoted by (´). It is the most common metrical foot in English poetry. Edmund Spenser, John Milton, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth, Thomas Gray, Alfred Lord Tennyson etc. brilliantly used this metric pattern, in their poetry. It is suitable for both grave and sublime subjects. It adds charm and smoothness to a line or lines of a poem. Let me quote the first line from Shakespeare's Sonnet No 116-

Lĕt mé nŏt tó thĕ márrĭage óf trŭe minds.

In the above line, we see *iambic* five feet (*pentametre*) pattern. This *sonnet* is composed in *iambic pentametre*.

8.5.2 TROCHAIC

This metrical pattern is largely used for gay, lively, and devotional subjects. It is derived from the Greek word *trecho,* which means 'I run'. It consists of one accented syllable followed by one unaccented syllable (´˘). It is the opposite of *Iambic measure*.

Percy Bysshe Shelley in the second stanza of his poem *To a Skylark* (1820) employ *trochaic measure*:

Hígher stíll ănd hígher

Fróm thĕ eárth thŏu spríngĕst….

The above quoted lines are organized in *trochaic trimetre*.

Most *trochaic* lines lack the unaccented syllable at the end of the line. Such lines are technically called *catalectic*; for instance the very first line from William Blake's poem *The Tiger*–

Tígĕr! Tígĕr! Búrnĭng bríght

Here we see the absence of a weak syllable at the end of the line.

8.6 HEROIC COUPLET

A couplet in English usually refers to a pair of two *decasyllabic* (ten syllables or five feet or *pentametre*) lines with rhyming and *iambic* metrical pattern. When sense and grammatical structure or syntax of a couplet rounds off with the second line, it is called *closed couplet*. Such couplets do not require pre and post lines' help for the completion of sense. They are self-contained and perfect in themselves. Contrary to this, when the sense of first line runs on over the second line, it is called *run-on lines* or *enjambment* or *striding-over*. Whether it is *closed couplet* or *run-on lines*, rhyming is essential.

Iambic pentameter line is also called heroic line because it was frequently used in epic or heroic poetry in English to celebrate heroic feats. Rhyming was not necessary to these lines in epic verses.

Heroic couplet denotes a pair of two *iambic pentametre* lines rhyming like *aa, bb, cc*, and so on. The adjective 'heroic' was prefixed to couplet in the late 17th century because of its frequent use in heroic poems and plays. Heroic couplet as a stanza form perfected in the hands of Alexander Pope and John Dryden in the Neo-Classical period. Pope usually used comma (,) or semi-colon (;) at the end of every first line of heroic couplet signifying the partial completion of the sense; and full stop at the end of the second line signifying the completion of the meaning. A special feature of his heroic couplets is the use of pause marked by (, ;) towards the middle of every line though it is not always used. He often expanded couplet to triplet or *tercet* (a unit of three rhyming lines). John Dryden's couplets are neither end-stopped nor self-contained. He even often introduces *Alexandrine* (a line of six *iambic* feet). Pope criticized Dryden's use of *Alexandrine*. Let us see a Heroic couplet from Alexander Pope:

Ask them the Cause; They're wiser still, they say;

And still to Morrow's wiser than to Day.

We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;

Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.

(From Pope's *An Essay on Criticism*, Part II)

Mark the use of semi-colon at the end of the first and third lines and full stop at the end of the second and fourth lines.

Heroic couplet as a stanza form suits the speedy and brief expression. Its brevity produces epigrammatic touch. It admits balance and antithesis, as such it is best for satiric poetry because the satiric target can be performed succinctly and effectively through it. It is not suitable for lyrical poetry because there is always some possibility of growing monotonous for lack in variety.

Heroic couplet as a verse form was introduced Geoffrey Chaucer into English poetry with by all certainties in *Legend of Good Women* (1384-85) and mostly in *The Canterbury Tales* (1385 onwards). He was followed by Edmund Spenser who employed it in *Mother Hubard's Tale* (1597), a satirical verse narrative. Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare had also used occasionally in their plays and poetry to give novelty and variety or to round off a passage. Christopher Marlowe used it neatly in his narrative poem *Hero and Leander* (1598). John Milton and the Metaphysical poets had shown no interest in it. John Denham with his *Cooper's Hill* (composed in closed couplets, 1642) refashioned heroic couplet, and inspired Pope and Dryden. Romantic poets especially John Keats turned couplets into *run-on* lines. For example:

A thing of beauty is a joy for *ever*:

Its loveliness increases; it will *never*

Pass into nothingness; but still will *keep*

A bower quiet for us, and a *sleep*

Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet *breathing.*

Therefore, on every morrow, are we *wreathing*

(John Keats, *Endymion*, Book I)

Learners should notice the end words put in italics of each line in the above quoted excerpt.

8.7 BLANK VERSE

Blank verse is the most liberal, flexible, and noble verse form. It is "closest to the rhythms of everyday speech in English" (J. A. Cuddon). That's why English playwrights favoured this verse form most. Any metrical text or composition is called verse. Blank verse is called blank for its being unrhymed. Blank verse has necessarily each line in *iambic pentametre*. Thus, Blank verse is unrhymed *iambic pentameter,* whereas Heroic couplet is rhymed *iambic pentametre*. This verse form has been in use over centuries except Dryden and Pope for dramatic, narrative, reflective, didactic, and descriptive English poetry. John Milton boldly

defended Blank verse. According to him only *Blank verse* can bring English language to its zenith of dignity. He explained his stand on it in his preface to *Paradise Lost,* Book I: "The measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek and of Virgil in Latin; *rhyme being no necessary adjunct of true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age,* to set off wretched matter and lame meter; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets, carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them" (italics mine).

Verse paragraph is a derivative device. It refers to a group of lines often in *blank verse* forming a unit (often divided by spaces). It has no definite length as it does not conform to any stanzaic pattern. Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* (1867) is cast in *verse paragraph*. The following excerpt from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), Book I, is as an example of *verse paragraph*:

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit

Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste

Brought death into the world, and all our woe,

With loss of *Eden,* till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,

Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top

Of *Oreb,* or of *Sinai,* didst inspire

That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,

In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth

Rose out of *chaos:* Or if *Sion* hill

Delight thee more, and *Siloa's* brook that flow'd

Fast by the oracle of God; I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,

That with no middle flight intends to soar

Above th' *Aonian* Mount, while it pursues

Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,

Instruct me, for thou know'st. thou from the first

Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread

Dove-like satst brooding on the vast abyss

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

Illumine, what is low raise and support;

That to the highth of this great argument

I may assert eternal providence,

And justifie the ways of God to men.

(lines 1-26)

This verse form took birth in the hand of Henry Howard 'Earl of Surrey' while translating Books 2 and 4 of Roman poet Virgil's *Aeneid* (a classical Latin masterpiece of world literature) around 1540 into English. Perhaps he took hints from *versi sciloti* ('freed verse') of Molza's Italian translation of *Aeneid* in 1539. Milton's *Paradise Lost* (in 12 Books), William Cowper's *The Task* (1785), Edward Young's *The Complaint* or *Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1742), James Thomson's *The Seasons* (1726-30), Wordsworth's autobiographical poem *The Prelude* (in 14 Books completed in 1805 but published in 1850 posthumously), *Tintern Abbey* (1798), Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Frost at Midnight* (1798), Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (it is in 12 Books, began in 1859 and completed in 1885), Robert Browning's *The Ring and the Book* in 4 volumes (1868-69), Thomas Stearne Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), are some of the noted English compositions in Blank verse.

Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton for the first time used this verse form in English Play. They wrote the first Blank verse regular tragedy named *Gorboduc* or *Ferrex and Porrex* (1561). For speeches Shakespeare in his plays *Hamlet* (1601), *Macbeth* (1605) and others, Christopher Marlowe in *Doctor Faustus* (1592), and Thomas Heywood in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1603) employed blank verse successfully.

8.8 FREE VERSE

Free verse is an outcome of open versification. In French it is called *verse libre'*. Free verse signifies a composition which does not conform either to the rules of rhyme or to the rules of metre. Briefly to say, it is to nonrhyming, nonmetrical verse form. In fact, this verse form drew off prosodic metrical restrictions and patterns of metre and rhyme to make lines free and open and to recreate rhythms near to natural speech. To a Heroic couplet, metre and rhyme are essential; to a Blank verse, metre is essential; but for a Free verse, rhythm is essential. That is why in a Free verse, we see irregular lengths of lines. For rhythmic beat or

measure, a free verse composition heavily depends on “repetition, balance, and variation of words, phrases, clauses, and lines” (M. H. Abrams).

In English tradition, the use of free verse can be traced back to King James' translation of Biblical psalms and Song of Solomon though it was not recognized by all scholars as the first free verse work. Perhaps, the plain, repetitive, and rhythmic phrasal style of his translation inspired Walt Whitman, an American poet and philosopher who consistently applied the phrasal pattern in his poetry collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855). He firmly established free verse in America. Another compatriot Allen Ginsberg and the mystica poet Emily Dickinson (popular as the mother of American English free verse) promoted this verse form. In English poetry, T. E. Hulme argued for it. After World War I it was liberally used by T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, E. E. Cummings, William Carlos Williams etc. for the fulfillment of their poetic dreams. Let us examine a poem by Emily Dickinson:

COME slowly, Eden!

Lips unused to thee,

Bashful, sip thy jasmines,

As the fainting bee,

Reaching late his flower,

Round her chamber hums,

Counts his nectars—enters,

And is lost in balms!

We see the first, second, fourth, sixth, and eighth lines are made of 5 syllables; and remaining lines are made of 6 syllables forming thus a trimetre. The rhyme scheme of the poem may be *abcb, dccc.* In the first stanza she maintains *ballad measure,* but leaves the second loose. Thus, we feel rhythmic movement but no regular metrical pattern and rhyme in the poem.

8.9 SUMMING UP

In this Unit we studied closely the art of versification along with its structural constituents. The knowledge of laws and principles of versification will help learners to apply them while doing critical appreciation of a particular piece of poem. And moreover, we also studied important verse forms and how they differ from one another.

8.10 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 Define Prosody.

Ans. Read carefully Section 8.2.

Q. 2 What is a 'trochaic metre'?

Ans. Read carefully Section 8.4.2.

Q. 3 What is an 'iambic pentametre'?

Ans. Read carefully 8.3.5 and 8.4.1.

Q. 4 How do you distinguish 'free verse' from 'blank verse'?

Ans. Read carefully Sections 8.6 and 8.7.

Q. 5 What is difference between 'run-on-lines' and 'heroic couplet'?

Ans. Read carefully Section 8.5.

Q. 6 What is a 'verse paragraph'?

Ans. Read carefully Section 8.6.

Q. 7 Distinguish 'feminine rhyme' from 'masculine rhyme'.

Ans. Look into Section 8.3.3.

8.11 GLOSSARY

Image	: picture or reflection.
Trivium	: a set of three subjects.
Perish	: destroy or kill.
Quadrivium	: a set of four subjects.
To postulate	: to assume
Versification	: the art or practice of writing verse
Wit	: verbal skill.
Pejoratively	: negatively.

8.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT- 9 FIGURES OF SPEECH –I

Structure

9.0 INTRODUCTION

For effective evocation and transmission of emotions, sentiments or thoughts through any expression or composition, a writer or orator either naturally or intentionally feels obliged to deviate from ordinary form or syntactical relation of words. Figurative language conveys feelings and sentiments powerfully and comfortably.

After having understood function and application of each figure of speech we want you write down answers to the questions as directed in the section 9.11.

9.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall be discussing some of the figures of speech used as literary devices. The use of figures makes the sense more clearly being superficially unclear. And therefore it is very necessary to have the

knowledge of 'figures' generally applied usually in poetic verses. At the end of the Unit, learners will be able to

- understand the role and function of 'figures' in a poem
- understand how 'figures' add charm and novelty to the verse-expression

9.2 WHAT DOES FIGURE MEAN?

The term figure (derived from Latin *figura*) literally means a shape or form but by its connotation signifies something or someone notable and extraordinary. Every figure of speech contains a *tenor* and a *vehicle*. These terms were first used by I. A. Richards in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936). The subject of any figure of speech is called *tenor* and the *image* used to represent the *tenor* is called *vehicle*.

9.2.1 WHAT PURPOSE DOES FIGURE SERVE?

For floral and eloquent presentation, figures seem essential. Figures in fact are very much necessary to any expression to ward off probable monotony. Many words are used literally and figuratively both. Gifted writers turn ordinary words into figures and wield extra emphasis, novelty, and pleasing effect. A figure of speech makes the dress of thought rich, remarkable, and impressive.

9.3 TYPES OF FIGURE

For learner's convenience, the great range of rhetorical figures or figures of speech can be classified with certain restrictions in the following way:

✓	Figures based on Similarity:	(i) Simile; (ii) Metaphor; (iii) Allegory; (iv) Parable; (v) Fable; (vi) Conceit.
✓	Figures based on Association:	(i) Metonymy; (ii) Synecdoche; (iii) Transferred Epithet or Hypallage; (iv) Allusion.
✓	Figures based on Difference:	(i) Antithesis; (ii) Epigram; (iii) Climax; (iv) Oxymoron; (v) Paradox; (vi) Anti-climax; (vii) The Condensed Sentence.
✓	Figures based on Imagination:	(i) Personification;

(ii) Apostrophe; (iii) Vision;

(iv) Hyperbole;

(v) Pathetic Fallacy.

- ✓ Figures based on Indirectness: (i) Innuendo; (ii) Irony;

(iii) Periphrasis;

(iv) Euphemism; (v) Litotes.

- ✓ Figures based on Sound: (i) Onomatopoeia;

(ii) Pun or Paronomasia;

(iii) Alliteration;

(iv) Assonance.

- ✓ Figures based on Construction: (i) Interrogation;

(ii) Exclamation;

(iii) Chiasmus; (iv) Zeugma.

Now, I shall explain and analyze one by one only those figures which are prescribed in the course along with suitable examples.

9.4 SIMILE

Simile, a resemblance based figure, is derived from Latin word *similis* meaning 'like'. A *simile* is not a comparison. In the latter two things are compared along all the various points of similarity whereas in a *simile*, two things essentially differing in kind but the point of close resemblance or likeness is stated and usually introduced by such words as *like, as, so* etc. Such statement of resemblance should be distinct enough to be understood by ordinary intellect. Thus comparison seems more explanatory than simile. When two seemingly and strikingly differing things are put together for comparison with great ingenuity requiring lots of labour to comprehend is technically called *Conceit*. The function of Simile is to make the supposed idea clear or to elevate and make it noble. For instance;

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,

Stains the white radiance of Eternity

Until Death tramples it to fragments….

In the above quoted lines from Percy Bysshe Shelley's elegiac poem *Adonais* (1821) on John Keats, the poet compares 'life' with 'a dome'. These two ideas differ completely in kind but both resemble in terms of their colourfulness. Let me quote another example from William Shakespeare's play *King John* (1595);

There's nothing in this world can make me joy:

Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale

Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man;

And bitter shame hath spoil'd the sweet world's taste

That it yields nought but shame and bitterness.

Act III, Scene IV (italics mine)

In the above quoted lines we see the comparison made between 'life' and 'twice-told tale'. As 'a twice-told tale' fails to arouse sleepy audience so life seems bereft of interest to impulsive, emotional, and rhapsodic Louis or Lewis, the Dauphin (in French Dauphin means an heir to the French throne).

When the resemblance between tenor and vehicle is expressed briefly and directly, it is called *Simple Simile*. As we saw in above quoted lines, 'life' (*tenor*) is represented by the *image* or *vehicle* - 'a dome of many-coloured glass' and 'a twice-told tale' directly and briefly. When the *vehicle* or *secondary subject* (the *image* used to define the *tenor* or *primary subject*) is elaborated at such length that almost obscures the tenor is called *Epic Simile*. It is also called *Homeric Simile* because of its frequent use in Homer's epics- *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. John Milton used this type of *Simile* for the description of Satan's entrance into Paradise in *Paradise Lost* (1667):

As when a prowling Wolfe,

Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,

Watching where Shepherds pen thir Flocks at eeve

In hurdl'd Cotes amid the field secure,

Leaps o're the fence with ease into the Fould:

Or *as* a Thief bent to unhoord the cash

Of some rich Burgher, whose substantial dores,

Cross-barrd and bolted fast, fear no assault,

In at the window climbes, or o're the tiles;

So clomb this first grand Thief into Gods Fould:

The Paradise Lost, Book IV

For learner's convenience and notice, I have italicized words- as and so in the above excerpt. After Milton, Tennyson and Matthew Arnold too tried out their hands using *Homeric similes*.

9.5 METAPHOR

Metaphor is another similarity based figure of speech. It is an implied *Simile*, in which we identify two things and speak of one as if it were really the other. There is no formal statement of the likeness, and so no need of connective words to make comparison. Etymologically, Greek *meta* means beyond and *phero* means I carry. In this figure, comparison is performed implicitly. One word or expression bearing one sense literally is used to denote another thing without making direct statement; it is called Metaphor. It is 'an implied comparison', 'a comparison without like or as', 'compressed simile'.

Metaphors may be classified as *direct* or *implied* and *mixed* metaphor. In the former, the *tenor* is implied only through the context whereas in the latter more than one *vehicle* is used to specify the *tenor*. In doing so, often comparison get incongruous. George Orwell in an essay wrote a sentence "The fascist octopus has sung its swan song" is a suitable example for *mixed* metaphor. Here more than one vehicle (octopus and swan) is used to infer the working of fascism. A metaphor is usually implied through a noun, an adjective, and a verb.

For example; 'I *plowed* through a book'. In the example, 'plowed' is a verb and it is usually used for tilling thus it is transferred to the act of reading. Here the act of reading is only inferred by the context. It is an example of *direct* metaphor. Take another example for elaboration; 'the camel is the *ship* of desert'. Here 'ship' is noun and used to infer the act of running. In these two instances, we saw how tenors were implied by the context. Shakespeare beautifully used a number of *Metaphors* in the play *Macbeth* in the dialogue of Macbeth:

> Out, out, *brief candle*!
>
> Life's but a *walking shadow*, a *poor player*
>
> That struts and frets his hour upon the *stage*
>
> And then is heard no more: it is a *tale*
>
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
>
> Signifying nothing.
>
> (Act V, Scene V)

In the first line, human life is compared to a short candle, and in the second line to a moving shadow and a poor actor. In the third line, the world is likened to a stage. In the fourth line, life is compared to a tale designed and narrated by a poor craftsman. William Cawper in his poem **The Task** (1786) Book II titled *The Time-piece*, used a very beautiful metaphor: Variety is the *spice* of life.

9.6 ANTITHESIS

Etymologically Antithesis is derived from Greek word 'antitithenai', 'anti' means against and 'tithenai' means to place. An antithesis as a rhetorical device based on difference is usually used to put up fundamentally opposite ideas or words in a grammatically parallel way striking a perfect balance marked by parallelism to emphasize contrast or opposition. This is used to strike an implied contrast. When the contradiction is made apparently; or say, an extreme version of it, is called *Oxymoron*. I shall discuss under the next sub-heading. This device of implied contrast was mostly favoured by John Dryden and Alexander Pope in eighteenth century. Let me quote a few commonly used examples for elucidation:

God made the country, and man made the town.

The above line is taken from William Cawper's longer poem **The Task** (1786) Book I titled *The Sofa*. By this line the works of God and man are contrasted through parallelism. Let me quote a few more stock lines for learners:

Man proposes, but God disposes.

(This antithetical proverb was used by a German cleric Thomas á Kempis who had translated a Latin phrase "Homo proponit, sed Deus disponit").

United we stand, divided we fall.

From a Greek storyteller Aesop's *Fables*.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:

From- Shakespeare's *Hamlet* Act I, Scene III

Better to reign in Hell than serve in heaven.

From- Milton's *The Paradise Lost* Book I

To err is human, to Forgive Divine.

From- Alexander Pope's *An Essay on Criticism*

Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.

From- Alexander Pope's *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* (1735)

Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures.

From- Samuel Jonson's *Rasselas* (1759)

9.7 OXYMORON

In an *Oxymoron*, two apparently contradictory or incongruous words or thoughts are juxtaposed that is, placed side by side in a phrase for effect. It is derived from Greek word *oxymoros* which means 'pointedly foolish'. Let me quote a few relevant examples for illustration:

I must *be cruel*, only to *be kind*:

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.–

From- Shakespeare's Hamlet Act III, Scene IV

And *having nothing*, he *hath all*.

From- Sir Henry Wotton's *Character of Happy Life*

A being *darkly wise*, and *rudely great*:

From- Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* Epistle II

The *Bookful Blockhead, ignorantly read*,

With Loads of Learned Lumber in his Head,

From- Alexander Pope's *An Essay on Criticism*

His honour rooted in dishonour stood,

And *faith unfaithful* kept him falsely true.

From- Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine*

In all above examples, I have italicized words and phrases where Oxymoron occurred.

9.8 PARADOX

Ancient theorists on Rhetoric firmly established Paradox as a figure of speech. The term paradox is derived from Greek word 'paradoxon' which means 'contrary opinion'. It refers to a statement or proposition that seems apparently self-contradictory or nonsensical but on closer examination it seems containing fundamental truth. It is as a rhetorical device is used to grab the reader's attention immediately. Paradox is not Oxymoron. When two opposite words are juxtaposed, thereby presenting a paradox for rhetorical effect, it is called Oxymoron. A few Grammarians prefer to identify Paradox with *Epigram*. Let me quote a few examples for illustration:

No, truly; for *the truest poetry is the most*
feigning; and lovers are given to poetry, and what
they swear in poetry may be said as lovers they do feign. (Italics mine)

The above dialogue is taken from Shakespeare's play *As You Like It* (1600), Act III and Scene III. It is delivered by Touchstone. The italicized clause apparently seems contradictory but it is truth in regard to its defamiliarising potential.

The child is the father of man.

The above line is taken from Wordsworth's lyric *My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold*. Literally, the sentence does not convey any meaningful sense but on the closer examining it is felt that the early knowledge of child shapes grows into manhood. Say other way, child is more close to divine forces than an adult and therefore a child is the father of man.)

All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.

The above line bears the sense of paradox. It occurs in George Orwell's novella *Animal Farm* (1945). It is used to refer existing inequality in the society despite political claims of equality.

9.9 PERSONIFICATION

By the figure of Personification, human qualities are attributed to non-human beings, inanimate objects, and abstract ideas. Thus having human sensibility, they can think, feel, and act like human beings. The use of it is more frequent in poetry than prose. The following examples nicely illustrate the use of Personification:

Love's not Time's fool,

Here it is taken from Shakespeare's Sonnet 116 representing 'love' as a servant of time.

Death lays his icy hand on kings:

This line is taken from James Shirley's poem "Dirge". Here, death is presented as a person.

… but *Patience,* to prevent

That murmur, soon *replies*.

It is taken from Milton's famous sonnet *On His Blindness*. In it Patience is made replying like human beings.

Where *Beauty* cannot keep her lustrous eyes,

Or new Love pine at them beyond tomorrow.

In above two lines from John Keats's Ode to a Nightingale, we see 'beauty' behaving like a lady.

Nor *grandeur* hear, with a disdainful smile

The short and simple annals of the poor.

The above two lines are taken from Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*. In the first line 'grandeur' is endowed with human quality of smiling. Another example is from the same poem where 'wishes' are given with the capacity of walking like humans:

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,

Their sober *wishes* never learn'd to stray;

9.10 SUMMING UP

Thus we saw and arrived at the conclusion that 'figures' are very part of both general expression and literary expression. They endow variety, pictorial effect, and force to one's writing. They make the presentation of thought impressive and remarkable. Figurative composition or expression distinguishes itself immediately form the ordinary mode of speech.

9.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 Distinguish Antithesis from Oxymoron.

Ans. Answer reading two sections 9.6 and 9.7 simultaneously.

Q. 2 Give at least two examples of Mixed Metaphor and explain why it is called mixed.

Ans. Read carefully section 9.5

Q. 3 What is Homeric Simile?

Ans. Look into section 9.4

Q. 4 What is Vehicle and how it is distinct from Tenor?

Ans. Look into section 9.4

Q. 5 What is Paradox ? Give a suitable example

Ans. Look into section 9.8

9.12 GLOSSARY

Ambition : aspiration or dream.

Abjure : formally reject.

Cognate : related in nature.

Etymology : the study of the sources and development of words.

Sarcasm : witty language used to pass bitter remark openly.

9.13 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT-10 FIGURES OF SPEECH –II

10.0 INTRODUCTION

For effective evocation and transmission of emotions, sentiments or thoughts through any expression or composition, a writer or orator either naturally or intentionally feels obliged to deviate from ordinary form or syntactical relation of words. Figurative language conveys feelings and sentiments powerfully and comfortably.

After having understood function and application of each figure of speech we want you write down answers to the questions as directed in the section 10.9.

10.1 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we shall be discussing some of the figures of speech used as literary devices. The use of figures makes the sense more clearly being superficially unclear. And therefore it is very necessary to have the knowledge of 'figures' generally applied usually in poetic verses. At the end of the Unit, learners will be able to

- understand the role and function of 'figures' in a poem
- understand how 'figures' add charm and novelty to the verse-expression

10.2 PATHETIC FALLACY

Pathetic Fallacy is subclass or subset of Personification. When nature or inanimate objects are portrayed as having human 'feelings, emotions, capabilities' taking interest in human actions either by sympathy or by antipathy, it is the case of Pathetic Fallacy. As a term, it was coined by John Ruskin in his book Modern Painters Vol. III, Part IV in 1856). John Ruskin interpreted such representation of nature with negative connotation and called it a fallacy or illusion "caused by an excited state of the feelings when the mind is borne away, overclouded or over-dazzled by emotions" (John Ruskin). Let me quote a few examples for illustration:

> The *night has been unruly*: where we lay,
>
> *Our chimneys were blown down*; and, as they say,
>
> Lamentings heard i' the air; *strange screams of death*,
>
> And prophesying with accents terrible
>
> Of dire combustion and confused events
>
> New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird
>
> Clamor'd the livelong night: some say, *the earth*
>
> *Was feverous and did shake*.
>
> (Macbeth Act II, Scene III)

In the above dialogue Lennox describes the brutal murder of King Duncan at the castle of Macbeth. Here we see 'unruly night', 'blown down chimney', 'screams of death', and 'feverous earth' depicting the evil act of murder that happened a night before. This is the nice case of Pathetic Fallacy.

> Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
>
> Ye to each other make, I see
>
> *The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee*;

The above lines have been taken from Wordsworth's *Ode: Intimations of Immortality* (1807). In the third line we see heavens taking part in the jubilee of blessed creatures. It is the case of Pathetic Fallacy.

> But when the melancholy fit shall fall
>
> Sudden from heaven like a *weeping cloud*,

In the above two lines taken from John Keats' *Ode on Melancholy*, feelings of melancholy is represented through weeping clouds. Thus we see human capacity of weeping is transferred to cloud. The weeping cloud is portrayed taking part in the human feelings of melancholy.

10.3 IRONY

The word Irony is derived from the Greek word 'eiron' (a dissembler), which itself is derived from 'eironeia', meaning "dissembling" or the act of deceiving. By this figure of speech, we say one thing but mean just the opposite. The intended meaning is suggested either by the context or by the writer's tone. Of all figures, it is most subtle form for insulting covering itself with the veil of condemnation or praise. It is used to expose vices and follies. Irony is less hurtful than *Sarcasm*. In *Sarcasm*, we exactly mean what we say. There are two basic kinds of Irony: *Verbal Irony* and *Situational* or *Dramatic Irony*.

Verbal irony is also called *rhetorical irony*. When two points of view arise out of what a speaker or writer says or believes to be true, it is called Verbal Irony. Disguise is one of the fruitful sources of Verbal Irony. Let us examine the following dialogue between Duke Orsino and Viola. Viola having disguised, is serving Duke as his male servant (in the name of her brother Cessario). In fact she has fallen in love with Duke who is courting Lady Olivia.

DUKE ORSINO: Thou dost speak masterly:

My life upon't, young though thou art, thine eye

Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves:

Hath it not, boy?

VIOLA: A little, by your favour.

DUKE ORSINO: What kind of woman is't?

VIOLA: Of your complexion.

DUKE ORSINO: She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith?

VIOLA: About your years, my lord.

Let us another example:

"Here's our chief guest."

This is the statement of Macbeth in Act III, Scene I in the play *Macbeth* referring to Banquo as an important guest keeping his real intention hidden.

Let us examine another example from *Pride and Prejudice*:

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

This is an opening line from Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). The implication of the statement is that a single woman is in want of a rich husband.

Dramatic Irony or *Irony of Situation* refers to two points of view arose out of what is done. In a Situational Irony, characters on the stage and the audience mean the situation differently. In Act I Scene IV of *Macbeth*, Duncan is unaware of Witches' prophecy about Macbeth to be king and his plan to kill him but audience knows all about properly:

> DUNCAN: There's no art
>
> To find the mind's construction in the face:
>
> He was a gentleman on whom I built
>
> An absolute trust.

Let me quote the Porter Scene Act II, Scene III where the Porter chatters in the state of drunkenness while admitting Macduff and Lennox to the castle. Macduff talks lightly without knowing about the murder of Duncan which audience knows very well. Greek tragedies are full of such ironic situations.

10.4 ONOMATOPOEIA

It is a figure of speech in which sense or meaning is echoed or suggested by the sound of words. In Onomatopoeia, words imitate sound of the thing. Words like hiss, fizz, whack, suck, sizzle, bang, dong, moo, tinkle, clatter, crackle, batter, gurgle, shower, etc. are onomatopoeic. Let me quote a few lines from Tennyson's dramatic monologue *Ulysses*:

> Much have I seen and known: cities of men
>
> And manners, climates, councils, governments,
>
> Myself not least, but honoured of them all,
>
> And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
>
> Far on the *ringing* plains of *windy* Troy.

The last line is an instance of Onomatopoeia. In it 'ringing' and 'windy' echo meaning by their sound. Another example from *Come Down, O Maid* (1847) by Tennyson:

The *moan* of doves in immemorial elms,

And *murmuring* of innumerable bees.

In the above two lines, we have ‘moan’ and ‘murmur’ suggesting the sense of sound.

10.5 ALLITERATION

Alliteration also known as ‘head rhyme’ or ‘initial rhyme’ is a figure of speech which consists in the recurrence or repetition of consonant sounds usually initial consonants of two or more words in the same line. It is generally used to add musical effects. When similar vowel sounds are repeated usually in stressed syllables, it is called ‘assonance’. Samuel Taylor Coleridge used Alliteration beautifully describing the sacred river Alph in his *Kubla Khan* (1816):

Five miles meandering with a mazy motion

Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,

Here in the above lines we see the repetition of ‘m’ at the beginning of words- miles, meandering, mazy, and motion. Let us see another example selected from Algernon Charles Swinburne’s *Atlanta in Calydon* (1865) in which the consonant ‘f’ is used for Alliteration in the words- faint, fresh, flame, flush, from, flower, and fruit:

The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes,

From leaf to flower, from flower to fruit.

10.6 METONYMY

Metonymy as a figure of speech is based on association. It is derived from the Greek word ‘metonumia’ that is ‘meta’ means change or transfer and ‘onoma’ means name. Thus Metonymy means change or transfer of name. Metonymy consists in describing a thing by its recurrent and close association or accompaniment instead of its own name. For metonymic use of word, rhetoricians have suggested following ways:

a) The sign for the thing signified: When a sign or symbol is used for the thing symbolized, there occurs Metonymy. Let us see a few examples-

Sceptre and *Crown*

Must tumble down, (From- James Shirley’s poem *Dirge*)

In the first line we have words ‘sceptre’ and ‘crown’ used as the symbols of kings.

Where *palsy* shakes a few, sad, last *grey hairs*,

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;

The above two lines are selected from John Keats' famous poem "Ode to a Nightingale". In the first line 'palsy' and 'grey hairs' have been used as symbols for old age.

b) The instrument for the agent: When an instrument or organ is used for which it is usually known, there occurs Metonymy. Let us notice a few examples-

And in the dust be equal made

With the poor crooked *scythe* and *spade*. (From- James Shirley's poem *Dirge*)

In the second line, the poet used instruments- *scythe* and *spade* for the farmers.

The *pen* is mightier than the *sword*.

In the above line, pen and sword are used as instruments for an author and a fighter.

c) The container for the thing contained: When a vessel or container is used in place of the thing it has, there occurs Metonymy. For example-

Who steals my *purse* steals trash. Iago said it in Shakespeare's *Othello* Act III, Scene III

…the heroic wealth of *hall* and *bower*. From- Wordsworth's poem *London* (1802)

In the above two lines 'purse' 'hall', 'bower' are containers. 'Purse' is used for money; 'hall' and 'bower' are used for lords and ladies. 'Hall' is where noblemen sit; and 'bower' means a garden where royal ladies enjoy gossips.

d) An effect for a cause, or a cause for an effect: When a name or word is used either for cause or for effect to show cause and effect relationship, there happens Metonymy. Let me quote a few suitable examples-

A thing of beauty is a joy for *ever*:

Here the cause of joy is beauty.

e) The name of a feeling for the object: When a feeling is used for the object, there occurs Metonymy. For instance-

She is the *pride* of her class.

The sentence implies that she is such a brilliant student; her teachers feel pride on her.

f) The creator for creation: When the maker is used for his/her work, it is metonymic use of it. For example-

And all *Arabia* breathes from yonder box.

In the above line selected from Alexander Pope's The Rape of the Lock (1712) Canto I Arabia stands for perfumes that it produces.

When one says that he /she is weak at Euclid; it means he or she is poor at geometry.

10.7 SYNECDOCHE

Hard to distinguish Synecdoche from Metonymy literally means 'understanding together'. J. C. Nesfield defines that it "consists in changing one noun for another of kindred meaning". By this figure part is used for whole or vice versa. In Synecdoche one name is substituted for another, whose meaning is more or less *cognate;* in Metonymy the meaning is *foreign* to the name itself. The following are different ways to designate one thing by means of another:

a) A part for the whole:

No, rather I abjure all *roofs*, and choose

To wage against the enmity o' the air;

(In King Lear Act II, Scene IV, Shakespeare used 'roofs' for houses.

b) The whole for the part:

Disclose the long-expecting flowers,

And wake the *purple year*!

The above two lines have been taken from Thomas Gray's poem "Ode on the Spring". In the second line, the poet used 'purple year' for spring.

b) A species for the genus:

For instance; *Silver and gold* I have none. In the sentence 'silver and gold' stands for riches.

c) A genus for the species

For example; "Drink, *pretty creature*, drink". Here 'pretty creature' is used for lamb.

d) An individual for the class:

For instance; every man is not *Vikramaditya*. Here Vikramaditya stands for a class of wise and just king.

e) The abstract for the concrete:

For example; Let not *ambition* mock their useful toil,

Here 'ambition' an abstract noun is used for the concrete that is, ambitious people.

f) The concrete for the abstract:

For instance; "Wisely kept the *fool* within" Dryden

In the above line 'fool' is concrete used for folly the abstract.

g) The material for the thing made:

For instance; She is dressed in *cotton*. Here 'cotton' stands for clothes made of cotton she has put on.

h) Definite for indefinite:

ANTONIO: We are merely cheated of our lives by drunkards:

This wide-chapp'd rascal—would thou mightst lie drowning

The washing of *ten* tides!

This dialogue is selected from Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. In the third line 'ten' is definite used for indefinite.

10.8 SUMMING UP

Thus we saw and arrived at the conclusion that 'figures' are very part of both general expression and literary expression. They endow variety, pictorial effect, and force to one's writing. They make the presentation of thought impressive and remarkable. Figurative composition or expression distinguishes itself immediately form the ordinary mode of speech.

10.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 Define Pathetic Fallacy with suitable examples .

Ans. Answer reading carefully section 10.2

Q. 2 How do you differentiate between 'dramatic irony' and 'verbal irony'?

Ans. Read carefully section 10.3

Q. 3 What is Irony?

Ans. Look into section no. 10.3

Q. 4 What is difference between Alliteration and Assonance?

Ans. Read carefully section 10.5

Q. 5 What is Metonymy ? Give a suitable example.

Ans. Read carefully section 10.6

Q. 6 What is Synecdoche ? Give a suitable example.

Ans. Read carefully section 10.7

10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

Abrams, M. H. A Glossary of Literary Terms (7th ed.) Bangalore: Eastern Press, 2003. Print.

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UNIT-11 FORMS OF POETRY

Structure

11.0 INTRODUCTION

Literature is a most secular science. Considering the state-of-art, only most objective and elevated literature can work out problems of relation. Literature does not clean ills off so-called society and social mind; instead it prepares ground for their transformation. Literature is a remedial grammar of life and time. In short, a true literature is an invocation and reinterpretation of religion. And therefore it is the immediate need of time to promote, studied, and support it.

After having studied this Unit, you are required to write down answers to the questions as suggested in Section 11.5.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

In the previous Unit you learnt the figures of speech usually used in poems. In this Unit we aim to explain what poetry is and introduce you to various forms of poetry. At the end of this Unit, you will be able to:

- recognize forms of poetry

- understand basic differences among them
- decipher the patterns of words as they are used in poetry.

11.2 WHAT IS POETRY?

It is very hard to dub all inner and outer features of poetry in one sentence or one clause. Poetry is very wide, variegated, and comprehensive in approach and treatment. Theoretically, it can be divided into subjective and objective category on the basis of subject matter but practically no poem is seen till the day either purely subjective or objective. It is common knowledge that poetry alongside other forms of literature is of human origin. A poet is seen undoubtedly extra sensible towards everything around. He or she works either getting objective or subjective; after all he or she is the party of the composition. Things are selected, tasted, and felt along with his or her hearts and then the creative genius tries to put poetic colour into it with poetic talent as much as possible. Thus the poetic orientation distinguishes one poem from the other. Poetic vision is the most essential subjective aspect of any work of art. It is the soul. In absence of the soul, the work of art remains a mere structure. It cannot console and comfort human feelings.

11.2.1 IS VERSE THE SAME AS POEM?

Definitely no, before I make a meaningful distinction between verse and poem in order to explain what poetry is. To explain poetry is very much like to explain what literature is. These days the term literature is being used across the disciplines. To be specific, the discussion is about those writings whose business is with human joys and sorrows in accordance with the formula of probability and necessity (Aristotle). Literature is one that supports life being consistent with ethical modes and patterns. Literature is one that argues for the humanization, not the animalization or criminalization, of the human world. Literature is one that inculcates a sense to see all the living and non-living beings as equal. Literature is one that tirades against rat-race. Literature is one that prepares a platform for the cultivation of fortitude and forbearance. Literature is none's island. Anyone can possess this domain. Literature softens out the complexes of life. Literature helps his/her lift out of his/her personality. Literature is an implied prophecy. Literature is more visionary and philosophic than other branches of knowledge.

Technically to say, poetry is a versified and musical structure gingerly prepared, bearing deep and noble feelings and emotions put through specialized language and shape. Verse is the clothing of poetical thoughts. It is an aid to memory. It is the formal or technical aspect of any musical composition. It has nothing to do with the charm of probability and necessity. It is in fact the verse that distinguishes poetry from prose.

It say conclusively, poetry a composition of *rhythmic lines underlying poetic vision* (emphasis mine).

11.3 FORMS OF POETRY

There are principally three genres or types of literature namely, drama, poetry, and prose. For convenience, there are structurally certain forms of poetry; they are *lyric, ode, sonnet, dramatic monologue, elegy, epic, ballad, mock-epic, idyll,* and *satire.*

11.3.1 LYRIC

A *lyric* is comparatively a short non-narrative poem best suited for the expression of a single thought, feeling, and mood of a single speaker not necessarily the poet himself. The term is derived from Greek word *lyre* which means a musical instrument something like harp or *veena*. In ancient Greece, any short poem composed and sung along with the music of lyre (*lyra*) was usually called *lyric,* though in ancient Rome, Horace, a noted Roman poet, composed lyrics to be read only. In ancient Greece, it was fashion to divide their songs into two kinds–*melic* and *choric*. The former was sung by a single singer or poet being accompanied on the *lyre,* whereas the latter was sung by a group of singers with the musical accompaniment of *lyre* and sometimes dance especially on the occasion of religious festivals. It was deemed best for the expression of strong collective or commonly shared feelings of a community. The former is responsible for the development of lyric poetry in English. Thus in modern times, a lyric is a musical composition (music created by the lyricist through certain sweet sounding words not through some musical instrument) giving vent to "a single thought, mood or feeling" (R. J. Rees) in a reasonably compressed manner. Subjectivity though is the focal feature of a lyric poem, it may either be purely subjective or objective or the combination of both in the expression of mood and feeling. Since a lyric poem is an outcome of an emotion or impulse which is activated by subjective or objective factors, it is bound to be brief and short in length and duration. A *lyric* is marked by ease and flow in the expression of feeling. In it the poet involves himself or herself directly or indirectly into the fabric of the composition. Dramatic monologue, Elegy, Ode, and Sonnet are its subtypes. A well composed– *lyric* may bear the following features:

- A *lyric* is primarily a musical composition in its sound pattern. It is made musical by adhering to the principles or laws of metre, rhyme, foot, rhythm, and figures, thus making the expression swift, memorable, and musical.
- The essence of lyric is subjectivity that is, it expresses the personal profound thought or intense feeling, but sometimes it expresses the emotion of human being in general.

- The fundamental quality of a lyric is feeling or emotion rather than idea. It appeals more to the heart than to the mind or intellect.
- It is usually a short composition.
- A *lyric* poem has a well-knit structure. It is structurally divided into three parts corresponding to three moods of the poet. The first part is called 'motive' which means a powerful cause that activated the emotion of the poet. It is generally expressed in the first few lines or the first stanza. The second part is the development of thought generated by the catalytic emotion or subject. In the third part, the poet usually returns to the cause of mood and sums up his thoughts with a sense of either contentment or sadness. However, sometimes the poet fails to arrive at conclusion.

Lyric poetry has ever been very much liberal in its choice of subject–matter. In fact, it is nearly unlimited in its scope and variety. It can treat all aspects of experiences pertaining to human beings as its subject-matter. It seems a little bit futile to prepare a list of subject–matter systematically that suits *lyric* most. However, sometimes it is divided into four types : i) the *lyric* of vision; ii) the *lyric* of emotion; iii) the *lyric* of thought; iv) the *lyric* of moral. The *lyric* of vision uses images and symbols to evoke a particular emotion in place of expressing it directly. The lyrics of *Imagist* and *symbolist* poets (Ezra Pound, T. E. Hume, Amy Lowell, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot etc.) fall under this category. The *lyric* of emotion is mostly subjective. It has at least three subclasses–the sensual *lyric*; imaginative *lyric*; and mystical *lyric.* The *lyric* poetry of Elizabethan, Metaphysical, and Romantic period are mostly sense–evoking in their treatment of emotion or feeling. W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, William Empson and many others wrote particularly imaginative *lyrics*. W. B. Yeats, G. M. Hopkins, William Blake, William Herbert, Henry Vaughan etc. wrote a number of *lyrics* of mystical type. The *lyric* of thought appears a little more objective in its tone and approach. This *lyric* type is informative and expository in its treatment of subject-matter. William Cawper, John Dryden and T. S. Eliot wrote several *lyrics* of this type. Alfred Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, and Alexander Pope wrote moralistic or didactic *lyrics*.

R.J. Rees has also suggested and identified four types of *lyric* poetry:

a) The direct *lyric* in which the poet directly addresses and shares his/her feelings in simple and straightforward way; for instance Robert Burns' poem 'A Red Rose'.

b) The formal *lyric* in which the emotion is expressed through some intricate structure; for instance, the Sonnet, Elegy, Ode etc.

c) The intellectual or metaphysical *lyric* in which the poet shows his/her intellectual calibre and acumen; for instance the poetry of John Donne.

d) The aural or sound based *lyric* in which the poet exploits musical potential of words; for example G. M. Hopkins' poem the *Windhover*.

It is clear that the Greeks poets like Pindar, Sophocles etc. were the earliest poets to have used this form of poetry. Then Roman poets like Horace wrote lyrics only for reading. His lyrics were not set for some instrumental music. Then Latin poets like Virgil, Ovid, and Catullus also used this form of poetry. During the R*enaissance* period, under the leadership of Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, lyric poetry attained a surprising growth. William Shakespeare, Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Michael Drayton, John Milton, and Samuel Daniel helped it reach the zenith of of popularity. During the Neo-Classical period, the lyrics of Thomas Gray and William Collins kept it going. But in the hands of Romantic poets– Wordsworth, Coleridge, Robert Southey, Blake, Byron, Shelley, and Keats–lyric poetry got perfected. In the 20th century, Yeats, Eliot, Auden, Philip Larkin, and Dylan Thomas kept lyric poetry alive.

In this way, it can be said with ease that *lyric* poetry has ever enjoyed the limelight since its days of origin. Its brevity and musicality suited the expression of the passionate and impress feelings.

11.3.2 ODE

Ode, like its parent form *lyric*, took birth in ancient Greece. It is "most elevated and complicated species of lyric" (Childs and Fowler). The term 'ode' is derived from the Greek word *aeidein* which means to sing or to chant. Structurally, it is formal and elaborate in theme, manner, and style. It is relatively longer in form than proper *lyric* poem. Since its origin, it has gone several modifications that create difficulty before critics and scholars to define it conclusively yet it seems very much safe to say that 'ode' is serious and grand in its form (that is, typical stanzaic structure and free but complex and subtle metrical patterns–regular and irregular) and content, (that is, the subject-matter) both. It was usually composed to address a person or some abstract thing. Such odes are reflective, meditative, and subjective in the treatment of theme. Even sometimes, it was written to celebrate some public events 'like funerals, birthdays, and state events' (J. A. Cuddon). B. Prasad in his book, *A Background to the Study of English Literature*, succinctly enumerates the following salient characteristics that all odes bear :

- It is exalted in subject-matter, and elevated in tone and style. Neither the theme nor its treatment can be trivial or undignified. The poet is serious both in the choice of his subject and the manner of its presentation. For instance; Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*.
- It is longer than the lyric proper, for the emotion it embodies is of a kind that admits of development. It does not give an impression of 'unpremeditated art'.

- It is often addressed directly to the being or object it treats of. The opening lines sometimes contain an apostrophe or appeal, which is characteristic of the whole treatment of the poem. For instance; Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*.

- Sometimes it has for its theme an important public event like a national jubilee, the death of a distinguished personage, the commemoration of the founding of a great university. For instance; Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*.

There are chiefly two kinds of Ode: the Greek Ode and the English Ode. The Greek Ode is of two forms–Pindaric and Horatian. Thus we have three types of Ode:

1) The Regular or Pindaric Ode

2) The Horation Ode

3) The Irregular or Cowleyan Ode.

The Regular or Pindaric Ode was first conceived in ancient Greece by the Greek poet, Pindar and henceforth it is *Pindaric ode*. It was actually a choral poem generally sung on some public occasion by a group of singers while performing dance. It is perhaps the reason that led some scholars to call it *Choral ode*. It is also called the *Dorian ode* because it originally grew and flourished in the Doris district whose dialect was Doric. For Pindar's regular stanzaic structure, some prefer to call it the *Regular ode*. The Pindaric ode consisted of trifold stanzaic form– *Strophe, Anti-strophe,* and *Epode*. The first two stanzas are similar in structure and metre but the third stanza differs from the early two stanzas. The first stanza known as 'strophe' is sung by dancers making a turn from the right to the left. The second stanza, that is, Antistrophe, during its recitation the dancers turn anti–clockwise, that is, from the left to the right. During the recitation of the third stanza, that is, Epode, dancers stand with no movement. This sequence of three stanzas- *Strophe, Antistrophe,* and *Epode*–can be repeated any number of times in a *Pindaric ode*. Pindar for his odes perhaps took hints from songs of chorus in plays. For example, Thomas Gray successfully imitated Pindaric form in his poems *The Progress of Poesy* (1754) and *The Bard* (1757) where he repeated the sequence of *Strophe, Antistrophe,* and *Epode* three times. This form of Ode entered into England with Ben Jonson's "To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of that Noble Pair Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison" (1629), and John Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* (1697).

The Horatian Ode is associated with the name of Roman poet Horace. It was popularized in Latin by two great Roman poets, Horace and Catullus, but the works of Horace emerged outstanding and served as the model for subsequent writers. For his successful odes, this type of ode is called Horatian. Sometimes it is called Lesbian for its origin in the island of Lesbos. Horatian odes are more calm, elegant, philosophical, personal, and brief than Pindaric odes. Horatian ode consists of a number of short

stanzas usually of four lines similar in length and arrangement with regard to rhyme and metre. "The treatment is direct and dignified, and the thought clearly developed" (B. Prasad). The Horatian ode is usually written in a single repeated stanza form. Andrew Marvell's *An Horatian Ode Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* (1650) and John Keats' *Ode to Autumn* (1820) may be taken for examples here to substantiate the point.

The Irregular or Cowleyan Ode. This irregular form of ode is called after the name of Abraham Cowley who neither follows fully the Pindaric pattern (triadic structure of 'strophe', 'antistrophe', and 'epode' nor the Horatian, that is, equal length stanzas having the same rhyme-scheme and metre. The rhyme–scheme, number of stanzas, and metre are almost at the discretion of the poet. The English poets, especially the Romantics, favoured it most and for this reason it is sometimes called the English ode. The English ode is marked by its own pattern of varying lengths, number of lines, and rhyme–scheme. Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* (1807), Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Dejection: An Ode* (1802) and *France* (1798) are suitable cases in point. They do not have stanzas of equal length, same metre, and rhyme. Odes of Shelley and Keats are partly regular and partly irregular and they perfected it in the 19th century. Keats' *Ode on a Grecian Urn* (1820), *Ode to a Nightingale* (1819), *Ode to Autumn* (1820) etc. and P. B. Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind* (1819) are regular odes.

Thus we see the Pindaric and Horatian are odes regular. The English odes are both regular and irregular structurally.

11.3.3 SONNET

The *Sonnet* as a poetic form took birth probably in the thirteenth century either in Sicily or Provence, Italy. It is one of the most popular verse forms. It is a short lyric poem usually consisting of fourteen lines in *iambic pentametre* with an intricate rhyme-scheme. The word 'sonnet' has come from the Italian word *sonnetto* which means a little sound or song. The word s*onnetto* itself came from Latin word *sonus* which means a sound. It was primarily used to express the emotions of love for some original or imaginary beloved, especially in the hands of Italian and Elizabethan poets. After them its scope gradually widened and then it came to be applied for everything that came under the purview of human experience and feeling, such as, politics, religion, and even personal grieves. There are three basic forms of Sonnet:

- The Italian Sonnet
- The Spenserian Sonnet
- The English Sonnet

The Italian Sonnet: it was firmly established by the fourteenth century Italian poet Francis Petrarch in his *Rime*. It was addressed to his sweet lady named Laura giving vent to single emotion of love. This form

of ‘sonnet’ is sometimes also called the Petrarchan or the Classical. It is divided into two parts: the first eight lines is called *octave*, rhyming *a b b a, a b b a*, and the last six lines is called *sestet*, rhyming *c d e, c d e* or *c d c, d c d* or *c d e, d c e*. The ‘octave’ is composed of two *quatrains* (a unit of four lines). The ‘sestet’ can be divided into two *tercets* (a unit of three lines). The end of ‘octave’ is well-marked by the effect of punctuation, such as full stop, and sometimes it is highlighted by space. It is called *caesura* or pause. The ‘octave’ contains a particular thought and in the ‘sestet’ the thought of ‘octave’ finds a new application, or summarization. The turn from ‘octave’ to ‘sestet’ is technically called *volta* (a turn of thought). Thus ‘sestet’ grows out of ‘octave’. John Milton is said to have reestablished the Italian sonnet in England and so it is sometimes called the Miltonic Sonnet. However, he in his *On His Blindness* (it was probably composed sometime between 1652 and 1655 but officially published in 1673) does not formally divide it into ‘octave’ and ‘sestet’. Let me quote a ‘sonnet’ of Milton titled “How Soon Hath Time“ bearing the Italian sonnet characteristics for elucidation:

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth, *a*
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year! *b*
My hasting days fly on with full career, *b*
But my late spring no bud or blossom show’th *a*

Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, *a*
That I to manhood am arrived so near, *b*
And inward ripeness doth much less appear, *b*
That some more timely-happy spirits endu’th. *A*

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow, *c*
It shall be still in strictest measure even *d*
To that same lot, however mean or high, *e*

Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven; *d*
All is, if I have grace to use it so, *c*
As ever in my great taskmaster’s eye. *e*

The above quoted ‘sonnet’ consists of two quatrains, that is ‘octave’ and two tercets, that is, ‘sestet’. At the end of the second quatrain, we notice the punctuation mark (.) signifying pause, and thereafter the thought is presented differently in the ‘sestet’. The ‘sonnet’ is cast in ‘iambic pentametre. It is an example of the *Italian Sonnet*.

The English Sonnet: The 'sonnet' came into England through two diplomats who were on a mission to Italy named Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey in the first half of the 16th century. They learnt the art of composing 'sonnet' for pleasure. Especially Henry Howard invented a new rhyme design which later on Shakespeare perfected. Howard's 'sonnet' consists of three quatrains and a concluding couplet. It has a rhyme-scheme: *abab, cdcd, efef, gg*. Howard addressed his love to his beloved Geraldine or Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald. Thomas Wyatt addressed his love to Ann Boleyn. Their 'sonnets' were collected in *Tottle's Miscellany* (1557), which was published by Richard Tottle along with Grimald. It has around 261 poems. In this way, we see all the quatrains are unconnected to one another though related thematically. The final couplet stands alone serving as a concluding remark. William Shakespeare's successful application of Surreyan rhyme-scheme, it came to be known as the *Shakespearean Sonnet*. Let us take up a 'sonnet', numbered 18, from Shakespeare's sonnet-sequence simply titled *Sonnets* (1609) containing 154 sonnets, published by Richard Thorpe. 126 sonnets out of it are addressed to some 'Mr. W. H.' (he was most probably Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton, or Sidney's nephew William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke) and remainders to a 'Dark Lady'(she was perhaps called Mary Fitton):

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	*a*
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:	*b*
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,	*a*
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;	*b*
Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,	*c*
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;	*d*
And every air from fair sometimes declines,	*c*
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;	*d*
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,	*e*
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;	*f*
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,	*e*
When in eternal lines to Time thou grow'st:	*f*
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,	*g*
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.	*g*

Thus we see all the three quatrains are not structurally bound with one another. The *Shakespearean Sonnet* neither has *caesura* nor *volta*. As usual it is composed of iambic pentametre lines. Philip Sidney wrote a

sonnet-sequence of 108 and 11 songs titled *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) where he addressed his love emotions to a lady named Penelope Devereux. In it he applied a new rhyme scheme*: abab,baba, dede, ff*.

The *Spenserian Sonnet* is an important variant of 'sonnet'; it has three linked up quatrains and a separate final couplet as in the *Shakespearean Sonnet*. Being structurally linked up, it is sometimes called 'Link Sonnet'. Edmund Spenser in the 16th century invented a new rhyme scheme for his 'sonnets'. It came after his successful use known as the *Spenserian Sonnet*. A *Spenserian Sonnet* has a rhyme scheme *abab, abab, bcbc, bcbc, ee*. As far as the subject-matter is concerned, the Shakespearean and the Spenserian both are kindred to each other; they differ structurally only. Edmund Spenser wrote a sonnet-sequence of 88 in number titled *Amoretti* (it is an Italian word which means a little gift, published in 1595) to address his lady-love named Elizabeth Boyle about the progress of his love. Let us see an example from his *Amoretti,* Sonnet No 75:

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,	*a*
But came the waves and washed it away:	*b*
Again I write it with a second hand,	*a*
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.	*b*
Vain man, said she, that doest in vain assay,	*b*
A mortal thing so to immortalize,	*c*
For I myself shall like to this decay,	*b*
And eek my name be wiped out likewise.	*c*
Not so, (quod I) let baser things devise	*c*
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:	*d*
My verse, your virtues rare shall eternize,	*c*
And in the heavens write your glorious name.	*d*
Where whenas death shall all the world subdue,	*e*
Our love shall live, and later life renew.	*e*

Thus, we see all the 'quatrians' are linked to one another by rhyming and a couplet at the end of the 'sonnet'. There are some other variants of the 'sonnet', G. M. Hopkins wrote '*Curtal Sonnet'*. It consists of ten and a half lines. George Meredith wrote 16 line sonnets in his *Modern Love* (1802). A few Elizabethan poets have written 12 line sonnets too.

At the conclusion, it is to say that all English sonnets were in *iambic pentameters (10 syllables)*, *Italian sonnsts*, of Petrarch were in *hendecasyllables* (11 syllables), and French sonnets were in *alexandrines* (12 syllables).

11.3.4 ELEGY

Like 'lyric', it also took birth in ancient Greece. The word 'elegy' is derived from the Greek word *elegeia* which means 'song of mourning or lamentation'. In the beginning it was generally composed to give expression to emotion of sadness caused by death or loss of someone. Gradually it came to be used for various subjects like "death, love, war, and similar themes. The Elegy was also used for epitaphs and commemorative verses, and very often there was a mourning strain in them" (J. A. Cuddon). In Greek and Roman times, the term 'elegy' was applied for any poem composed in 'elegiac measure' (that is, alternating *dactylic hexametre* and *pentametre* lines in couplets). In a *dactylic foot*, one accented syllable is followed by two unaccented syllables. In fact, Elegy as a form of poetry refers to any mournful mood or content immediately. In modern usage in English, 'elegy' is recognized for its mournful or reflective content not, for its structure. Structurally, it has become almost open. Through 'elegy', sometimes the poet pays tribute to something or someone once loved but now lost. There are two types of 'elegy':

- The Pastoral Elegy
- The Traditional Elegy

During the Renaissance period, the 'Pastoral Elegy' came into fashion. It was perhaps invented by a Sicilian Greek poet named Theocritus. In a 'pastoral elegy', the poet represents himself as a shepherd lamenting the loss of his fellow companion in a country or rural setting. The term 'pastoral' is derived from the Latin word 'pastor' which means 'a shepherd'. The tradition of 'pastoral elegy' began with Edmund Spenser's *Astrophel* (1586). It was composed on the death of Sir Philip Sidney. Spenser wrote another elegy of this type on the death of Sir George's wife. It was titled *Daphnaida* and published in 1591. His *Shepherd's Calender* (1579) is also full of pastoral elements in the manner of Theocritus and Virgil. After Spenser, John Milton took the responsibility and carried the tradition forward. He wrote his famous 'elegy' *Lycidas* (1638) on the death of his 'learned friend' Edward King. P. B. Shelley wrote *Adonais* (1821) on the death of John Keats. Matthew Arnold wrote *Thyrsis* (1867) on the death of Arthur Hugh Clough. Walt Whitman wrote *When Lilacs Lost in the Dooryard Bloom'd* (1866) on the death of late American President Abraham Lincoln.

In the 'Traditional Elegy', the poet is seen mourning someone or something lost very close to him or her. This form of 'elegy' came into fashion with the publication of Tennyson's poem *In Memoriam* (1850) written in the memory of his friend Arthur Henry Hallam who died of

cerebral haemorrhage when he was on vacation in Vienna on September 15, 1833. Tennyson took around 17 years to complete his work. G. M. Hopkins wrote a famous elegy *The Wreck of Deutschland* (1875) to express his feelings of sadness on the drowning of five Franciscan Nuns in the river Thames in the winter of 1875. Wystan Hugh Auden wrote an elegy titled *In Memory of W. B. Yeats* (1939) in the fond memory of William Butler Yeats.

Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1751) is also an elegy of conventional type. In it the poet personally pays his deeply felt sympathy and tribute to common people of the hamlet who are dead and buried in a churchyard with no well–carved plaque. Matthew Arnold's *Rugby Chapel* (1867) is also an elegiac poem composed in the memory of his own father, Dr. Thomas Arnold, who was famous as the Headmaster of Rugby School.

In this way, it can be said that the pastoral elegy distinguishes itself from the traditional elegies in terms of setting and the poet's involvement. When he plays as an ordinary person without putting himself in any particular setting, it is called 'traditional elegy', but when he put on the clothing of a shepherd and roams in a forest looking around for his friend with mournful heart, it is called 'pastoral elegy'.

11.3.5 Satire

The *Satire* in modern usage is more known for its tone and technique or point of view than as a set and separate literary form. For it, the satire has been ever in the fashion since immemorial days. Today *satire* cannot be explained as a poetic form in terms of rhyme, metre, and stanza structure. It is, of course, applied into a number of genres–poetry, essay, novel, and drama. However, I shall restrict my discussion to *satirical poetry* only. The chief business of *satire* is censure. Till date, no age can be claimed as free from its shortcomings. As far as social, cultural, economic, political, and religious abuses exist in the society, the men of sense and sensibility will continue to censure falsity, vanity, and folly of human beings through the arrows of ridicule and raillery openly and frankly. *Irony* is an indirect form of attack, whereas *Satire* is a direct form of attack. *Satirists* do not mince the matter. They prefer direct form of the verbal attack. *Satire* in general does not hurt any person anyway. *Satirists* use the technique of *irony*, *wit*, and sometimes *sarcasm* for giving a direction to change or reform. B. Prasad notes in this regard : "Etymologically, a *satire* is 'unpolished verse' and this has been characteristic of it in English literature. It may be defined as a literary composition whose principal aim is to ridicule folly or vice. It is a light form of composition, intended to keep the reader in a good *humour* even when it is at its most caustic". "The true end of Satire", observes Dryden, "is the amendment of vices by correction". Thus we can identify the following distinguishing features of *Satire*:

- Satire is more light, playful, and less hurtful
- Censure or ridicule is its soul business
- It is open and direct in its purpose and direction
- It looks for change or reformation
- It is brief and epigrammatic in style and manner
- It can target a person or a group of persons, an institution or an idea
- It makes both grave and gay its subject-matter.

The *Satire* is of classical origin. In Greek and Roman literature, it was used to launch attack upon follies. Aristophanes satirized literature (he equated it to frogs), legal institutions (to wasps), politics (to knights), and the philosophy of Socrates (to clouds) in his comic plays. Aesop (a 6th century B. C. E. story teller, popular for beast fables) is even today remembered for his **Fables** in which he boldly satirized human follies. Homer, Horace, and Juvenal were too popular for their satires.

During the Medieval period, it was used as an element in songs, ballads, fables, epics, and epistles. Dante, William Langland, Goeffrey Dunbar, William Chaucer, Skelton, and Latimer were then popular for satirical verses.

During the Elizabethan era, the spirit of Satire entered into the body of drama especially through the genius of George Gascoigne, John Marston, Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson, and William Shakespeare.

During the Neo-classical period, Satire became the most famous writing. The use of couplets and epigrams made it more efficacious and forceful. In fact, famous satires like *Satiric* poetry got perfection during this era. John Dryden wrote *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), *Mac Flecknoe* (1682), and *The Hind and the Panther* (1687).Among *satiric* poets Alexander Pope stood first. His noted satiric verses are: *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), *The Dunciad* (1743), *Moral Essays* (1731-35), and *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735). *London*, a satirical poem, was written by Samuel Johnson in 1738. And he wrote *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, in 1749.

Among the nineteenth century Romantic poets, Byron's *The Vision of Judgment* (1822), Shelley's *Masque of Anarchy* (1832) and Keats' unfinished *The Cap and Bells* (1848) are a few noted *Satires*. Among the Modern poets, T. S. Eliot is a well familiar name who surprised the whole world with his *satirical* poem *The Lovs song of J.Alfred Prufrock (1915) and a few others.*

Now, it can be said that satire as a spirit has never been extinct since the origin of follies and foibles. It holds immense bright future as it

is quite capable at entering into other forms of literature as per the demand of time or situation.

11.4 LET US SUM UP

Thus we see that poetry is the most suitable vehicle for the transmission and evocation or generation of human emotions. Poetry has several forms to accommodate a wide range of themes and to express intense emotions, feelings, moods, meditations, and reflections.

11.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. 1 Discuss the salient features of Sonnet.

Ans. Read carefully Section 11.3.3

Q. 2 What is difference between the Regular Ode and the Irregular Ode?

Ans. Read Section 11.3.2

Q. 3 What is Pastoral Elegy and why it is called so?

Ans. Read carefully Section 11.3.

Q. 4 How does Satiric poetry differ from other forms of poetry?

Ans. Read carefully Section 11.3.1, 11.3.2, 11.3.3, 11.3.4, and 11.3.5.

Q. 5 Discuss Lyric as the parent-form of verse.

Ans. Read Section 11.3 and 11.3.1.

Q. 6 Distinguish Satire from Irony.

Ans. Read Section 11.3.5.

Q. 7 What is Curtal Sonnet?

Ans. Read Section 11.3.3.

Q. 8 Differentiate between Octave and Sestet.

Ans. Read Section 11.3.3

Q. 9 Differentiate between *Caesura* and *Volta.*

Ans. Read carefully Section 11.3.3.

Q. 10 What is Hendecasyllable?

Ans. Read Section 11.3.3.

11.6 GLOSSARY

Imagist	:	A 20th century movement in poetry advocating free verse and the expression of ideas and emotions through images or word pictures.
Epitaph	:	words written in memory of someone dead especially on the gravestone.
Classical Age	:	related to ancient Greek and Roman art and literature.
Renaissance	:	a French word, meaning 'new birth'.
Neo-classical	:	revival of classical art and literature between years 1660 and 1780.
Medieval period	:	related to the period from 500 A.D. to 1500 A. D. in Europe.
Humour	:	amusing quality.
Succinct	:	brief.
Genre	:	kind or type of literature
Immense	:	very great.
Ballad	:	a kind of song that tells a story.
Epistle	:	a composition in the form of letter.

11.7 FURTHER SUGGESTED READINGS

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ROUGH WORK

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