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MATS CENTRE FOR OPEN & DISTANCE EDUCATION

Restoration & Neo –Classical Age

Master of Arts (English)
Semester - 1

SELF LEARNING MATERIAL

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Restoration and Neo-Classical Age

M.A English Semester I

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Restoration and Neo-Classical Age

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PAPER-III

MODULE-I

***ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL*- JOHN DRYDEN (POEM)**

***FROM THE ESSAY OF MAN (FROM EPISTLE- I)*- ALEXENDER POPE**

THE RESTORATION AND NEO-CLASSICAL AGE

Contents

Objective

The paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key features found within the literary periods known as the Restoration Age and the Neo-Classical Age.

Through an exploration of the prominent literary works from these eras, students will be able to gain a profound understanding of the various genres that defined this time, as well as grasp the essential characteristics that distinguish these periods.

By delving into the works of influential authors such as John Dryden, Alexander Pope, John Milton, Addison, Charles Dickens, William Congreve, Richard Sheridan, and Johnathan Swift, the module will offer a detailed examination that sheds light on the significant contributions made by these writers to the literary landscape of their respective epochs.

An overview of the Restoration and the Neo-Classical Age:

The Neoclassical Era, which spanned from 1660 to 1785, is a period that encapsulates approximately 140 years immediately following the Restoration in 1660. In this era, authors exhibited a profound admiration for classical writers, particularly those hailing from ancient Greece and Rome, hence earning it the moniker of the Neoclassical period. This period was characterized by a predominant view of literature as an "art," with neoclassical writers diligently adhering to the established rules governing this art form. Central to neoclassical literature was the principle of creating art for the betterment of humanity rather than solely for its own sake. Delving into the additional subdivisions within this significant era can greatly enhance one's comprehension of its depth and influence on literary expression.

The Restoration (1660-1700) denotes the era subsequent to Charles II's ascension to the English throne in May 1660, following his exile due to the termination of the Commonwealth administration, and continues until 1700. The urbanity, wit, and licentiousness of court life are vividly illustrated in the literature of the period, whereas country individuals are consistently derided for their clumsiness, lack of refinement, and deficiency in intelligence. The theatres were rejuvenated with the removal of the restriction enacted by the Puritans in 1642. George Etherege, William Wycherley, William Congreve, and John Dryden were instrumental in developing the comedy of manners known as Restoration Comedy, whereas Dryden, Otway, and other playwrights contributed to the form of tragedy termed heroic drama. Dryden was a distinguished poet, critic, and playwright. Neoclassicism, the new classical philosophy, prescribed particular styles and writing rules for authors while establishing frameworks for critical analysis among contemporary literary experts, thus reinforcing literature's dependence on ancient paradigms. France, the foremost nation in Europe politically and culturally, acted as the channel for transmitting classical ideas to other countries, including Britain, promoting ideals of naturalness, logic, order, clarity, balance, and aesthetic judgement.

In the wider social context, following the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 and the 1707 "Act for a Union of the Two Kingdoms of England and Scotland," Britain steadily progressed towards prosperity, rooted in ancient traditions and classical values, with neoclassicism becoming the dominant theory of the period, exemplified by satirical

and philosophical poetry in its literary expression. It would influence not just modern poetry and the formation of the novel writing tradition in the eighteenth century but also the ensuing Victorian realism, marked by socially aware, realistic, conventional, normative, and moral narratives. Neoclassicism, the literary expression of the European "Age of Enlightenment," is identified as a historical literary period from the 1660s to the 1780s, segmented into three distinct phases: (1) the "Restoration Age" (1660-1700), also termed the "Age of Dryden"; (2) the "Augustan Age" (1700-1750s), known as the "Age of Pope"; and (3) the "Age of Johnson" (1750s-1780s), which aligns with the "Age of Sensibility," both signifying the decline of the neoclassical period. Pre-Romanticism denotes the transition in literature from neoclassicism to the Romantic era, commencing with the demise of neoclassicism in the mid-eighteenth century. The advent of the novel, distinguished by its realistic features, moral instruction, and humorous components, signifies the formation of a primarily new genre in English literature: creative writing. This advancement would ultimately result in the proliferation of fiction, including both novels and short stories, during the Victorian era and thereafter. Pre-Romanticism was a lyrical movement distinguished by "primitive" and "mournfully reflective" topics, acting as an alternative to neoclassical poetry and a precursor to Romanticism, however devoid of substantial analytical theories. Conversely, neoclassicism included both theoretical frameworks and literary execution, with many pioneers of the English novel expressing critical viewpoints on the nascent form regarding the notions of order and proportion. The nation achieved stability and confidence.

Unit 1

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Following in the footsteps of esteemed literary figures, including celebrated poets like John Donne and John Milton, John Dryden distinguished himself as the foremost English poet of the 17th century. Continuing the rich tradition established by luminaries such as William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Dryden not only excelled in the realm of poetry but also left and indelible mark as a preeminent writer of his time. His exceptional talent was not confined to verse alone; his mastery extended to the prose domain, garnering unparalleled acclaim for his works, particularly in the fields of literary criticism and translation. While poets like George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, William Wycherley, and William Congreve enjoy widespread recognition in anthologies and literary histories, it is Dryden's consistent and significant contributions to both poetry and drama that set him apart. In the theatrical arena, his plays stand out as towering achievements, with notable works such as "The Conquest of Granada" (1670, 1671) and "Marriage A-la-Mode" (1671) earning him the distinguished reputation as the foremost author of heroic plays and tragicomedies following the era of Shakespeare. His remarkable tragedies, including "All for Love" (1677) and "Don Sebastian" (1689), as well as acclaimed comedies like "Amphitryon" (1690), further cement his legacy in the realm of dramatic literature. Shifting focus to his prose works, Dryden's writing style captivates readers with its clarity and professionalism, deftly capturing the natural rhythms of everyday speech. His critical prowess shines through in his adept synthesis of historical, analytical, evaluative, and dialogic approaches, significantly enriching the landscape of neoclassical literary criticism.

John Dryden was a skilled translator who developed a clear style known as paraphrase. He used this method to create remarkable translations of classical works from authors like Homer, Lucretius, and Virgil. His version of The Aeneid is considered one of the best in English literature. As a poet, Dryden improved the heroic couplet

and added techniques like enjambments and rhythmic changes, influencing later poets like Alexander Pope.

Even though he is remembered for his poetry, Dryden is often associated with his satirical works, having only written two major satires: Mac Flecknoe and The Medal. His famous poem, Absalom and Achitophel, showcases his skillful satire with a strong resolution. Other important poems include Annus Mirabilis, Religio Laici, and The Hind and the Panther, reflecting his varied themes and styles. His occasional poetry also highlights his significant influence on English literature.

Dryden was born on August 9, 1631, into an extended family of ascending Puritan gentry in Northamptonshire. As a youth, he was enrolled at the King's School in Westminster to be educated as a King's Scholar under the esteemed Royalist teacher Richard Busby. Although Dryden's family supported the Commonwealth, his inaugural published poem, the elegy "Upon the Death of the Lord Hastings," featured in a 1649 collection of verses commemorating the young aristocrat's premature demise from smallpox, disclosed his Royalist inclinations.

Due to familial pressure, Dryden predominantly refrained from writing until after his departure from Cambridge, where he was an undergraduate at Trinity College, and subsequent employment in Oliver Cromwell's administration, perhaps in the Office of Latin Secretary alongside Milton and Marvell. This may be the initial indication of Dryden adjusting his stance to align with political currents, as has been said by critics for ages. His relative, the notable Puritan Sir Gilbert Pickering, lord chamberlain to Cromwell, likely facilitated work for Dryden, and upon the Protector's death in 1659,

The Style of Dryden

John Dryden (1631–1700), a prominent literary personality of the Restoration era, is frequently considered the "father of English criticism" and a preeminent voice in English literature of his day. His writing style is marked by flexibility, incisive wit, and a deep comprehension of classical traditions, alongside a refined amalgamation of diverse genres. The following are essential characteristics of Dryden's style:

Utilization of Heroic Couplets

Dryden is most renowned for his employment of heroic couplets, which consist of rhymed pairs of iambic pentameter lines. This metre, including five pairs of unstressed and stressed syllables each line, was optimal for expressing both the magnificence of the subject and the sophistication of the language. Dryden refined the heroic couplet, establishing it as a principal form for serious poetry in the 17th century. His employment

of this style is evident in his extended poems, such as Absalom and Achitophel (1681), where the rhythm and rhyme embody both the poem's formal structure and the gravity of the political themes.

2. Sophistication and Lucidity

Dryden's style was refined, sophisticated, and characterized by lucidity. He excelled in the craft of lucid expression, merging classical restraint with modern directness. He favoured clarity in his words, eschewing superfluous complication or ambiguity, rendering his poetry both accessible and impactful. In The Hind and the Panther (1687), his employment of clear and logical reasoning enables him to articulate intricate religious and philosophical issues in a manner that captivates the reader.

3. Satire and Intellect

Dryden was renowned for his incisive wit and sardonic acumen, which he adeptly utilized to critique contemporary politics, religion, and society. His satirical compositions, such Absalom and Achitophel and The Medal (1682), frequently embody his political perspectives and incisive critiques of the corruption and machinations of his era. He employed satire to ridicule persons, concepts, and institutions, utilizing irony, hyperbole, and humour to convey his messages. His wit, however, was not solely for derision; it also functioned to illuminate the moral teachings and political insights he aimed to convey to his audience. This capacity to harmonize humour with incisive analysis is a defining characteristic of his style.

4. Classical Influence

Dryden was profoundly affected by the classical tradition, especially Greek and Roman literature. He esteemed the writings of Horace, Virgil, Juvenal, and Ovid, frequently attempting to replicate their structures, topics, and literary techniques. Dryden was among the earliest English poets to systematically use classical references and mythological allusions in his oeuvre, aiming to replicate the classical principles of

balance, harmony, and order. The classical influence is apparent in his dramatic poetry, especially in works such as All for Love (1677), a tragic play derived from Plutarch's Life of Antony. Dryden's oeuvre exemplifies neoclassical ideas of decorum, highlighting the significance of suitable conduct and language according to genre and subject matter.

5. Didacticism

Numerous works by Dryden seek to educate or enlighten the reader, particularly in his critical essays and translations. His renowned work An Essay of Dramatic Poesy (1668) exemplifies his instructional method, as he articulates the foundations of effective drama while advocating for English theatre against the classical criteria established by French critics. In this essay, Dryden underscores the significance of unity in play, the functions of comedy and tragedy, and the impact of classical authors on contemporary literature. As a translator of classical classics, including Virgil's Aeneid, Dryden shown a dedication to enhancing and rendering classical literature accessible to his English audience. His translation of The Aeneid is both a true rendition of the original and a distinct artistic achievement, showcasing Dryden's literary prowess and capacity to enhance the language.

6. Linguistic Accuracy and Rhythmic Diversity

Dryden was renowned for his linguistic prowess. He utilized the English language with exceptional precision and expertise, frequently incorporating an extensive vocabulary and diverse syntax to amplify the effect of his poems. His speech was frequently formal and high, suitable for the topics he addressed. He exhibited a capacity to adjust his register according to the subject, enabling him to attain the requisite gravitas in political and moral writings, while employing a lighter, more whimsical tone in his satirical pieces. He utilized diverse rhythms in his poetry, however the heroic couplet was his hallmark metre. He infused this style with dramatic intensity and musicality, altering the rhythm and tempo of the lines to align with the poem's substance, whether serious political or lighter humorous themes.

7. Impact of French Literature

The Restoration era, influenced by the court of King Charles II, experienced a surge of French culture, particularly in literature. Dryden was profoundly influenced by French authors, notably Boileau and Corneille, frequently translating or adapting their works into English. He also authored a defence of French poetic and theatrical theory, which was gaining popularity in England around that period. This impact is apparent in his treatment of tragedy, shown by All for Love, which conforms to the classical French paradigm of tragedy, adhering to the unities of time, location, and action.

8. Political and Religious Involvement

Dryden's style frequently converged with his political and religious perspectives, notably in works such as Absalom and Achitophel, The Hind and the Panther, and The Medal. In these works, Dryden's poems address political difficulties while also presenting moral and spiritual arguments. His fluctuating political affiliations (transitioning from Royalist to Whig supporter and again to Tory) are evident in his writings, rendering his style a reflection of the ideological discourses of the era. The era's theological conflicts—Catholicism vs Protestantism—are examined with fervour and eloquence, illustrating Dryden's dedication to upholding the monarchy and his Catholic beliefs.

Dryden's style is defined by his command of the heroic couplet, lucidity, sardonic humour, classical influences, and political involvement. His writings exhibit a deep comprehension of the English language, an aptitude for merging academic rigour with creative expression, and a proficiency in intertwining humour with critique. Dryden's poetry, theatre, and critical writings constitute a fundamental aspect of Restoration literature and persist in shaping the literary canon today.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL

In pious times, ere priest-craft did begin,Before polygamy was made a sin;When man, on many, multipli'd his kind,Ere one to one was cursedly confin'd:When Nature prompted, and no Law deni'dPromiscuous use of concubine and

bride;Then, Israel's monarch, after Heaven's own heart,His vigorous warmth did variously impart. To wives and slaves: and, wide as his command,Scatter'd his Maker's image through the land.Michal, of royal blood, the crown did wear;A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:Not so the rest; for several mothers boreTo god-like David, several sons before.But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,

No true succession could their seed attend.

Of all this numerous progeny was none

So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:

Whether, inspir'd by some diviner lust,His father got him with a greater gust;Or that his conscious destiny made way,By manly beauty to imperial sway.Early in foreign fields he won renown,With kings and states alli'd to Israel's crown:In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,And seem'd as he were only born for love.Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,In him alone, 'twas natural to please:His motions all accompani'd with grace;And Paradise was open'd in his face.With secret joy, indulgent David view'dHis youthful image in his son renew'd:To all his wishes nothing he deni'd;And made the charming Annabel his bride.What faults he had (for who from faults if free?) His father could not, or he would not see.Some warm excesses, which the Law forbore,Were constru'd youth that purged by boiling o'er:And Amnon's murther, by a specious name,Was call'd a just revenge for injur'd fame.Thus prais'd, and lov'd, the noble youth remain'd,While David, undisturb'd, in Sion reign'd.But life can never be sincerely blest:Heav'n punishes the bad, and proves the best.The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murm'ring race,As ever tri'dth'extent and stretch of grace;God's pamper'd people whom, debauch'd with ease,No king could govern, nor no God could please;(Gods they had tri'd of every shape and size,That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise:)These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,Began to dream they wanted liberty:And when no rule, no precedent, was foundOf men, by laws less circumscrib'd and bound,They led their wild desires to woods and caves,And thought that all but savages were slaves.

They who, when Saul was dead, without blow,

Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;

Who banisht David did from Hebron bring,

And, with a general shout, proclaim'd him king: Those very Jews, who, at their very best,Their Humour more than loyalty exprest,

Now, wonder'd why, so long, they had obey'd

An idol-monarch which their hands had made:

Thought they might ruin him they could create;

Or melt him to that golden calf, a state.

But these were random bolts: no form'd design,

Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:

The sober part of Israel, free from stain,

Well knew the value of a peaceful reign:

And, looking backward with a wise afright,

Saw seams of wounds, dishonest to the sight:

In contemplation of whose ugly scars,

They curst the memory of civil wars.

The moderate sort of men, thus qualifi'd,

Inclin'd the balance to the better side:

And, David's mildness manag'd it so well,

The bad found no occasion to rebel.

But, when to sin our bias'd nature leans,

The careful Devil is still at hand with means;

And providently pimps for ill desires:

The good old cause reviv'd, a plot requires.

Plots, true or false, are necessary things,

To raise up common-wealths, and ruin kings. The' inhabitants of old Jerusalem

Were Jebusites: the town so call'd from them;

And theirs the native right— But when the chosen people grew more strong,The rightful cause at length became the wrong:And every loss the men of Jebus bore,They still were thought God's enemies the more.Thus, worn and weaken'd, well or ill content,Submit they must to David's government:Impoverish'd and depriv'd of all command,Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;And, what was harder yet to flesh and blood,

Their gods disgrac'd, and burnt like common wood. This set the heathen priesthood in a flame;For priests of all religions are the same:

Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,

Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,

In his defence his servants are as bold,

As if he had been born of beaten gold.

The Jewish Rabbins though their Enemies,

In this conclude them honest men and wise:

For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,

T'espouse his cause by whom they eat and drink. From hence began that plot, the nation's curse,Bad in itself, but represented worse.

Rais'd in extremes, and in extremes decri'd;

With oaths affirm'd, with dying vows deni'd.

Not weigh'd, or winnow'd by the multitude;

But swallow'd in the mass, unchew'd and crude. Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies;To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise.Succeeding times did equal folly call,Believing nothing, or believing all.

Th' Egyptian rites the Jebusites embrac'd;

Where gods were recommended by their taste.

Such sav'ry deities must needs be good,

As serv'd at once for worship and for food.

By force they could not introduce these gods;

For ten to one, in former days was odds. So fraud was us'd, (the sacrificers' trade,)

Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.

Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews;

And rak'd, for converts, even the court and stews: Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,Because the fleece accompanies the flock.Some thought they God's anointed meant to slayBy guns, invented since full many a day:Our author swears it not; but who can knowHow far the Devil and Jebusites may go?This plot, which fail'd for want of common sense,Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:

For, as when raging fevers boil the blood,

The standing lake soon floats into a flood;

And ev'ry hostile humour, which before

Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er:

So, several factions from this first ferment,

Work up to foam, and threat the government.

Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,Oppos'd the pow'r, to which they could not rise.Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,Like fiends, were harden'd in impenitence.Some by their monarch's

fatal mercy grown,From pardon'd rebels, kinsmen to the throne;Were rais'd in pow'r and public office high;Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.Of these the false Achitophel was first:A name to all succeeding ages curst.For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;Sagacious, bold and turbulent of wit:Restless, unfixt in principles and place;In pow'runpleas'd, impatient of disgrace.A fiery soul, which working out its way,Fretted the pigmy-body to decay:

And o'er inform'd the tenement of clay.

A daring pilot in extremity; Pleas'd with the danger, when the waves went high

He sought the storms; but for a calm unfit,

Would steer too nigh the sands, to boast his wit. Great wits are sure to madness near alli'd;

And thin partitions do their bounds divide:

Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest, Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?

Punish a body which he could not please;

Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?

And all to leave, what with his toil he won

To that unfeather'd, two-legg'd thing, a son:

Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;

And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.

In friendship false, implacable in hate:

Resolv'd to ruin or to rule the state.

To compass this, the triple bond he broke;

The pillars of the public safety shook:

And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke.

Then, seiz'd with fear, yet still affecting fame,

Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.

So easy still it proves in factious times,

With public zeal to cancel private crimes:

How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,

Where none can sin against the people's will:

Where crowds can wink; and no offence be known,Since in another's guilt they find their own.Yet, fame deserv'd, no enemy can grudge;The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.In Jewish courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin

With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean: Unbrib'd, unsought, the wretched to redress;Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.

Oh, had he been content to serve the crown,

With virtues only proper to the gown;

Or, had the rankness of the soil been freed

From cockle, that opprest the noble seed:

David, for him his tuneful harp had strung,

And heav'n had wanted one immortal song.

But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand;

And fortune's ice prefers to virtue's land:

Achitophel, grown weary to possess

A lawful fame, and lazy happiness;

Disdain'd the golden fruit to gather free,

And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.

Now, manifest of crimes, contriv'd long since,

He stood at bold defiance with his prince:

Held up the buckler of the people's cause,

Against the crown; and skulk'd behind the laws. The wish'd occasion of the plot he takes;

Some circumstances finds, but more he makes.

By buzzing emissaries, fills the ears

Of list'ning crowds, with jealousies and fears

Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,

And proves the king himself a Jebusite.

Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well,

Were strong with people easy to rebel.

For, govern'd by the moon, the giddy Jews

Tread the same track when she the prime renews:And once in twenty years, their scribes record,By natural instinct they change their lord.Achitophel still wants a chief, and none

Was found so fit as warlike Absalom:

Not, that he wish'd his greatness to create,

(For politicians neither love nor hate:)

But, for he knew, his title not allow'd,

Would keep him still depending on the crowd:

That kingly pow'r, thus ebbing out, might be

Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.

Him he attempts, with studied arts to please,

And sheds his venom, in such words as these. Auspicious Prince! at whose nativity

Some royal planet rul'd the southern sky;

Thy longing country's darling and desire;

Their cloudy pillar, and their guardian fire:

Their second Moses, whose extended wand

Divides the seas, and shows the promis'd land:

Whose dawning day, in very distant age,

Has exercis'd the sacred prophet's rage:

The people's pray'r, the glad diviner's theme,

The young men's vision, and the old men's dream!Thee, Saviour, thee, the nation's vows confess;And, never satisfi'd with seeing, bless:

Swift, unbespokenpomps, thy steps proclaim,

A*nd stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name. How long wilt thou the general joy detain;Starve, and defraud the people of thy reign?Content ingloriously to pass thy days*

Like one of virtue's fools that feeds on praise;

Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight.Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be,Or gather'd ripe, or rot upon the tree.

Heav'n has to all allotted, soon or late, Some lucky revolution of their fate:Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill, (For human good depends on human will,)Our fortune rolls, as from a smooth descent,And, from the first impression, takes the bent:But, if unseiz'd, she glides away like wind;And leaves repenting folly far behind.Now, now she meets you, with a glorious prize, And spreads her locks before her as she flies.Had thus Old David, from whose loins you spring,Not dar'd, when fortune call'd him, to be king.At Gath an exile he might still remain;And Heaven's anointing oil had been in vain.Let his successful youth your hopes engage;But shun th'example of declining age:Behold him setting in his western skies,The shadows

lengthening as the vapours rise. He is not now, as when on Jordan's sandThe joyful people throng'd to see him land,Cov'ring the beach, and black'ning all the strand:But, like the Prince of Angels from his height,Comes tumbling downward with diminish'd light:Betray'd by one poor plot to public scorn:(Our only blessing since his curst return:)Those heaps of people which one sheaf did bind,Blown off, and scatter'd by a puff of wind.What strength can he to your designs oppose,

Naked of friends and round beset with foes?

If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use,

A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:

Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring; Foment the war, but not support the king:Nor would the royal party e'er unite

With Pharaoh's arms, t'assist the Jebusite;

Or if they should, their interest soon would break, And with such odious aid, make David weak.All sorts of men, by my successful arts,

Abhorring kings, estrange their alter'd hearts From David's rule: And 'tis the general Cry,Religion, Common-wealth, and Liberty.If, you, as champion of the public good,Add to their arms a chief of royal blood;What may not Israel hope, and what applause

Might such a general gain by such a cause?Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flow'r,Fair only to the sight, but solid pow'r:And nobler is a limited command,Giv'n by the love of all your native land,Than a successive title, long, and dark,Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's Ark. What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,When flattery soothes, and when ambition blinds!Desire of pow'r, on earth a vicious weed,Yet, sprung from high, is of celestial seed:In God 'tis glory: And when men aspire,'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.Th' ambitious youth, too covetous of fame,Too full of angel's metal in his frame;Unwarily was led from virtue's ways;Made drunk with honour, and debauch'd with praise. Half loath, and half consenting to the ill,(For loyal blood within him struggled still)He thus repli'd.—And what pretence have ITo take up

arms for public liberty? My Father governs with unquestion'd right;The Faith's defender, and mankind's delight:Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws;And Heav'n by wonders has espous'd his cause. Whom has he wrong'd in all his peaceful reign?Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?What millions has he pardon'd of his foes,Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose?Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good;Inclin'd to mercy, and averse from blood.If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,His crime is God's beloved attribute. What could he gain, his people to betray,Or change his right, for arbitrary sway?Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign,His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.If David's rule Jerusalem displease,The Dog-star heats their brains to this disease.Why then should I, encouraging the bad,Turn rebel, and run popularly mad?

Were he a tyrant who, by lawless might,

Oppress'd the Jews, and rais'd the Jebusite,

Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands

Would curb my spirits, and restrain my hands:

T*he people might assert their liberty;*

But what was right in them, were crime in me.

His favour leaves me nothing to require;

Prevents my wishes, and out-runs desire.

What more can I expect while David lives?

All but his kingly diadem he gives:

And that: but there he paus'd; then sighing, said, Is justly destin'd for a worthier head.

For when my father from his toils shall rest,

And late augment the number of the blest:

His lawful issue shall the throne ascend;

Or the collat'ral line where that shall end.

His brother, though oppress'd with vulgar spite, Yet dauntless and secure of native right,

Of every royal virtue stands possess'd;

Still dear to all the bravest, and the best.

His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim; His loyalty the king, the world his fame.His mercy ev'nth'offending crowd will find:For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.

Why should I then repine at Heaven's decree;

Which gives me no pretence to royalty?

Yet oh that Fate, propitiously inclin'd,

Had rais'd my birth, or had debas'd my mind;

To my large soul, not all her treasure lent,

And then betray'd it to a mean descent.

I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,

And David's part disdains my mother's mold.

Why am I scanted by a niggard-birth?

My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth:

And made for empire, whispers me within;

Desire of greatness is a god-like sin. Him staggering so when Hell's dire agent found,

While fainting virtue scarce maintain'd her ground,He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:

Th'eternal God, supremely good and wise,

Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain; What wonders are reserv'd to bless your reign?

Against your will your arguments have shown,

Such virtue's only giv'n to guide a throne.

Not that your father's mildness I contemn;

But manly force becomes the diadem.

'Tis true, he grants the people all they crave;

And more perhaps than subjects ought to have:

For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,

And more his goodness than his wit proclaim.

But when should people strive their bonds to break, If not when kings are negligent or weak?Let him give on till he can give no more,The thrifty Sanhedrin shall keep him poor:And every shekel which he can receive,

Shall cost a limb of his prerogative. To ply him with new plots, shall be my care;Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;Which, when his treasure can no more supply,He must, with the remains of kingship, buy.His faithful friends, our jealousies and fearsCall Jebusites; and Pharaoh's pensioners:Whom, when our fury from his aid has torn,He shall be naked left to public scorn.The next successor, whom I fear and hate,My arts have made obnoxious to the state;Turn'd all his virtues to his overthrow,And gain'd our elders to pronouncea foe.His right, for sums of necessary gold,Shall first be pawn'd, and afterwards be sold: Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,To pass your doubtful title into law:If not; the people have a right supremeTo make their kings; for kings are made for them.All empire is no more than pow'r in trust:Which when resum'd, can be no longer just.Succession, for the general good design'd,In its own wrong a nation cannot bind:If altering that, the people can relieve,Better one suffer, than a nation grieve.

The Jews well know their pow'r: ere Saul they chose, God was their king, and God they durst depose.Urge now your piety, your filial name,

A father's right, and fear of future fame; The public good, the universal call,To which even Heav'n submitted, answers all.Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;'Tis Nature's trick to propagate her kind.Our fond begetters, who would never die,Love but themselves in their posterity.Or let his kindness by th'effects be tri'd,Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.

God said he lov'd your father; could he bring

A better proof, than to anoint him king?

It surely show'd he lov'd the shepherd well,

Who gave so fair a flock as Israel. Would David have you thought his darling son?

What means he then, to alienate the crown?

The name of godly he may blush to bear:

'Tis after God's own heart to cheat his heir.

He to his brother gives supreme command;

To you a legacy of barren land: Perhaps th'old harp, on which he thrums his lays: Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.Then the next heir, a prince, severe and wiseAlready looks on you with jealous eyes;Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,And marks your progress in the people's hearts. Though now his mighty soul in grief contains,He meditates revenge who least complains;And like a lion, slumb'ring in the way,Or sleep-dissembling, while he waits his prey,His fearless foes within his distance draws;Constrains his roaring and contracts his paws:Till at the last, his time for fury found,He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground:The prostrate vulgar, passes o'er, and spares;But with a lordly rage, his hunters tears.Your case no tame expedients will afford;Resolve on death, or conquest by the sword,Which for no less a stake than life, you draw;

And self-defence is Nature's eldest law.

Leave the warm people no considering time;

For then rebellion may be thought a crime.

Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,

But try your title while your father lives:

And that your arms may have a fair pretence,

Proclaim, you take them in the king's defence:

Whose sacred life each minute would expose

To plots from seeming friends and secret foes.

And who can sound the depth of David's soul?

Perhaps his fear, his kindness may control.

He fears his brother, though he loves his son,

For plighted vows too late to be undone.

If so, by force he wishes to be gain'd;

Like women's lechery, to seem constrain'd:

Doubt not; but when he most affects the frown,

Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.

Secure his person to secure your cause;

They who possess the prince, possess the laws. He said, and this advice above the rest

With Absalom's mild nature suited best;

Unblam'd of life, (ambition set aside,)

Not stain'd with cruelty, nor puff'd with pride.

How happy had he been, if destiny

Had higher plac'd his birth, or not so high!

His kingly virtues might have claim'd a throne;

And blest all other countries but his own:

But charming greatness since so few refuse,

'Tisjuster to lament him, than accuse.

Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,

With blandishments to gain the public love;

To head the faction while their zeal was hot,

And popularly prosecute the plot. To farther this Achitophel unitesThe malcontents of all the Israelites:Whose differing parties he could wisely join,For several ends, to serve the same design.The best, and of the princes some were such,Who thought the pow'r of monarchy too much:Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;

Not wicked, but seduc'd by impious arts.

By these the springs of property were bent,

And wound so high, they crack'd the government. The next for interest sought'embroil the state,To sell their duty at a dearer rate;And make their Jewish markets of the throne;Pretending public good, to serve their own.Others thought kings an useless heavy load,Who cost too much, and did too little good.These were for laying honest David by,

On principles of pure good husbandry.

With them join'd all th'haranguers of the throng, That thought to get preferment by the tongue.Who follow next, a double danger bring,Not only hating David, but the king;

The Solymaean rout; well vers'd of old

In godly faction, and in treason bold;

Cow'ring and quaking at a conqu'ror's sword,

But lofty to a lawful prince restor'd;

Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun,

And scorn'd by Jebusites to be out-done.

Hot Levites headed these; who pull'd before

From th'Ark, which in the Judges' days they bore, Resum'd their Cant, and with a zealous cry,Pursu'd their old belov'd Theocracy.

Where Sanhedrin and Priest enslav'd the nation, And justifi'd their spoils by inspiration:

For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,

If once dominion they could found in Grace?

These led the pack; though not of surest scent,

Yet deepest mouth'd against the government.

A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed;

Of the true old enthusiastic breed:

'Gainst form and order they their pow'r employ;Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.But far more numerous was the herd of such,Who think too little, and who talk too much.These, out of mere instinct, they knew not why,Ador'd their father's God, and property:And by the same blind benefit of fate,The Devil and the Jebusite did hate:

Born to be saved even in their own despite;

Because they could not help believing right.

Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more

Remains, of sprouting heads too long, to score.

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:

In the first rank of these did Zimri stand:

A man so various, that he seem'd to be Not one, but all Mankind's Epitome. Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;Was everything by starts, and nothing long:But in the course of one revolving moon,Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking;Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.Blest madman, who could every hour employ,With something new to wish, or to enjoy!Railing and praising were his usual themes;And both (to show his judgment) in extremes:So over violent, or over civil,That every man, with him, was god or devil.In squandering wealth was his peculiar art:Nothing went unrewarded, but desert.Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late:He had his jest, and they had his estate.He laugh'd himself from court; then sought reliefBy forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:For, spite of him, the weight of business fellOn Absalom and wise Achitophel:Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,He left not faction, but of that was left.Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse

Of lords, below the dignity of verse. Wits, warriors, commonwealths-men, were the best:Kind husbands and mere nobles all the rest.And, therefore in the name of dullness, be

The well-hung Balaam and cold Caleb free.

And canting Nadab let oblivion damn, Who made new porridge for the Paschal Lamb.Let friendship's holy band some names assure:Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure. Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace:Not bull-faced Jonas, who could statutes drawTo mean rebellion, and make treason law.But he, though bad, is follow'd by a worse,The wretch, who Heav'n's Anointed dar'd to curse.Shimei, whose youth did early promise bringOf zeal to God, and hatred to his king;Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,

And never broke the Sabbath, but for gain:

Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,

Or curse, unless against the government.

Thus, heaping wealth, by the most ready way

Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray;

The city, to reward his pious hate

Against his master, chose him magistrate:

His hand a vare of justice did uphold;

His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.

During his office, treason was no crime.

The sons of Belial had a glorious time:

For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,

Yet lov'd his wicked neighbour as himself:

When two or three were gather'd to declaim

Against the monarch of Jerusalem,

Shimei was always in the midst of them.

And, if they curst the king when he was by,

Would rather curse, than break good company.

If any durst his factious friends accuse,

He pack'd a jury of dissenting Jews:

Whose fellow-feeling, in the godly cause,

Would free the suff'ring saint from human laws.For laws are only made to punish those

Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.

If any leisure time he had from pow'r,

(Because 'tis sin to mis-employ an hour;)

His bus'ness was, by writing, to persuade,

That kings were useless, and a clog to trade:

And, that his noble style he might refine,

No Rechabite more shunn'd the fumes of wine.

Chaste were his cellars; and his shrieval board

The grossness of a city feast abhorr'd: Hi cooks, with long disuse, their trade forgot;Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot. Such frugal virtue malice may accuse;But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews: For towns once burnt, such magistrates requireAs dare not tempt God's providence by fire.With spiritual food he fed his servants well,But free from flesh, that made the Jews rebel: And Moses' laws he held in more accountFor forty days of fasting in the mount.To speak the rest, who better are forgot,Would tire a well-breath'd witness of the plot:Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass;Erect thyself thou monumental brass:High as the serpent of thy metal made,While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.What though his birth were base, yet comets riseFrom earthy vapourse'er they shine in skies.Prodigious actions may as well be doneBy weaver's issue, as by prince's son.This arch-attestor, for the public good,By that one deed ennobles all his blood. Who everask'd the witnesses' high race,Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,His tribe were God-almighty's gentlemen.Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,Sure signs he neither choleric was, nor proud:His long chin prov'd his wit; his saint-like graceA church vermilion, and a Moses' face.His memory, miraculously great,Could plots exceeding man's belief, repeat;Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,For human wit could never such devise.Some future truths are mingled in his book;But, where the witness fail'd, the Prophet spoke: Some things like visionary flight appear;The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where:And gave him his rabbinical degree,Unknown to foreign university.

His judgment yet his mem'ry did excel:

Which piec'd his wondrous evidence so well:

And suited to the temper of the times; Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.Let Israel's foes suspect his Heav'nly call,And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;Our

laws for such affronts have forfeits made:He takes his life, who takes away his trade.Were I myself in witness Corah's place,The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace,Should whet my memory, though once forgot,To make him an appendix of my plot.His zeal to Heav'n made him his prince despise,And load his person with indignities:But Zeal peculiar privilege affords,

Indulging latitude to deeds and words. And Corah might for Agag's murther call,In terms as coarse as Samuel us'd to Saul.What others in his evidence did join,(The best that could be had for love or coin) In Corah's ow predicament will fall: For Witness is a common name to all.

Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,

Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:

Impatient of high hopes, urg'd with renown,

And fir'd with near possession of a crown:

Th'admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,

And on his goodly person feed their eyes:

His joy conceal'd, he sets himself to show;

On each side bowing popularly low:

His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames, And with familiar ease repeats their names.Thus, form'd by Nature, furnish'd out with arts,He glides unfelt into their secret hearts:Then, with a kind compassionating look,And sighs, bespeaking pity e'er he spoke:

Few words he said; but easy those and fit:

More slow than Hybla drops, and far more sweet.

I mourn, my country-men, your lost estate;

Though far unable to prevent your fate:

Behold a banish'd man, for your dear cause

Expos'd a prey to arbitrary laws!

Yet oh! that I alone could be undone,

Cut off from empire, and no more a son!

Now all your liberties a spoil are made;

Egypt and Tyrus intercept your trade,

And Jebusites your sacred rites invade.

My father, whom with reverence yet I name,

Charm'd into ease, is careless of his fame:

And, brib'd with petty sums of foreign gold,

Is grown in Bathsheba's embraces old:

Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys:

And all his pow'r against himself employs.

He gives, and let him give my right away:

But why should he his own, and yours betray?

He, only he can make the nation bleed,

And he alone from my revenge is freed.

Take then my tears (with that he wip'd his eyes) 'Tis all the aid my present pow'r supplies:

No court-informer can these arms accuse;

These arms may sons against their fathers use;

And, 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign

May make no other Israelite complain.

Youth, beauty, graceful action, seldom fail: But common interest always will prevail:

And pity never ceases to be shown To him, who makes the people's wrongs his own.The crowd, (that still believe their kings oppress,)With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:Who now begins his progress to ordain;With chariots, horsemen, and a num'rous train:

From East to West his glories he displays: And, like the sun, the Promis'd Land surveys.Fame runs before him, as the Morning-Star;

And shouts of joy salute him from afar:

Each house receives him as a guardian God;

And consecrates the place of his abode:

But hospitable treats did most commend

Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend.

This moving court, that caught the people's eyes, And seem'd but pomp, did other ends disguise:Achitophel had form'd it, with intent

To sound the depths, and fathom where it went, The people's hearts; distinguish friends from foes;And try their strength, before they came to blows.Yet all was colour'd with a smooth pretenceOf specious love, and duty to their prince.Religion, and redress of grievances,Two names, that always cheat and always please,Are often urg'd; and good King David's lifeEndanger'd by a brother and a wife.Thus, in a pageant show, a plot is made;

And peace itself is war in masquerade.

Oh foolish Israel! never warn'd by ill:

Still the same bait, and circumvented still!

Did ever men forsake their present ease,

In midst of health imagine a disease;

Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,

Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?

What shall we think! Can people give away

Both for themselves and sons, their native sway?Then they are left defenceless to the swordOf each unbounded arbitrary lord:

And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,

If kings unquestion'd can those laws destroy.

Yet, if the crowd be judge of fit and just,

And kings are only officers in trust,

Then this resuming cov'nant was declar'd

When Kings were made, or is for everbar'd:

If those who gave the sceptre could not tie

By their own deed their own posterity,

How then could Adam bind his future race?

How could his forfeit on mankind take place?

Or how could heavenly justice damn us all,

Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?

Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.Add, that the pow'r for property allow'd,Is mischievously seated in the crowd:

For who can be secure of private right,

If sovereign sway may be dissolv'd by might?

Nor is the people's judgment always true:

The most may err as grossly as the few.

And faultless kings run down, by common cry,

For vice, oppression and for tyranny.

What standard is there in a fickle rout,

Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster out?

Nor only crowds, but Sanhedrins may be

Infected with this public lunacy: And share the madness of rebellious times,To murther monarchs for imagin'd crimes.If they may give and take whene'er they please,Not kings alone, (the godhead's images,)But government itself at length must fallTo nature's state, where all have right to all.Yet, grant our lords the people kings can make,What prudent men a settled throne would shake?For whatsoe'er their sufferings were before,That change they covet makes them suffer more.All other errors but disturb a state;But innovation is the blow of fate.If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,

To patch the flaws, and buttress up the wall,

Thus far 'tis duty; but here fix the mark:

For all beyond it is to touch our Ark. To change foundations, cast the frame anew,

Is work for rebels who base ends pursue:

At once divine and human laws control;

And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.

The tamp'ring world is subject to this curse,

To physic their disease into a worse.

Now what relief can righteous David bring?

How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!

Friends he has few, so high the madness grows; Who dare be such, must be the people's foes:Yet some there were, ev'n in the worst of days;Some let me name, and naming is to praise.

In this short file Barzillai first appears;

Barzillai crown'd with honour and with years:

Long since, the rising rebels he withstood

In regions waste, beyond the Jordan's flood:

Unfortunately brave to buoy the state;

But sinking underneath his master's fate:

In exile with his god-like prince he mourn'd:

For him he suffer'd, and with him return'd.

The court he practis'd, not the courtier's art:

Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart:

Which well the noblest objects knew to choose,The fighting warrior, and recording Muse.His bed could once a fruitful issue boast:

Now more than half a father's name is lost.

His eldest hope, with every grace adorn'd,

By me (so Heav'n will have it) always mourn'd, And always honour'd, snatch'd in manhood's primeB'unequal Fates, and Providence's crime:Yet not before the goal of honour won,All parts fulfill'd, of subject and of son;Swift was the race, but short the time to run.Oh narrow circle, but of pow'r divine,

Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!

By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known; Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:Thy force infus'd, the fainting Tyrians propp'd:And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopp'd.Oh ancient honour, Oh unconquer'd Hand,Whom foes

unpunish'd never could withstand! But Israel was unworthy of thy name:Short is the date of all immoderate fame.It looks as Heav'n our ruin had design'd,And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.

Now, free from earth, thy disencumber'd Soul

Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry pole: From thence thy kindred legions may'st thou bring,To aid the Guardian Angel of thy king.Here stop my Muse, here cease thy painful flight;No pinions can pursue immortal height:Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,And tell thy soul she should have fled before;Or fled she with his life, and left this verseTo hang on her departed patron's hearse?Now take thy steepy flight from Heav'n, and seeIf thou canst find on earth another he;Another he would be too hard to find,See then whom thou canst see not far behind.Zadoc the priest whom, shunning, pow'r and place,His lowly mind advanc'd to David's grace:With him the Sagan of Jerusalem,Of hospitable soul and noble stem;

Him of the western dome, whose weighty senseFlows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.The Prophet's sons by such example led,To learning and to loyalty were bred:For colleges on bounteous kings depend,

And never rebel was to arts a friend. To these succeed the pillars of the laws,Who best could plead, and best can judge a cause.

Next them a train of loyal peers ascend:

Sharp judging Adriel, the Muse's friend,

Himself a Muse:—in Sanhedrin's debate

True to his prince; but not a slave of state.

Whom David's love with honours did adorn,

That from his disobedient son were torn.

Jotham of piercing wit and pregnant thought,

Endow'd by Nature, and by learning taught

To move assemblies, who but only tri'd

The worse awhile, then chose the better side;

Nor chose alone, but turn'd the balance too;

So much the weight of one brave man can do.

Hushai, the friend of David in distress,

In public storms of manly steadfastness;

By foreign treaties he inform'd his youth;

And join'd experience to his native truth.

His frugal care suppli'd the wanting throne;

Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:

'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow;

But hard the task to manage well the low:

For sovereign power is too depress'd or high,

When kings are forc'd to sell, or crowds to buy.

Indulge one labour more, my weary Muse,

For Amiel, who can Amiel's praise refuse?

Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet

In his own worth, and without title great:

The Sanhedrin long time as chief he rul'd,

Their reason guided, and their passion cool'd;

So dext'rous was he in the crown's defence,

Soform'd to speak a loyal nation's sense,

That as their band was Israel's tribes in small,

So fit was he to represent them all.

Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,

Whose loose careers his steady skill commend:

They, like th'unequal ruler of the day,

Misguide the seasons and mistake the way;

While he withdrawn at their mad labour smiles, And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.

These were the chief; a small but faithful band

Of worthies, in the breach who dar'd to stand,

And tempt th'united fury of the land.

With grief they view'd such powerful engines bent,To batter down the lawful government.

A numerous faction with pretended frights,

In Sanhedrins to plume the regal rights.

The true successor from the court remov'd:

The plot, by hireling witnesses, improv'd.

These ills they saw, and as their duty bound,

They show'd the king the danger of the wound:

That no concessions from the throne would please; But lenitives fomented the disease:

That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,

Was made the lure to draw the people down:

That false Achitophel's pernicious hate,

Had turn'd the plot to ruin church and state:

The Council violent, the rabble worse:

That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.

With all these loads of injuries opprest,

And long revolving in his careful breast

Th'event of things; at last his patience tir'd,

Thus from his royal throne, by Heav'n inspir'd,

The god-like David spoke; and awful fear

His train their Maker in their Master hear.

Thus long have I by native mercy sway'd,

My wrongs dissembl'd, my revenge delay'd:

So willing to forgive th'offending age;

So much the father did the king assuage.

But now so far my clemency they slight,

Th' offenders question my forgiving right.

That one was made for many, they contend:

But 'tis to rule, for that's a monarch's end.

They call my tenderness of blood, my fear:

Though manly tempers can the longest bear.

Yet, since they will divert my native course,

'Tis time to shew I am not good by force.

Those heap'd affronts that haughty subjects bring,Are burdens for a camel, not a king:

Kings are the public pillars of the state,

Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:

If my young Sampson will pretend a call

To shake the column, let him share the fall:

But oh that yet he would repent and live!

How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!

With how few tears a pardon might be won

From Nature, pleading for a darling son!

Poor pitied youth, by my paternal care,

Rais'd up to all the heights his frame could bear:

Had God ordain'd his fate for empire born,

He would have giv'n his soul another turn:

Gull'd with a patriot's name, whose modern sense,Is one that would by law supplant his prince:

The people's brave, the politician's tool;

Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.

Whence comes it that religion and the laws

Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?

His old instructor, e'er he lost his place,

Was never thought endued with so much grace.

Good heav'ns, how faction can a patriot paint!

My rebel ever proves my people's saint;

Would they impose an heir upon the throne?

Let Sanhedrins be taught to give their own.

A king's at least a part of government;

And mine as requisite as their consent:

Without my leave a future king to choose,

Infers a right the present to depose;

True, they petition me t'approve their choice:

But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.

My pious subjects for my safety pray,

Which to secure they take my pow'r away.

From plots and treasons Heav'n preserve my yearsBut save me most from my petitioners.

Unsatiate as the barren womb or grave;

God cannot grant so much as they can crave.

What then is left but with a jealous eye

To guard the small remains of royalty?

The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,

And the same law teach rebels to obey:

Votes shall no more establish'dpow'r control,

Such votes as make a part exceed the whole:

No groundless clamours shall my friends remove,Nor crowds have pow'r to punish ere they prove:

For gods, and god-like kings their care express,

Still to defend their servants in distress.

Oh that my pow'r to saving were confin'd:

Why am I forc'd, like Heav'n, against my mind,

To make examples of another kind?

Must I at length the sword of justice draw?

Oh curst effects of necessary law!

How ill my fear they by my mercy scan,

Beware the fury of a patient man.

Law they require, let law then show her face;

They could not be content to look on grace,

Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye

To tempt the terror of her front, and die.

By their own arts 'tis righteously decreed,

Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.

Against themselves their witnesses will swear,

Till viper-like their mother plot they tear:

And suck for nutriment that bloody gore

Which was their principle of life before.

Their Belial with the Belzebub will fight;

Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right:

Nor doubt th'event: for factious crowds engage

In their first onset, all their brutal rage;

Then, let 'em take an unresisted course:

Retire and traverse, and delude their force:

But when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,And rise upon 'em with redoubled might:

For lawful pow'r is still superior found,

When long driv'n back, at length it stands the ground.

He said. Th' Almighty, nodding, gave consent;

And peals of thunder shook the firmament.

Henceforth a series of new time began,

The mighty years in long procession ran:

Once more the god-like David was restor'd,

And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

Unit -2

UNDERSTANDING OF THE POEM

"Absalom and Achitophel" is a political parody poem authored by John Dryden, initially published in 1681. This significant work used biblical metaphor to critique the political landscape in England during the late 17th century, especially the conflict between the monarchy and the rising opposition to King Charles II.

Essential Aspects:

1. Biblical metaphor: The poem reinterprets the biblical narrative of Absalom and King David from the Old Testament, with Dryden employing it as a metaphor for current political occurrences. In the poem, Absalom symbolises the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate progeny of King Charles II, who insurrects against his father's authority. Achitophel represents Thomas, Earl of Shaftesbury, a prominent member of the Whig party and a significant adversary of the monarchy. In the poem, Achitophel counsels Absalom to insurrect, providing his sagacity and support.

2. Political Themes: The poem encapsulates the political upheaval and factionalism of the era, emphasising the conflict between royal authority (the monarchy) and the burgeoning power of parliament and reformists. In the character of Achitophel, Dryden attacks political figures who endeavoured to subvert the throne for their own aims.

3. Literary Style: Dryden utilises heroic couplets, a style of rhymed iambic pentameter prevalent in contemporary English satire. His utilisation of this style enhanced the poem's serious political commentary, whilst enabling him to convey incisive humour and critique.

4. Characters: Absalom: The insubordinate son, emblematic of the Duke of Monmouth, who asserts his entitlement to the throne and endeavours to usurp the King.

Achitophel: A cunning counsel, symbolising Shaftesbury, who endorses Absalom's insurrection and exploits his position for personal gain.

King David symbolises King Charles II in the poem, representing the monarch during the political crisis.

Other characters, including Zimri, symbolise many figures within the political milieu of the era.

5. Satirical Tone: Dryden critiques both the Whig opposition and the overarching political milieu, highlighting hypocrisy, ambition, and the perils of insurrection. His criticism targets not only the opposition leaders but also individuals perceived as self-serving and eager to undermine the nation for personal benefit.

6. Context: "Absalom and Achitophel" was composed amidst significant political turmoil, characterised by the ascendant influence of the Whigs, who aimed to curtail monarchical authority, and the contentious circumstances surrounding the Duke of Monmouth's assertion to the throne. Shaftesbury, a prominent Whig leader, was involved in conspiracies to depose the king, and the poem illustrates the divisive political climate of the day.

In ancient times, prior to religion deeming polygamy sinful, a man was not restricted to a single woman. The law did not prohibit a man from having both a mistress and a wife, and Israel's king, David, disseminated his lineage throughout the kingdom. Michal is his sovereign, however several women have borne the offspring of the "godlike David." These boys, however, are not of noble lineage and hence cannot legitimately inherit the throne. Among David's illegitimate sons, Absalom is the most cherished and esteemed by both the Israelites and his father. Absalom is attractive and graceful, having demonstrated his heroism in foreign conflicts. David experiences a profound sense of "secret joy" as he observes Absalom mature into a respected individual, perceiving in his son a reflection of his own "youthful image." David's rule is tranquil and subdued; nonetheless, the Jews, characterised as "a headstrong, moody, murmuring race," start to yearn for greater freedom. The Jews will soon resurrect the Good Old Cause to "establish commonwealths and overthrow monarchs."

The Jebusites, indigenous to Israel, commence the forfeiture of their privileges. Their taxes are elevated, their land is confiscated, and their deities and faith are disparaged. Their clergy are enraged, and shortly thereafter, the conspiracy, termed the "nation's curse," starts to disseminate. The Jebusites, using a covert strategy, penetrate all sectors of Israel, including the judiciary and brothels, in search of converts. The narrative ultimately falters due to a deficiency in "common sense," yet it also possesses a "profound and perilous consequence." The Jebusite conspiracy significantly disrupts the administration, prompting the populace to revolt against David. Some individuals

within the government oppose David, with the most important among them being "false Achitophel." Achitophel is intelligent and successful, power-hungry, and possesses adaptable ethics. He seeks either total domination of the government or its annihilation, and he feigns friendship with David to achieve this objective. Absalom incites unrest among the Israelites and asserts that David is a Jebusite. The Jews have a tradition of proclaiming a new king approximately every two decades, and Achitophel determines that the moment has arrived to fulfil this practice. He acknowledges that he can never ascend to the throne, however if a king is to be chosen, he desires it to be Absalom.

Achitophel commences by publicly acclaiming Absalom's birth as regal. He asserts that Absalom will be the Jews' "saviour" and that he is the solution to their supplications. Absalom's popularity escalates, and even infants begin to articulate his name. Achitophel praises Absalom for his exceptional morality and recalls that David had responded to a summons to the throne while in exile in Gath. The populace is agitated and clamouring for a new monarch, and Achitophel is confident that if Absalom aligns himself with their demands, leveraging his royal lineage, the people would elect him as their king. Absalom is enamoured by Achitophel's praise, while David's claim to the throne remains "indisputable." Absalom asserts that David is an admirable ruler, characterised by kindness and mercy, and seldom resorts to violence. Absalom is certain that if the populace is opposing David, he ought not to exacerbate the discord. Moreover, David bestows upon Absalom all possessions except his crown, which he has already indicated he would relinquish if possible. The crown is, nonetheless, "rightfully intended for a more deserving head."

Subsequent to David, the crown descends to a collateral line, namely to David's brother, who, despite his "vulgar spite," possesses a valid claim to the kingdom. Absalom desires to have been born into royalty to legitimately assert his claim to the crown. Absalom asserts that coveting power that legitimately belongs to another constitutes a "divine transgression." Achitophel perceives Absalom's lingering scepticism, prompting him to intensify his efforts. He informs the young prince that God has endowed him with virtue for a purpose—specifically, to assume the role of king. Achitophel asserts that David is "weak," indicating that it is an opportune moment to contest his authority. Achitophel intends to bide his time until David has imprudently exhausted his financial resources on the populace, after which he will provoke further civil unrest or overwhelm David with costly foreign conflicts. Achitophel confesses his

disdain for David's brother, a sentiment shared by the majority of the Jewish populace. According to Achitophel, the populace possesses the right to select their own monarch, and they reject David's sibling. The opportunity to seize the kingdom is immediate; if they postpone until after David's brother ascends the throne, they may jeopardise Absalom's kingship.

To execute his scheme, Achitophel unites the many "malcontents" of Israel with a singular objective—to usurp David's authority and bestow it upon Absalom. Numerous persons aid Achitophel in his endeavour, including Zimri, Balaam, and Caleb, although none possess the might of Shimei. Shimei exploits and deceives the Jews at every opportunity, prompting them to appoint him as their magistrate. During his tenure as magistrate, treason is sanctioned, and he manipulates juries with "dissenting Jews" to ensure the acquittal of the king's adversaries while incarcerating his loyalists. Even more concerning is Corah, who orchestrated the scheme. He is a clergyman, and his recollection is flawless. Consequently, the populace is oblivious to his duplicity. Absalom addresses the populace in the presence of such guys. He asserts that he is indignant about their difficulties and desires to endure on their behalf. Absalom informs the populace that he harbours affection for his father; yet, their freedom is jeopardised. He then wipes a tear from his eye and informs the audience that his tears are all he possesses to offer. As the populace elevates their arms in adulation towards Absalom, he departs alongside Achitophel and his entourage in a regal procession, engaging with the citizens of Israel. Absalom is universally welcomed with affection and esteem, while Achitophel adeptly discerns any potential adversaries to their agenda.

"O imprudent Israel!" exclaims the speaker of the poem. Absalom's march is a facade, representing nothing more than "war in disguise." No individual is secure if monarchs can be "dissolved by force." Furthermore, the speaker asserts that individuals frequently err, and a "flawless monarch" could be compromised. No rational individual would destabilise the government and depose their monarch, as this would undoubtedly exacerbate their frustrations. Notwithstanding public dissent, there remain steadfast supporters of David, notably Barzillai, who was in exile with him, together with Zadok and Sagan of Jerusalem. Amiel, a government officer, is arguably the most faithful, diligently suppressing David's criticism from within the ranks. The loyal men notify David of Absalom's ambition and Achitophel's treachery, and ultimately, in his impatience, David addresses the people of Israel.

David informs the populace that he has permitted his paternal responsibilities to obscure his judgement as a monarch; however, he will now demonstrate that he is "not good by force." Absalom's endeavour to destabilise the country and usurp the throne poses no threat to David; should Absalom persist in his ambitions, he must be ready to face defeat. David asserts his kingship, declaring that God will not for such treachery to occur. David is unhesitant to unsheathe his sword when necessary, and he cautions the Jews to "beware the wrath of a patient man." If the Jews seek confrontation, David is prepared, and while they are "breathless" and fatigued, he will vanquish them. As David articulates, thunder reverberates across the heavens, and every Jew recognises their legitimate monarch.

Summary

The poem "Absalom and Achitophel" written by John Dryden is a narrative poem that is written in heroic couplet rhythm. In the midst of political turbulence in England, it was initially published in 1681. At the time, King Charles II was facing rising resistance from domestic factions, most notably the Whigs, which were led by figures such as Thomas Shaftesbury. A critique of the political battles that were occurring during Dryden's time period, particularly the dangers that were posed to the monarchy by the Whigs and the Duke of Monmouth, is portrayed in the poem through the use of an allegory that is based on the biblical story of Absalom's rebellion against King David. The poem uses the narrative of the Old Testament to reflect on the events that occurred in the late 17th century. It does so in a manner that is highly stylised and codified, and it tells the story of Absalom's revolt.

Absalom, the offspring of King David, is introduced at the beginning of the poem. In Dryden's work, Absalom is a portrayal of King Charles II in the form of an allegorical figure. The character of Absalom is portrayed as a young and ambitious guy who possesses the charisma and attraction necessary to compel others to become his followers. The beginning of his rebellion is the moment when he becomes disillusioned with the way his father governs. Absalom, who is portrayed as an idealistic figure, believes that he is the rightful monarch and insists that he should take over the throne that his father had previously held. The concept of Absalom's rebellion against King

David is comparable to contemporary English politics. One example of this is the Duke of Monmouth, who was an illegitimate offspring of King Charles II and had the ambition to seize the throne and challenge his father's authority.

The plots of Achitophel, a counsellor who eventually becomes Absalom's most trusted advisor, are what are responsible for the uprising that he leads. Thomas Shaftesbury, a significant leader in the Whig party, is represented by the character Achitophel, whose name is a reference to the biblical figure Achitophel, who was a deceitful counsellor to King David. Similar to Achitophel, Shaftesbury was a major political opponent of King Charles II. He worked towards the collapse of the monarchy by campaigning for the Duke of Monmouth's claim to the throne. Shaftesbury was a significant political foe of King Charles II. According to the poem, Achitophel is portrayed as a shrewd and power-hungry guy who is willing to take advantage of other people in order to achieve his political goals. He exercises his influence over Absalom, persuading him to rebel against his father and grab the throne and take control of the household. Achitophel argues that King David, who is comparable to King Charles II, is corrupt, and that his reign was marked by failure. He believes that Absalom, who is younger, more idealistic, and more competent than King David, should take the kingdom instead.

The poem presents a wide variety of personalities who are in agreement with the rebellion, with a great number of individuals supporting Absalom's reason for participating. During the time that Absalom is gathering support for his cause, he is joined by a group of disillusioned persons who are unhappy with the conditions that are now in place as a result of David's leadership. These people, who are typically portrayed as being self-interested or ethically compromised, are representative of the political factions that existed during that time period, most notably the Whigs, who worked to overthrow the monarchy.

The progression and intensification of the rebellion are chronicled from beginning to end in the poem's narrative. The campaign of Absalom is gaining momentum, and it is

attracting adherents from a wide variety of political forces. In the beginning, the uprising appeared to be very idealistic; yet, as time went on, it became increasingly loaded with political intrigue, deception, and self-interest. It is primarily Absalom's friendship with Achitophel, who is working hard to take advantage of him and amplify his ambitions, that is the primary influence behind his rebellion. Absalom is further committed to his erroneous attempt to capture the throne as a result of Achitophel's eloquent words and desires. He gives Absalom the assurance that a new world order will be established, in which Absalom will rule as the ideal ruler, unaffected by the wrongdoing of his father. Absalom is becoming more and more convinced that the throne is his legitimate inheritance while Achitophel continues to weave his complex ruse.

Absalom's leadership is beginning to show signs of cracking, despite the fact that the insurrection is gradually gaining momentum. Absalom's youthful idealism is ultimately defeated by the harsh realities of uprising, despite the fact that his cause was first recognised as being ethical. As Absalom rises through the ranks of leadership, his character starts to show signs of vulnerableness. As the political repercussions of his actions become more apparent, his early attraction as a charismatic leader begins to wane. In the midst of the growing chaos caused by the revolt, Absalom's capacity for moral discernment starts to become increasingly blurred by his desire to gain power. His leadership is being scrutinised by the factions that initially supported him, and the dissension that exists among his ranks is becoming more intense. As their particular objectives become more apparent, the leaders of the insurrection, most notably Achitophel, are in conflict with one another.

At the same time, King David, who is depicted as a flawed but fundamentally legitimate king, is getting ready to deal with the uprising. Despite his late age and undeniable signs of exhaustion, the monarch continues to be a forceful presence, and his reign is distinguished by stability and continuity, if not complete absence of flaws. The dangers posed by the uprising are recognised by David, and he immediately begins to gather his troops in order to put an end to it. David is portrayed in the poem as a symbol of monarchical sanctity and societal

order, despite the fact that the poem is embedded with political metaphor. In contrast to the uprising, David's authority is portrayed as being founded on legitimacy and tradition, despite the fact that it is not without its flaws.

A tale of political conflict and personal treachery is constructed by Dryden as the revolt continues to progress. As the rebellion unfolds, it becomes abundantly evident that neither Absalom nor Achitophel have truly moral reasons. The protagonists are portrayed as being motivated by their own self-interest. The journey that Absalom takes to become an insurgent is marked by a rising moral doubt, and as he acts, he gradually becomes farther distant from the people who were formerly his allies. It becomes clear that the war between the father and son is not only a struggle for political domination but also a struggle for moral validity as the conflict between them escalates.

The rebellion led by Absalom reaches a critical juncture when King David's army makes preparations to engage in combat with him. In the end, the uprising, which was initially an idealistic attempt to construct a new system, fails to succeed. There is a gradual decline in the faith that the followers of Absalom have in his leadership, and as the confrontation draws nearer, it becomes clear that the troops that are loyal to King David are substantially more fearsome and unified than the troops that are loyal to the insurgents. Absalom's fall from grace is shown in the poem as something that is unavoidable. Absalom is betrayed by his closest associates when he is confronted by the entirety of the troops that are fighting against him. As he comes to terms with the depth of his own mistakes, his supporters abandon him, and his self-perceived moral superiority begins to crumble.

In the final act of the poem, Absalom's rebellion is brought under control. His forces are defeated, and he himself is killed in battle, which is a symbolic representation of the downfall of the rebellion and the restoration of order under King David's authority. Absalom's downfall is depicted as a terrible yet unavoidable conclusion, particularly due to the fact that his rebellion was ultimately unsustainable. In the final line of the

poem, the monarchy is reaffirmed as a legitimate form of government, emphasising that despite its flaws, it continues to be the most efficient form of government for maintaining order and stability.

Throughout the poem, Dryden emphasises the dangers of revolt, particularly when it is motivated by self-serving motivations or erroneous idealism. The poem highlights the upheaval and instability that may result from factionalism and political disagreement, and it analyses the consequences that might result from undermining the power of the monarch. Dryden uses the biblical story of Absalom's rebellion as a metaphor for the political atmosphere in England. He does this by reflecting on the factionalism that existed during his time period, particularly the conflict that existed between the monarchy and the Whigs, as well as the dangers that opposition posed to the power of the king.

In a nutshell, "Absalom and Achitophel" is a captivating narrative poem that intricately weaves together the tale of Absalom's bold rebellion against the established authority of King David. This historical uprising mirrors, with striking resemblance, the turbulent political landscape of England during the 17th century, a period marked by unrest and power struggles. By skillfully intertwining the biblical narrative as a sturdy structure for his exploration, Dryden delves deep into the complex themes of governmental power, legitimacy, and the intricate dynamics of revolt. Through his poetic lens, he not only dissects these crucial issues but also sheds light on the prevailing political atmosphere of his era. Furthermore, in his profound analysis, Dryden brings into sharp focus the vital significance of maintaining governmental stability amidst unrest and chaos, vividly illustrating the dire consequences that unfold when this delicate balance is disrupted.

Critical Examination of "Absalom and Achitophel" by John Dryden

Preface

"Absalom and Achitophel" is an astute political satire authored by John Dryden in 1681, amidst a time of considerable political turmoil in England. The poem, structured in heroic couplets, draws inspiration from the biblical account of Absalom's insurrection against his father, King David, as depicted in the Old Testament, employing this narrative as an allegory to critique the contemporary political landscape, especially the discord between the monarchy and the Whig opposition. Dryden's poem transcends mere examination of political persons and events, serving as a masterful work of literary art

that skilfully employs allegory, characterisation, and rhetorical tactics to articulate its themes of power, loyalty, revolt, and legitimacy. The critical examination of "Absalom and Achitophel" explores the poem's structure, political and moral foundations, characterisation, and its importance within its historical setting and English literary tradition.

Contextual Historical and Political Framework

The principal aim of "Absalom and Achitophel" is to examine the political circumstances in England during the rule of King Charles II. At the time the poem was composed, England had undergone years of political turmoil, encompassing the English Civil War and the Interregnum (the interval between the monarchy's dissolution and its reinstatement). The monarchy was reinstated in 1660 under Charles II; nonetheless, political tensions persisted, especially between the Royalists, who endorsed the monarchy, and the Whigs, who championed reform and increased parliamentary authority. The reign of Charles II, although well favoured, encountered considerable difficulties. The Duke of Monmouth, his illegitimate son, garnered substantial support, asserting that his lineage as the king's offspring rendered him a rightful heir to the throne. This assertion, together with the escalating tensions between the monarchy and the opposition led by individuals like Thomas Shaftesbury, fostered a precarious political environment.

Dryden's poem explicitly addresses the political leaders of the era. Absalom symbolises the Duke of Monmouth, the insubordinate and charismatic offspring of Charles II. Achitophel represents Shaftesbury, a notable Whig politician instrumental in challenging the monarchy and endorsing Monmouth's claim to the throne. The poem gently critiques other Whigs and political factions that aimed to subvert the monarchy. Through these characters and their allegorical functions, Dryden attacks the political milieu of his era, emphasising the perils of insurrection, ambition, and factionalism, while endorsing the legitimacy of royal power.

The Composition of the Poem

The poem is composed of heroic couplets, characterised by iambic pentameter and pairs of rhyming lines. This form is appropriate for the formal, high style that Dryden employs throughout the poem. The heroic couplet gained prominence in English satirical

poetry in the 17th century, enabling Dryden to convey his judgement with incisive wit and precision. The couplets provide a rhythm and symmetry that juxtaposes the confusion and disorder introduced by the insurrection illustrated in the poem. Dryden's employment of the form enhances the poem's tone, oscillating between grave and solemn to acerbic and scathing, frequently interspersed with instances of humour and irony.

The poem is segmented into multiple sections, each emphasising distinct aspects of the political drama. The initial section presents the characters of Absalom and Achitophel, establishing the context for the insurrection. The second section illustrates the increasing backing for Absalom's cause, while the third section dramatises the repercussions of the insurrection and the reinstatement of order under King David's governance. Dryden's meticulous segmentation of the poem into narrative sections facilitates the construction of momentum, climax, and conclusion, reflecting the political strife and the subsequent downfall of the revolt.

Characterisation and Allegorical Representations

One of the most remarkable aspects of "Absalom and Achitophel" is Dryden's exceptional ability to vividly and intricately portray his characters. Throughout the poem, a diverse cast of characters is presented, with each one serving as a symbol for specific political individuals or ideologies of the time. By ingeniously weaving biblical figures into his narrative, Dryden not only criticizes the political leaders of his era but also draws upon the deep-rooted traditions and storytelling techniques found in biblical texts.

Absalom symbolises the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate offspring of King Charles II. Dryden depicts Absalom as a fascinating and appealing young man, brimming with ambition and self-righteousness. Absalom is certain he is the legitimate heir to the throne and perceives his father, King David (Charles II), as corrupt and unqualified to govern. Dryden's depiction of Absalom is intricate; although he is motivated by good principles, his insurrection is ultimately erroneous. Absalom's demise results not from a deficiency of followers, but from his own character defects: youthful idealism, ignorance, and an inflated perception of his own powers. Through Absalom, Dryden

examines the perils of political ambition and the repercussions of attempting to usurp a legitimate ruler without comprehending the intricacies of government.

Achitophel serves as the principal allegorical figure in the poem, symbolising Thomas Shaftesbury, a pivotal member of the Whig party and a notable political adversary of King Charles II. Dryden's Achitophel is depicted as a manipulative, astute, and power-seeking individual who employs his intelligence and political clout to advance his personal objectives. Achitophel incites Absalom's insurrection, assuring him of his legitimate claim to the throne and urging him to rebel against his father. He portrays himself as an advocate for justice, yet Dryden uncovers his genuine motivations—self-interest and a quest for power. In Achitophel, Dryden exposes the political factions that aimed to undermine the monarchy and exploit public opinion for their own purposes.

In the poem, King David symbolises Charles II, the current ruler. Dryden depicts David as a monarch who, despite his imperfections, is inherently legitimate and deserving of allegiance. David is shown as a sagacious, seasoned sovereign who ultimately succeeds in reinstating order following the insurrection. Nonetheless, David is depicted as defective, as his kingdom confronts insurrection and internal discord. Dryden's David contrasts with the tumultuous, unpredictable powers embodied by Absalom and Achitophel. David's characterisation embodies Dryden's conviction regarding the necessity of preserving the monarchy's stability and continuity, despite political dissent.

Additional Characters: Throughout the poem, Dryden presents a range of personas, each symbolising distinct political factions or beliefs. The figures, including Zimri, symbolise the diverse personalities and factions that either endorse or contest Absalom's insurrection. Dryden employs these personalities to underscore the tumultuous and fractious characteristics of the political landscape in England. Through the creation of a diverse assortment of characters, Dryden critiques not just the leaders of the uprising but also the overarching political context that facilitated such division and instability.

Themes of Allegiance, Authority, and Insurrection

Allegiance and Treachery: A primary theme in "Absalom and Achitophel" is loyalty and betrayal. Absalom's insurrection symbolises a son's treachery against his father, a theme echoed in the political disloyalty towards the monarchy by individuals such as

Achitophel and other Whigs. Dryden underscores the ethical significance of loyalty, especially the allegiance offered to a monarch who, whatever imperfections, is the rightful sovereign. The poem posits that, despite the monarch's imperfections, allegiance to the crown is crucial for preserving societal order and stability. In contrast, the insurrection is shown as ethically indefensible, resulting solely in chaos and devastation.

Power and Legitimacy: A significant theme in the poem is the concern of power and legitimacy. King David's reign is valid, however imperfect, and Dryden posits that the monarch's legitimacy is crucial for the kingdom's stability. The insurrection, orchestrated by Absalom and influenced by Achitophel, jeopardises the established order, while Dryden admonishes individuals who seek to subvert the kingdom for personal gain. The poem underscores the perils of pursuing power through insurrection, especially when such insurrection is driven by self-interest rather than authentic regard for the common welfare.

Insurrection and Its Consequences: Dryden's poem depicts insurrection as a perilous and destabilising influence. The insurrection orchestrated by Absalom is inevitably destined for failure, as it is founded on erroneous principles and propelled by ambition rather than authentic political reform. By the collapse of Absalom's cause, Dryden underscores the significance of preserving governmental order and stability. The repercussions of insurrection, as illustrated in the poem, are severe: the disintegration of families, the breakdown of societal structure, and the forfeiture of lives. Ultimately, Dryden posits that revolt, regardless of its portrayal as heroic or just, constitutes a perilous force that should not be undertaken frivolously.

Final Assessment "Absalom and Achitophel" is an astute political satire that employs the allegory of the biblical narrative of Absalom's insurrection to critique the political strife of 17th-century England. The poem provides a nuanced examination of loyalty, power, revolt, and legitimacy through its vivid characterisation, moral inquiry, and incisive critique of political groupings. Dryden's depiction of the revolt as inevitably destined for failure functions as a cautionary tale regarding the perils of factionalism and the significance of political stability. The poem simultaneously asserts the essential role of monarchy as a stabilising influence on society, despite the monarch's

imperfections. "Absalom and Achitophel" is a notable work in English literature, distinguished for its political critique, poetic excellence, and examination of enduring themes.

Absalom and Achitophel as a Political Satire

Satire is a literary genre intended to mend human flaws or vices through humour or outrage. Satire differs from criticism and outright abuse, however it is motivated by outrage. Its objective is predominantly positive and does not always stem from cynicism or misanthropy. The satirist evaluates individuals against specific ethical, intellectual, and social criteria to ascertain their level of crime or culpability. Satire inherently possesses a broad scope; it may encompass a critique of the vices of an era, the shortcomings of an individual, or the universal follies of humanity.

Absalom and Achitophel, a work of significant historical importance, stands as a pivotal masterpiece of political satire written by the renowned author John Dryden. In crafting this literary gem, Dryden skillfully embeds his satire with a focused and hypnotically compelling poetic language that captivates readers from the very first line. His mastery of satirical poetry is nothing short of grand, a quality succinctly captured by Pope's declaration of his work as a "long majestic march and energy divine." Scholars and critics alike have marveled at Dryden's remarkable talent for transforming the ordinary and the mundane into poetry, while imbuing personal strife and jealousy with the fire of his imaginative prowess. By employing his unique style, Dryden effortlessly decodes the esoteric and convoluted, presenting them in a clear and accessible manner that resonates with readers across generations. The sheer transformative power of Dryden's words is evident right from the onset of Absalom and Achitophel, where the allegorical concept of 'Israel' serves as a canvas for his brilliant execution of both Horatian and Juvenalian satirical approaches. In his prose, Dryden exudes an air of urbanity, cleverness, and intellectual acumen that is truly devastating and forceful, yet remarkably free from any pettiness that might tarnish his formidable artistry.

Essentially a Political Satire:

Dryden referred to Absalom and Achitophel as 'a poem' rather than a satire, suggesting that it encompasses qualities beyond mere satire. One cannot disregard the evident epic or heroic elements within it. Nonetheless, the poem sprang from the political

circumstances in England during that period, and it is impossible to overlook the satire directed at various political figures within it. Suggested by the king to Dryden, the work was published in November 1681. The issue of succession to King Charles has become significantly important. The Earl of Shaftesbury was incarcerated to confront an accusation of high treason. Two candidates vied for the succession. Initially, Charles' brother James, Duke of York, a recognised Roman Catholic, was the first contender; the second was Charles' illegitimate son, the Protestant Duke of Monmouth. The Whigs endorsed Monmouth, whereas the Tories backed James to maintain national stability. Public uproar ensued due to the ambiguity around succession. King Charles II ensured that the Exclusion Bill, aimed at preventing his brother James from succeeding to the throne, could not be enacted by Parliament. The Earl of Shaftesbury, an exceedingly ambitious individual, aimed to exploit this turmoil. He additionally encouraged Monmouth to insurrect against his father. The King, despite his affection for his illegitimate son, did not endorse his ascension as it would contravene the law. The Earl of Shaftesbury was apprehended on a charge of high treason and thereafter lost public support.

Dryden's Objective in Absalom and Achitophel:

Dryden's objective was to endorse the King and to reveal his adversaries. Undoubtedly, Charles possessed his own vulnerabilities; he had a profound affection for women. However, Dryden conceals his sexual transgressions under a veneer of benevolence. He is lenient in addressing his genuine vices. The king himself held a favourable view of his romantic entanglements. Sexual license characterised the era and, therefore, warranted no criticism. Dryden expresses unequivocal admiration for the king's temperance in political affairs and his clemency towards insurgents. Dryden's critique targets the King's adversaries, notably the Earl of Shaftesbury. He was a reckless politician without of values who, having unsuccessfully attempted to entice Charles into arbitrary governance, subsequently reversed his stance and now capitulates to prevailing trends. Dryden apprehends the capriciousness of the masses and is uncertain regarding the potential extremes of a crowd's behaviour. Nonetheless, the king's rigour and adherence to the rule of law garnered him widespread respect, enabling him to dictate the succession according to his wishes. Dryden's allusion to the godlike David exemplifies his adulation of the King and his adherence to the "Theory of the Divine Right of Kings."

Political Satire Framed in Biblical Context:

Dryden selected the renowned Biblical narrative of Absalom's rebellion against his father David, incited by Achitophel, to satirise the prevailing political circumstances. Dryden's selection of a Biblical allegory lacks originality; yet, his overall approach to the subject is unparalleled, as noted by Courthope. However, Dryden ensures that the political satire remains discernible amidst the complexity of excessive Biblical parallelism. The benefit of situating the narrative in pre-Christian eras is evident, as it allowed Dryden to simultaneously commend the King and critique the King's adversaries. To undermine his opponents, he needed to highlight Monmouth's illegitimacy; but, he also had to ensure that Charles, Monmouth's father, was not negatively impacted by his critique. He could neither overtly endorse Charles' lax morals nor openly condemn them. With expert precision, he composes the poem:

"In devout eras, priestly manipulation commenced."

Prior to the designation of polygamy as a sin;

When man multiplied his kind,

Before one was wretchedly confined….

The satirical undertone is unmistakable; Dryden is clearly mocking Charles, who, as an astute patron, would not have overlooked it nor failed to appreciate it.

Dryden is rightly considered the most powerful and refined of English satirists, merging sophistication with intensity. Dryden is unparalleled in rhymed debate, and Absalom and Achitophel exemplifies his prowess in poetry argumentation. Absalom and Achitophel has no equal in the realm of political satire. In addition to the poem's contemporary relevance and historical significance, its attraction to the modern reader resides in its insights about English character and the inherent flaws of humanity. His generalisations regarding human nature had enduring significance. Dryden overcame the unique challenges of his selected theme. He was required to provide, not the misuse of power or political manoeuvring, but rather the poetic expression of abuse and politics. He was compelled to critique a son whom the father still favoured; he needed to ensure Shaftesbury condemned the King while safeguarding the King's sensitivities. He needed to commend without appearing obsequious and to critique

with artistry. Dryden accomplishes all of this adeptly and artfully. Achitophel's condemnation of the monarch takes on the characteristics of a glorification in Charles' perspective. Absalom is a misled tool in Achitophel's grasp. The poem is undoubtedly a political parody, however it amalgamates dignity with sharp and impactful critique.

Absalom and Achitophel is widely recognised as the preeminent political satire in the English language. It is characterised as an allegory pertaining to current political situations and a mock-heroic narrative. On the title page, Dryden refers to it succinctly as "a poem".In the prologue, "To the Reader," Dryden asserts that "the true purpose of satire is the rectification of vices through correction." He also posits that in Absalom and Achitophel, he moderated the sarcasm towards those who were least corrupt: "I confess I have mitigated the satire, where justice permitted, to prevent it from being excessively harsh."

Absalom and Achitophel has generated extensive discourse on satire: the definition of satire during Dryden's era and the poem's divergence from the classical paradigms of Horace, Virgil, and Juvenal. Dryden is regarded as a progenitor of the modern essay and a significant critic of the literary form, especially in his essay "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire," in which he chronicles the history of satire "from its initial rudiments of barbarity to its ultimate refinement and perfection."He provides a definition of satire:

John Dryden as a Satirist: An Analysis with Particular Emphasis on "Absalom and Achitophel"

John Dryden is considered as one of the preeminent satirists in English literature. Dryden, as a poet, playwright, critic, and political commentator, produced works across diverse genres and themes; nonetheless, his impact on satire, especially through his political poetry, has significantly influenced English literature. His acumen, incisive analysis, and capacity to analyse and critique persons and organisations with precision elevate him to the pinnacle of satirical authors. Dryden's notable satirical work, "Absalom and Achitophel" (1681), is a narrative poem that critiques the political upheaval in late 17th century England through allegory and satire, reflecting on current events. This essay examines Dryden's distinctive role as a satirist, particularly highlighting

his magnum opus, "Absalom and Achitophel," and its representation of his sarcastic technique, themes, and literary heritage.

Dryden as a Satirist

Dryden's satirical oeuvre encompasses a variety of subjects, including political, social, and religious commentary. Nonetheless, it is inside his political satire that Dryden's most incisive writing is concentrated. In the 17th century, political satire served as a means for writers to question political power and engage in public conversation, use literature to shape opinion and confront authority. Dryden, composing amidst a tumultuous era of political and theological strife in England, was profoundly engaged in the discourses of his epoch. During the Restoration period in England, Dryden's works, notably "Absalom and Achitophel," address the emergence of political divisions, succession conflicts, and the peril of revolt to monarchical order.

Dryden's satirical style is characterised by clarity, precision, and incisive wit. His critique is not just vitriolic; rather, it is well constructed, insightful, and frequently imbued with humour and irony. His satire targets not only individuals but also the systems and beliefs that regulate society. In "Absalom and Achitophel," Dryden used satire to convey political concepts, analyse opposing political philosophies, and depict the moral ramifications of insurrection and factionalism. His employment of allegory and political symbolism in this work demonstrates the profundity of his satirical prowess.

"Absalom and Achitophel" as a Political Satire

"Absalom and Achitophel" serves as a potent satire and exemplifies Dryden's political commentary at its finest. Composed during a period of turmoil under King Charles II and subsequent to the Exclusion Crisis, wherein the Whigs sought to prevent the Catholic James, Duke of York, from ascending to the throne, Dryden's poem employs the biblical narrative of Absalom's insurrection against his father, King David, to critique current political figures and circumstances. The poem establishes explicit connections between Old Testament characters and those in the Restoration court, utilising

Absalom's revolt to represent the political dissent against the crown, personified by individuals such as Thomas Shaftesbury and the Duke of Monmouth.

The poem begins by depicting Absalom as a charming and ambitious youth, brimming with idealistic fervour, yet ultimately naïve and self-interested. He is encouraged by his counsellor, Achitophel, who symbolises Thomas Shaftesbury, a notable politician and leader of the Whigs. Achitophel's astute exploitation of Absalom exemplifies the political stratagems employed throughout the Whig campaign for a new succession, wherein the Duke of Monmouth was presented as a legitimate claimant to the throne. Dryden's depiction of Absalom is satirical; despite the character's seeming intention to improve England, his ambition results in insurrection and discord. In this regard, Absalom exemplifies the arrogant disposition of those who defy lawful authority without comprehending the wider ramifications of their acts.

Achitophel, as the astute and ethically compromised strategist, is pivotal in the progression of the insurrection. Dryden employs Achitophel to represent the unscrupulous and opportunistic political figures who exploited the populace's discontent for their own gain. Achitophel's persona serves as a potent example of satirical literature, as Dryden amplifies his moral depravity and duplicitous speech to illuminate the perils of political ambition. He articulates convincingly and with seeming logic, however his statements are grounded in self-serving motives. In Achitophel, Dryden condemns individuals who seek to undermine the monarchy while masquerading their self-serving ambitions as reform.

Dryden additionally critiques the increasing factionalism within the nation. The poem depicts a fractured England, where many factions compete for dominance, driven by self-interest or ideological fervour. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes evident that Absalom's insurrection is fated to fail, not alone due to his individual shortcomings but also because of the divergent goals of his supporters. Dryden employs this fragmentation of oneness to analyse the perils of political divisions and insurrection, illustrating how these elements can undermine societal cohesion and ultimately result in disorder.

The concluding lines of the poem—where Absalom's insurrection collapses and he meets his demise—function as a powerful satirical critique of the precariousness of political movements lacking rationality or legality. Dryden's portrayal of Absalom's demise underscores the notion that rebellious forces, motivated by ambition and opportunism, will inevitably falter in their efforts to overthrow the existing order.

Satirical Devices in "Absalom and Achitophel"

Dryden's approach in "Absalom and Achitophel" is complex, integrating diverse humorous methods to convey his political arguments. A notable aspect of the poem is Dryden's employment of allegory. The characters are derived from the Bible but are intended to represent modern political actors. Absalom symbolises the Duke of Monmouth, whereas Achitophel denotes Shaftesbury. Dryden's employment of allegory facilitates clear comparisons between the biblical account of revolt and contemporary political conflicts, rendering the poem both an appealing tale and an incisive political critique.

Dryden's employment of irony is pivotal to the satire. He initially portrays Absalom's rebellion as honourable, but then u0ncovers its intrinsic weaknesses and ultimate failure. The poem's irony resides in the juxtaposition of Absalom's lofty ideals and the detrimental outcomes of his deeds. Dryden depicts Absalom as a figure brimming with potential yet ultimately misdirected, enabling the poet to analyse both the character of the Duke of Monmouth and the overarching political landscape. Achitophel's manipulation of Absalom is ironically underscored, since his seemingly virtuous rhetoric is ultimately driven by self-interest.

Besides irony, Dryden employs characterisation as a primary sarcastic instrument. His depiction of Absalom and Achitophel as morally intricate figures enhances the sarcasm. Absalom is not a simplistic antagonist, nor is Achitophel merely a depraved villain. Absalom's idealism, however flawed, is portrayed with empathy, rendering his

demise the more tragic. Achitophel is shown as a scheming, self-interested individual who is prepared to exploit people for his personal advantage. By rendering his characters ethically ambiguous, Dryden intensifies his condemnation of the prevailing political powers.

Dryden employs rhetorical strategies to amplify the mocking tone of the poem. The poem contains incisive dialogues and discussions among characters, especially between Absalom and Achitophel. These speeches are meticulously constructed, employing rhetoric that enhances the political significance of the insurrection while satirising the protagonists' personal aspirations. The excessive adulation of Absalom by his adherents, along with the ostentatious speech of Achitophel, underscores the hypocrisy and self-deception of the individuals participating in the insurrection.

The Ethical Implication in Dryden's Satire

"Absalom and Achitophel" serves as both a parody of political characters and a meditation on the moral ramifications of revolt and political instability. Dryden's poem posits that insurrection, especially when motivated by individual ambition or erroneous principles, ultimately culminates in disorder, treachery, and devastation. The character of Absalom, despite his initial virtue, ultimately endures consequences for his insurrection. Dryden's depiction of the rebellion's collapse functions as a cautionary narrative regarding the perils of usurping lawful authority without consideration for the repercussions.

Dryden's fundamental point is that the misuse or usurpation of political authority can result in the disintegration of order. The poem asserts the monarchy's stability and the imperative of allegiance to the crown. The figure of King David epitomises the ideal of legitimate, but flawed, governance. Dryden posits that although the monarchy may not be flawless, it serves as the foundation of political stability, and those who attempt to undermine it by insurrection are destined for failure.

Thus we see that John Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel" exemplifies the zenith of his satirical oeuvre, demonstrating his capacity to amalgamate wit, sarcasm, characterisation, and moral reflection to deliver an incisive assessment of the political milieu of his era. The poem provides a sharp assessment of certain political individuals while also exploring the enduring themes of loyalty, legitimacy, and rebellion. The poem,employing allegory, sarcasm, and moral contemplation, stands as a significant satirical masterpiece in English literature.

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Who is the main protagonist in Absalom and Achitophel?

    a) King David

    b) Absalom

    c) Achitophel

    d) The Earl of Shaftesbury

    Answer :b) Absalom

2. In Absalom and Achitophel, who does Dryden liken King David to?

    a) Charles II

    b) James II

    c) Oliver Cromwell

    d) Richard Cromwell

    Answer: a) Charles II

3. What is the main theme of Absalom and Achitophel

    a) The betrayal of a king

b) Religious hypocrisy

c) Political satire

d) The love between two siblings

Answer:c) Political satire

4. In the poem, who is Achitophel's most loyal ally?

a). Absalom

b) King David

c) Zimri

d) The Prophet Nathan

Answer a) Absalom

5. What role does Absalom play in the narrative of Absalom and Achitophel?

a) The rightful king

b) A rebellious son

c) A wise counselor

d) A prophet

Answer:b) A rebellious son

Very short answer types

1. What type of poem is Absalom and Achitophel?

Answer: Absalom and Achitophel is a Satire.

2. What reference does Dryden use for the satire?

Answer: Dryden uses biblical episode as satire.

3. Whom does Dryden defend in the poem?

Answer: Dryden defends the English Monarchy for public.

4. Who was made the Lord Protector and what happened to him?

Answer: Richard was made the Lord Protector and he was dethroned as he was foolish.

5. Who was the illegitimate son of Charles II.?

Answer: Duke of Monmouth was the illegitimate son of Charles II.

Long answer Questions

1. Where does Absalom and Achitophel stand in history?

Answer: Written in the midst of England's political upheaval known as the Exclusion Crisis (1679–1681), Absalom and Achitophel date back to the late 17th century. In this allegory, which draws parallels between biblical events and modern politics, the Duke of Monmouth—King Charles II's illegitimate son—represents Absalom. One who backed Monmouth's succession to the throne is the Earl of Shaftesbury, represented by Achitophel. In reaction to efforts to remove James, the Catholic brother of Charles II, from the succession line, the poet wrote the poem. Dryden penned the poem to condemn the uprising and encourage allegiance to the king, as he was a Charles II supporter.

2. Describe Achitophel as Dryden sees him in the poem.

Answer: The sly and manipulative advisor Achitophel, who stands in for the Earl of Shaftesbury, uses eloquence to convince Absalom (Monmouth) to rebel against King David (Charles II), who is represented by his father. People say he's a superb manipulator who uses his persuasive skills to further his political agenda. Rather than utilising his brilliance for the greater good, Dryden shows him as someone who is dangerously persuasive and who seeks power for himself. He is an ambitious and eloquent man, but he is also tragically flawed. The poet exposes his hypocrisy by describing how he claims to be looking out for the people's best interests while secretly plotting to bring the kingdom to its knees.

3. How is Absalom portrayed and what part does he play in the poem?

Answer: The people look up to Absalom, who stands in for the Duke of Monmouth, because he is youthful, charming, and beloved. At first, he is hesitant to betray his father, but Achitophel's convincing reasons eventually win him over. Rather being driven by ambition, Dryden paints him as a good-hearted but naive individual who is manipulated and flattery-induced into revolt. Absalom isn't a real leader because he isn't wise or strong, despite his charisma and popularity. His ultimate demise highlights the perils of succumbing to misleading advice and the repercussions of having political aspirations.

4. Discuss major themes of Absalom and Achitophel.

Asnwer: Political aspiration, loyalty, treachery, and the perils of manipulation are some of the topics explored in the poem. One major point is that a monarch's rule should not be contested; Dryden defends the belief that this is a divinely righteous position to take. Because Achitophel's sly rhetoric demonstrates how words may be utilised to influence people, the issue of deceit is equally important. Dryden also criticises individuals who want power without a legitimate claim, which brings us to another important theme: legitimacy. The poem concludes by expressing concern about the dangers of political instability and challenging an existing monarch.

5. What role does satire play in Absalom and Achitophel played by Dryden?

Answer: Political personalities are criticised and their shortcomings are shown by Dryden through the use of satire. He makes fun of modern politicians by bringing biblical imagery to light, exposing their naiveté and ambition. Other politicians are given exaggerated and frequently unsavoury portrayals, while Achitophel is seen as a crafty schemer. The insurrection is portrayed as dangerous and misguided by Dryden, who uses wit and irony to emphasise the absurdity of the Exclusion Crisis. While

mocking those who want to overthrow the monarchy, his caustic tone shows his support for Charles II.

Key Points to Remember

- The poem is a satirical political allegory that reflects the political tensions in England during the late 17th century, particularly during the reign of King Charles II.
- Absalom symbolizes Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles II, and Achitophel represents Anthony Ashley-Cooper, the Earl of Shaftesbury, a political leader who opposed James's succession.
- The poem also includes other key figures of the time, such as David (Charles II), Zimri (the Duke of Buckingham), and others, each symbolizing different aspects of political life and figures in the royal court.
- Loyalty vs. Rebellion: Dryden critiques the rebellion of Absalom (Monmouth) and the idea of usurping the legitimate king (David/Charles II). The poem explores the conflict between loyalty to the monarch and the temptation of rebellion.
- Power and Corruption: The poem underscores how political ambition can lead to corruption and manipulation, exemplified in the character of Achitophel (Shaftesbury), who encourages rebellion for personal gain.
- Divine Right of Kings: Dryden defends the notion that monarchs derive their authority from divine sanction, which reflects the Restoration belief in absolute monarchy and the rejection of radical political movements
- The poem is written in heroic couplets (pairs of rhyming iambic pentameter lines), which were popular during the Restoration period and give the work a formal, lofty tone.
- Dryden employs satirical language and irony to criticize the political figures of his time, and his use of biblical references (such as the story of Absalom and David from the Old Testament) helps frame the political struggles in a larger, moral context.

- The poem is not just a political critique but also a work of literary sophistication, with Dryden showcasing his mastery of language, poetic techniques, and intellectual depth.
- Absalom is portrayed as youthful, ambitious, and misled by the manipulative Achitophel.
- Achitophel is the scheming villain who represents the dangerous manipulations of politics and power.
- David (Charles II) is depicted as a wise, though flawed, monarch caught in a struggle between maintaining authority and dealing with internal dissent.
- Allusion and Reference: Dryden draws heavily on biblical, classical, and historical references to enrich the meaning of his satire. The figure of Achitophel directly references the biblical counselor who betrayed King David, while Absalom represents the tragic son.
- Rhetorical Devices: Dryden uses rhetorical devices like persuasion, pathos, and irony to sway his audience and critique the political climate.

From an Essay on Man (From Epistle I) Alexander Pope

Objectives: The objectives of the topic is to help students understand the philosophical themes, particularly the concept of the "Great Chain of Being," and the exploration of human limitations and reason. The poem also analyzes Pope's use of satire, poetic form, and literary devices, while reflecting on the poem's relevance to both the 18th century and contemporary issues.

Unit- 3

Detail Study of An Essay on Man (From Epistle -I)

Author Introduction

Alexander Pope (1688–1744) is widely regarded as one of the most eminent poets in the English language, acclaimed for his witty humor, profound satirical insights, and mastery of the heroic couplet. Born into a Catholic family in London during a tumultuous era of political and theological strife, Pope's formative years were marked by numerous challenges. His family grappled with discrimination and marginalization, and Pope himself faced health complications attributed to a variant of tuberculosis that stunted his physical growth. Despite these formidable adversities, Pope's intellectual acumen and literary talent blossomed early on. By the time he reached his twenties, he had already established himself as a prominent figure within the literary landscape, leaving an indelible mark on the world of poetry.

The works of Pope exhibit meticulous craftsmanship, demonstrating a sharp focus on metre and rhyme. He excelled in the heroic couplet, a duo of rhymed lines composed in iambic pentameter, which became a hallmark of his poetry. His poetry incisively mirrored the social, political, and philosophical dilemmas of his era, frequently infused with sarcasm, satire, and cleverness. His most renowned works include The Rape of the Lock (1712), a mock-epic that lampoons the vanities of the aristocracy, and The Dunciad (1728), a scathing condemnation of literary and cultural degradation.

One of Pope's most notable contributions to English literature is his philosophical poem An Essay on Man (1734), especially its first epistle. This work examines fundamental enquiries on the essence of humanity, the cosmos, and the function of divine intervention. An Essay on Man, composed in heroic couplets, embodies Pope's intellectual engagement with the Enlightenment and the significant philosophical discourses of his era. The poem was created as a component of a broader work that will examine the ethical and intellectual tenets guiding human life. Nevertheless, just four letters were finalised.

The initial epistle of An Essay on Man is among Pope's most renowned and impactful works, serving as a philosophical reflection on humanity's position in the universe. It commences with an examination of humanity's appropriate position within the vast

framework of the universe. Pope contends that humans possess inherent limitations in their comprehension and are incapable of grasping the entirety of divine rationale. The renowned opening lines—"What is the man, who, in the midst of life, / Thinks he can fathom the depths of the Creator's design?"—establish the tone for the entire poem, indicating that humanity must acknowledge its limitations and avoid overreaching in its efforts to comprehend the mechanisms of God and nature.

In the initial epistle, Pope articulates the philosophical concept of the Great Chain of Being, a hierarchical framework wherein each entity occupies a certain position, with God at the apex, humans situated under angels, and above animals. This concept embodies the Enlightenment's conviction in a rationally governed, orderly universe. However, Pope moderates this rational perspective by acknowledging human weakness and fallibility. He notably asserts that although people may not comprehend the entirety of the divine design, they ought to have faith in God's wisdom and uphold humility.

The language of Pope in An Essay on Man is characterised by clarity, conciseness, and logical coherence. The employment of the heroic couplet enables him to articulate intricate concepts with sophistication and accuracy, with each couplet augmenting the previous one to construct a more extensive philosophical discourse. His employment of sarcasm and paradox further enhances the intellectual engagement with the poem's topics, prompting readers to scrutinise their preconceptions and contemplate their position in the world.

Besides its philosophical profundity, An Essay on Man is distinguished by its extensive impact on subsequent intellectuals, especially in religion, ethics, and the Enlightenment's understanding of reason. Despite frequent criticism for its deterministic perspective, the poem stands as a lasting tribute to Pope's intellectual acuity and his capacity to condense intricate concepts into compelling poetry.

Pope cultivated a reputation as a keen critic and satirist, interacting with the works of fellow authors through his poems and articles. His critiques of societal standards, human foolishness, and the pretensions of the nobility rendered him simultaneously adored and contentious. Despite significant hostility from numerous contemporaries, Pope's oeuvre has endured, impacting poets and intellectuals for decades.

During his lifetime, Alexander Pope epitomised Enlightenment ideals, championing reason, ethical philosophy, and the quest for knowledge. His oeuvre, characterised by wit, sarcasm, and profound philosophical inquiry, is an essential component of the Western literary canon. Pope's position as one of England's preeminent poets is firmly established, and his Essay on Man is lauded for its profound philosophical insights, intellectual depth, and enduring impact on literature and philosophy.

An Essay on Man: Epistle I

To Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke

Awake, my St. John! leave all meaner things

To low ambition, and the pride of kings.

Let us (since life can little more supply

Than just to look about us and to die)

Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;

A mighty maze! but not without a plan;

A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous shoot;

Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.

Together let us beat this ample field,

Try what the open, what the covert yield;

The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore

Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar;

Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,

And catch the manners living as they rise;

Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;

But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I.

Say first, of God above, or man below,

What can we reason, but from what we know?

Of man what see we, but his station here,

From which to reason, or to which refer?

Through worlds unnumber'd though the God be known,

'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.

He, who through vast immensity can pierce,

See worlds on worlds compose one universe,

Observe how system into system runs,

What other planets circle other suns,

What varied being peoples ev'ry star,

May tell why Heav'n has made us as we are.

But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,

The strong connections, nice dependencies,

Gradations just, has thy pervading soul

Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,

And drawn supports, upheld by God, or thee?

II.

Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,

Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?

First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,

Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less!

Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made

Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?

Or ask of yonder argent fields above,

Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest

That Wisdom infinite must form the best,

Where all must full or not coherent be,

And all that rises, rise in due degree;

Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain

There must be somewhere, such a rank as man:

And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)

Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,

May, must be right, as relative to all.

In human works, though labour'd on with pain,

A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;

In God's, one single can its end produce;

Yet serves to second too some other use.

So man, who here seems principal alone,

Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,

Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;

'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man restrains

His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains:

When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,

Is now a victim, and now Egypt's God:

Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend

His actions', passions', being's, use and end;

Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why

This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;

Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:

His knowledge measur'd to his state and place,

His time a moment, and a point his space.

If to be perfect in a certain sphere,

What matter, soon or late, or here or there?

The blest today is as completely so,

As who began a thousand years ago.

III.

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of fate,

All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:

From brutes what men, from men what spirits know:

Or who could suffer being here below?

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed today,

Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?

Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,

And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,

That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:

Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,

Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,

And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;

Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore!

What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,

But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast:

Man never is, but always to be blest:

The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,

Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutor'd mind

Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;

His soul, proud science never taught to stray

Far as the solar walk, or milky way;

Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,

Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;

Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,

Some happier island in the wat'ry waste,

Where slaves once more their native land behold,

No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.

To be, contents his natural desire,

He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;

But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,

His faithful dog shall bear him company.

IV.

Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense

Weigh thy opinion against Providence;

Call imperfection what thou fanciest such,

Say, here he gives too little, there too much:

Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,

Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;

If man alone engross not Heav'n's high care,

Alone made perfect here, immortal there:

Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,

Rejudge his justice, be the God of God.

In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;

All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.

Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,

Men would be angels, angels would be gods.

Aspiring to be gods, if angels fell,

Aspiring to be angels, men rebel:

And who but wishes to invert the laws

Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

V.

Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,

Earth for whose use? Pride answers, " 'Tis for mine:

For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,

Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ryflow'r;

Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew,

The juice nectareous, and the balmy dew;

For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;

For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;

Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;

My foot-stool earth, my canopy the skies."

But errs not Nature from this gracious end,

From burning suns when livid deaths descend,

When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep

Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?

"No, ('tis replied) the first Almighty Cause

Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;

Th' exceptions few; some change since all began:

And what created perfect?"—Why then man?

If the great end be human happiness,

Then Nature deviates; and can man do less?

As much that end a constant course requires

Of show'rs and sunshine, as of man's desires;

As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,

As men for evertemp'rate, calm, and wise.

If plagues or earthquakes break not Heav'n's design,

Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?

Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning forms,

Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,

Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,

Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?

From pride, from pride, our very reas'ning springs;

Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:

Why charge we Heav'n in those, in these acquit?

In both, to reason right is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,

Were there all harmony, all virtue here;

That never air or ocean felt the wind;

That never passion discompos'd the mind.

But ALL subsists by elemental strife;

And passions are the elements of life.

The gen'ral order, since the whole began,

Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

VI.

What would this man? Now upward will he soar,

And little less than angel, would be more;

Now looking downwards, just as griev'd appears

To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.

Made for his use all creatures if he call,

Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?

Nature to these, without profusion, kind,

The proper organs, proper pow'rsassign'd;

Each seeming want compensated of course,

Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;

All in exact proportion to the state;

Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.

Each beast, each insect, happy in its own:

Is Heav'n unkind to man, and man alone?

Shall he alone, whom rational we call,

Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?

The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)

Is not to act or think beyond mankind;

No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,

But what his nature and his state can bear.

Why has not man a microscopic eye?

For this plain reason, man is not a fly.

Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,

T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?

Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,

To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?

Or quick effluvia darting through the brain,

Die of a rose in aromatic pain?

If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,

And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,

How would he wish that Heav'n had left him still

The whisp'ring zephyr, and the purling rill?

Who finds not Providence all good and wise,

Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

V*II.*

Far as creation's ample range extends,

The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:

Mark how it mounts, to man's imperial race,

From the green myriads in the peopled grass:

What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,

The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam:

Of smell, the headlong lioness between,

And hound sagacious on the tainted green:

Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,

To that which warbles through the vernal wood:

The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!

Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:

In the nice bee, what sense so subtly true

From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew:

How instinct varies in the grov'lling swine,

Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine:

'Twixt that, and reason, what a nice barrier;

For eversep'rate, yet for ever near!

Remembrance and reflection how allied;

What thin partitions sense from thought divide:

And middle natures, how they long to join,

Yet never pass th'insuperable line!

Without this just gradation, could they be

Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?

The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,

Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

VIII.

See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,

All matter quick, and bursting into birth.

Above, how high, progressive life may go!

Around, how wide! how deep extend below!

Vast chain of being, which from God began,

Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,

Beast, bird, fish, insect! what no eye can see,

No glass can reach! from infinite to thee,

From thee to nothing!—On superior pow'rs

Were we to press, inferior might on ours:

Or in the full creation leave a void,

Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:

From nature's chain whatever link you strike,

Tenth or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll

Alike essential to th' amazing whole,

The least confusion but in one, not all

That system only, but the whole must fall.

Let earth unbalanc'd from her orbit fly,

Planets and suns run lawless through the sky;

Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,

Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;

Heav'n's whole foundations to their centre nod,

And nature tremble to the throne of God.

All this dread order break—for whom? for thee?

Vile worm!—Oh madness, pride, impiety!

IX.

What if the foot ordain'd the dust to tread,

Or hand to toil, aspir'd to be the head?

What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd

To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?

Just as absurd for any part to claim

To be another, in this gen'ral frame:

Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,

The great directing Mind of All ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,

Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,

Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,

Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,

Lives through all life, extends through all extent,

Spreads undivided, operates unspent,

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,

As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;

As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,

As the rapt seraph that adores and burns;

To him no high, no low, no great, no small;

He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

X.

Cease then, nor order imperfection name:

Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.

Know thy own point: This kind, this due degree

Of blindness, weakness, Heav'n bestows on thee.

Submit.—In this, or any other sphere,

Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:

Safe in the hand of one disposing pow'r,

Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee;

All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;

All discord, harmony, not understood;

All partial evil, universal good:

And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,

One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.

Critical Analysis of the Poem

In the preface to Pope's inaugural Epistle, he encapsulates the principal theme of his enlightening essay in the concluding phrase, emphasizing the importance of understanding what is natural or proper. "An Essay on Man" seeks to not only alter but also elevate the reader's perception, aiming to validate life's occurrences and divine operations by revealing a rationale that transcends human comprehension. This effort by Pope to highlight nature's infallibility is emblematic of the Augustan literary period, where poets strived to convey truth through a faithful reflection of nature. In line 13, Pope employs a hunting metaphor to counsel readers to observe nature's behaviors diligently, akin to a hunter tracking his prey, thus urging the elimination of all follies that may be considered unnatural. He calls for an introspective exploration of our surroundings, recognizing it as a path to uncover fresh discoveries and gain deeper insights into our earthly purpose. Moreover, in line 12, Pope hints at humans occupying an intermediary position, below a higher force but above beasts in the hierarchy of existence. Warning against both blind apathy and arrogant presumption, Pope underscores the importance of pursuing knowledge while remaining humble and cognizant of our cognitive limitations.

Pope composes the initial portion to orient the reader towards his perspective, which he asserts represents the accurate understanding of the universe. He emphasises that our comprehension is contingent upon our surroundings, reflecting the empiricist

relationship emblematic of the Augustan era. He promotes the exploration of novel concepts while adhering to established parameters. The Chain of Being delineates the position of each organism within the universe, a system comprehensible solely to God. Pope asserts God's omniscience, using it as definitive evidence that human understanding will never attain a level similar to His. In the final phrase, he interrogates whether God or man assumes a more significant role in sustaining the link after it is established.

The principal theme in section two is encapsulated in one of the concluding couplets: "Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault; Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought." Pope employs this part to elucidate the fallacy of the "Presumptuous Man," highlighting our tendency to focus on our limitations rather than leverage our capabilities. He underscores the correctness of our position in the hierarchy of existence, for as we direct the lives of inferior beings, God possesses the capacity to navigate our destiny. Moreover, he contends that since our analysis is limited to our immediate surroundings, we cannot ascertain the existence of a superior entity or realm beyond our understanding; so, it is most rational to view the universe as operating within a hierarchical framework.

Pope used the commencement of section three to elucidate the roles of the chain of being. He asserts that the ignorance of all organisms, including humanity, facilitates a whole and joyful existence devoid of the potential weight of comprehending our destinies. Rather than preoccupying oneself with the unknowable, we should instead cultivate hope for a tranquil "life to come." Pope associates the afterlife with the soul and emphasises a renewed focus on a more basic society, "the Indian," whose souls remain untainted by power or avarice. As modest and grounded individuals, Indians and those with analogous beliefs perceive life as the paramount gift and have no superficial aspirations of transcending human limitations.

In the fourth stanza, Pope cautions about the detrimental consequences of inordinate pride. He cites as primary examples individuals who audaciously critique the work of

God, asserting that one individual is excessively blessed while another is insufficiently so. He also critiques humanity's egocentric disposition in annihilating other beings for personal gain, yet lamenting when they perceive God as unjust towards Man. The Pope emphasises his argument with the concluding and impactful couplet: "who but wishes to invert the laws of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause." This relates to the preceding stanza that examines the soul; individuals who grapple with their existential position will disrupt the chain of being and merit retribution rather than rewards in the afterlife.

In the opening of the fifth stanza, Pope personifies Pride and offers egocentric responses to enquiries about the condition f the universe. He portrays Pride as a collector of all the offerings that Nature provides. The portrayal of Nature as a benefactor and Man as her greedy recipient is challenged in the subsequent lines: The Pope contemplates the potential flaws of Nature in relation to natural disasters, like earthquakes and storms. He, however, refutes this idea, asserting that a greater purpose underlies all events and that God operates according to "general laws." Pope ultimately reflects on the origin of evil inside human nature and determines that we lack the capacity to elucidate such matters; attributing human transgressions to God becomes yet another manifestation of hubris.

Stanza six links the many occupants of the earth to their appropriate positions and elucidates the rationale behind the existing order. Pope humorously interrogates whether God is unkind exclusively to humanity, after emphasising the joy experienced by most species. He enquires about this since humanity perpetually longs for the capabilities unique to others beyond his realm, hence rendering him perpetually discontent with his life. Pope challenges humanity's infamous avarice by depicting the futile void that would ensue in a world where humanity possessed omnipotence. Moreover, he characterises an idyllic lifestyle as one focused on one's own domain, free from the distraction of pursuing impossible aspirations.

The seventh stanza examines the breadth of sensory and cognitive dimensions concerning all terrestrial beings. The Pope use an illustration pertaining to each of the

five senses to evoke a vision that highlights the complexities with which all entities are crafted. He cites a bee's sensitivity, enabling it to gather just useful compounds amidst hazardous materials. Pope subsequently addresses the disparities in cognitive capacities along the hierarchical continuum of existence. The mental functions are categorised into instinct, reflection, memory, and reasoning. The Pope asserts that reason should prevail above all, which is inherently a unique characteristic of humanity. Reason enables humanity to create methods of operation that are inherently unnatural.

In section 8, Pope underscores the profound extent of the universe across all facets of existence. This encompasses the profound depths of the ocean and the inverted expanse of the sky, along with the immensity that exists between God and Man, and between Man and the most rudimentary species of the earth. Irrespective of one's position in the hierarchy of existence, the elimination of any single link exerts an equivalent impact as any other. The Pope emphasises the necessity of preserving order to avert the disintegration of the universe.

In the ninth stanza, Pope reiterates the perspective on human pride and avarice. He likens humanity's grievances about subservience to God to an eye or an ear refusing to fulfil their function for the intellect. This artwork underscores the notion that all entities are meticulously crafted to guarantee the proper functioning of the cosmos. Pope concludes this stanza with the Augustan conviction that Nature pervades all entities, so forming the essence of the world, wherein God defines the soul.

In the tenth line, Pope concludes Epistle 1 by instructing the reader on how to attain several rewards, both in this world and the afterlife. He underscores the audacity of perceiving God's arrangement as flawed and stresses that genuine happiness can only be attained with the acceptance of one's inevitability.

Vulnerability Pope illustrates this acceptance of frailty in the concluding lines of Epistle 1, when he contemplates the unfathomable, whether appearing miraculous or calamitous, as being at least accurate, if nothing more.

Summary

An Essay on Man is a philosophical poem written by Alexander Pope. Its purpose is to shed light on questions concerning human nature and the place of humanity in the universe. The poem, which is written in heroic couplets, is an attempt to "vindicate the ways of God to man," which is an illustration of Pope's participation with the philosophy of the seventeenth century. Order, hierarchy, and divine providence are some of the topics that are discussed in Epistle 1, which focusses primarily on analysing the nature and condition of humanity in respect to the physical universe.

Its Structure

In An Essay on Man, the first section, which is named "The Design," serves as a literary introduction that elucidates the goal of the poem. In the book, the Pope expresses his gratitude to his close friend Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, and states that the purpose of the essay is to examine "Man in the abstract, his Nature, and his State." He maintains that human nature can be reduced to a number of fundamental reasons, and he asserts that he chooses to take a balanced perspective, avoiding extreme points of view. The Pope provides an explanation for his choice to write the essay in verse, stating that poetry makes it easier for the reader to comprehend and remember his ideas, while also increasing the text's shortness. In addition, he makes reference to concerns that he has over his health, which may make it difficult for him to continue writing. This suggests that this work is a basic examination of mankind.

Regarding the Characteristics and Predicament of Humanity in Relation to the Universe, the First Letter

According to Pope, the poem is divided into four Epistles, each of which investigates a different aspect of human nature. Epistle 1, which is the topic of this conversation, investigates the position of mankind within the larger framework of the universe. The well-known prayer is repeated at the beginning of the poem:

Wake up, my dear Saint John! Give up all ignoble activities in favour of those with lower aims and the haughtiness of monarchs. Bolingbroke is urged by the Pope to embark on a philosophical journey, with the understanding of humanity's place in God's creation being given precedence above other, more mundane diversions. The poem makes the argument that human knowledge is limited; individuals can only evaluate the cosmos from their limited perspective, and they are required to rely on a divine order that is beyond their ability to fully comprehend.

In this particular epistle, Pope is credited with composing one of his most famous sentences: Hope is something that is always there in the human heart; humans are never completely satisfied, but they are always destined to be blessed.

He proposes that hope is an inherent component of human nature, which enables humans to achieve happiness in spite of the fact that they do not know what the future holds. It is his contention that, in the same way that animals are unable to question their place in the natural world, people do not have to bemoan the limitations that they have placed upon themselves. The Pope perfectly illustrates this idea by drawing a comparison between the limited comprehension of humans and that of a lamb that is unaware of its future. In the same way that a lamb would be impossible to have pleasure in life if it knew that it was about to be slaughtered, God, in His wisdom, has hidden the future from humans in order to ensure that people are able to be pleased with their lives.

In the following paragraphs, Pope introduces the concept of the Great Chain of Being, which is a hierarchical structure in which every entity occupies the position that has been allocated to them. Everyone and everything in the universe, from the tiniest insect to the most heavenly creatures, plays an important role in maintaining the equilibrium of the universe. He is a composer:

Existence is organised in a complex hierarchy! Which originates from God: the ethereal, human, heavenly, and human aspects of nature itself.

While highlighting the fact that everything has a function, the Pope warns against rejecting the divine order that has been established. The removal of even a single link in this chain, according to his argument, will result in the collapse of the entire universe. The same concept applies to humanity: just as the numerous parts of the human body work together to maintain life, all of the entities in the universe are connected to one another. In light of this, it is imperative that humankind refrain from attempting to disrupt the natural order or to question the providence of God.

The foolishness of human pride and the pursuit of perfection is a prominent issue that has been explored throughout Epistle 1. Pope is of the opinion that people frequently exaggerate their significance and seek information that goes beyond what is essential. It is his contention that humanity is not faulty; rather, individuals are exactly as they were designed to be within the larger framework of creation. In addition to being ineffective, attempts to alter or challenge the natural order are also fraught with danger.

After careful consideration, the Pope has arrived at the conclusion that mankind must submit to the will of God and realise its place in the universe. It is noteworthy that he closes with the phrase:

The truth lies in whatever one finds.

This sentence encapsulates the core idea of the poem, which is that all existence is in accordance with a divine design, not something that humans ought to dispute or contest. It would be more prudent for him to put his faith in the wisdom of God and recognise the limitations of human cognition.

In the first chapter of An Essay on Man, the author presents a complete theological and philosophical perspective on the role of mankind in the universe inside the essay. Pope argues that human cognition is inherently limited, that a divine hierarchy permeates nature, and that humanity must rely on God's providence in order to maintain its existence. He criticises human hubris and the insatiable drive for knowledge, putting forth the idea that the key to achieving fulfilment is to accept one's place within the

divine hierarchy. Because of its exquisite poetry, logical structure, and ethical contemplations, the poem is a significant piece of literature from the Enlightenment period. It emphasises the importance of faith and reason coexisting in a harmonious relationship. There is a significant contemplation on human nature, divine justice, and the human condition in An Essay on Man.

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Which of the following best describes the central theme of Essay on Man (Epistle I)?

a) Man's place in the universe b) The fall of man from grace c) The concept of free will d) The pursuit of happiness

Answer: Man's place in the universe

2. . In Essay on Man, Pope asserts that man must accept:

a) His limitations b) His dominance over nature c) His divine right to rule d) The inevitable downfall of humanity

Answer: His limitations

3. What is Pope's view of human nature in Essay on Man?

a) Human nature is perfect and invincible b) Humans are fundamentally flawed and corrupt c) Humans are part of a divine plan and should trust in God's purpose d) Humans are self-reliant and autonomous

Answer: c) Humans are part of a divine plan and should trust in God's purpose

4. What philosophical concept is explored in Essay on Man?

a) Rationalism b) Empiricism c) Theodicy d) Naturalism

Answer: c) Theodicy

5. Which of the following statements is true about Essay on Man?

a) It critiques the philosophical optimism of Leibniz. b) It discusses the need for political reforms. c) It emphasizes the importance of education. d) It focuses on religious conversion.

Answer: a) It critiques the philosophical optimism of Leibniz.

Very Short Answer type questions:

1. Who is the author of an Essay on Man?

Answer: Alexander Pope.

2. What concept is showcased in 'Essay of Man' Epistle 1

Answer: The poem advocates the concept of the "Great Chain of Being,"

3. What does Pope advocate?

Answer: Pope advocates for humility and trust in divine providence.

4. What is the most famous work of Alexander Pope?

Answer: The most famous work of Pope is 'The Rape of the Lock"

5. How according to Pope one can assert happiness and how does it derive?

Answer: Happiness derives from embracing one's position within the divine order.

Long Answer Question

1. What is the primary idea of An Essay on Man,?

Answer: The primary theme of An Essay on Man, , is the notion that humanity must acknowledge its position within the divine hierarchy of the universe. The Pope contends that humanity ought not to challenge God's design, but rather acknowledge that all occurrences align with a comprehensive, rational scheme. He asserts that human reason

is constrained and that individuals ought to yield to divine wisdom instead of attempting to comprehend all things. The poem advocates the concept of the "Great Chain of Being," wherein each thing possesses a designated duty. Pope maintains that human arrogance and ignorance result in superfluous suffering, whereas humility and faith in God foster tranquilly.

2.What is the meaning of Pope's assertion "Whatever is, is right"?

Answer:The expression "Whatever is, is right" implies that all occurrences in the universe are integral to a divine scheme, regardless of their perceived imperfections by human cognition. Pope contends that humanity possesses constrained understanding and is unable to perceive the entirety of God's creation. What may seem like chaos or anguish is, in fact, an integral component of a larger, intentional order. The statement does not suggest uncritical acceptance of injustice but rather recognises that divine wisdom transcends human understanding. The Pope advocates for humility and trust in divine providence instead of challenging the world's structure.

3.What is Pope's depiction of the Great Chain of Being?

Answer:Pope delineates the Great Chain of Being as a hierarchical framework wherein all entities in creation possess a designated position. God occupies the highest position, succeeded by angels, humans, animals, plants, and inanimate objects. He contends that each organism have a distinct role, and disturbing this arrangement would result in disorder. Humans, situated between angels and animals, possess rationality yet also exhibit constraints. The Pope posits that discontent emerges when individuals attempt to transcend their assigned roles, resulting in chaos and suffering. He asserts that happiness derives from embracing one's position within the divine order.

4.What is Pope's perspective on human reason and pride in Epistle 1?

Answer: The Pope recognises reason as a significant gift, yet cautions that it is finite and should not foster undue arrogance. He condemns human hubris for endeavouring

to comprehend or modify God's overarching plan. Pope asserts that pride engenders a belief in one's entitlement to a superior position within the Great Chain of Being, resulting in discontent and fallacy. He contends that reason ought to be employed to acknowledge one's position in the universe rather than to contest divine wisdom. By exhibiting humility and acknowledging limitations, individuals can attain peace and harmony.

5.What is the rationale behind Pope's use of heroic couplets in An Essay on Man?

Answer:Pope utilises heroic couplets—rhymed pairs of iambic pentameter lines—to establish an ordered and rhythmic cadence in his argument. This poetic structure improves lucidity, rendering philosophical concepts more comprehensible to readers. The symmetrical composition of heroic couplets embodies Pope's notion of order and harmony within the cosmos. This succinct and impactful format enables him to convey intricate concepts with accuracy and humour. Pope underscores his assertion that the universe functions in accordance with a rational and divine scheme through this approach.

Key points to remember

1. **Philosophical Context:** The poem explores the relationship between humans, nature, and God, emphasizing the limitations of human understanding and the importance of accepting our place in the universe.

2. **The "Great Chain of Being"**: Pope discusses the hierarchical order of all creation, where everything has its rightful place, from God and angels to humans and animals, suggesting that each part of the universe plays a role in the divine plan.

3. **Human Limitation**: Pope argues that humans should recognize their limitations and avoid the arrogance of attempting to understand the vast, divine order or question God's wisdom.

4. **Optimism and the Divine Order:** The poem suggests that everything in the world, including human suffering and imperfection, fits into God's greater, rational design, which ultimately works for good.

5. **Man's Role and Purpose:** Pope emphasizes that humans are neither the highest nor the lowest beings and must accept their position in the great cosmic scheme rather than striving for something beyond their reach.

6. **The Limits of Reason:** Pope argues that while reason is a gift, it is limited and cannot fully comprehend the workings of the universe, urging humility and acceptance of divine wisdom.

7. **Critique of Human Pride:** The poem satirizes the pride of humans who attempt to elevate themselves to a god-like status, ignoring their smallness in the grand scheme of creation.

8. **Rhetorical Questions and Irony:** Pope uses rhetorical questions and irony to highlight the folly of human pride and ambition, inviting readers to reflect on their place in the world.

9. **Heroic Couplets:** The poem is written in heroic couplets (rhymed iambic pentameter), which reflect the formal, rational tone of Pope's argument about human nature and the cosmos.

10. **Moral Lessons:** Pope teaches that human beings must embrace their limitations, exercise reason within their bounds, and trust that God's plan is greater than individual understanding, promoting a life of humility and faith.

Essay Type Questions:

1.Examine the political allegory in Absalom and Achitophel. In what manner does Dryden employ biblical figures to critique the political circumstances of his era?

2.Examine Dryden's employment of satire in Absalom and Achitophel. In what manner does he evaluate the judiciary and the political atmosphere of Restoration England?

3.What is the significance of Achitophel's character in Absalom and Achitophel? Examine his intentions and the consequences of his actions.

4.In what manner does Dryden depict the struggle between loyalty and ambition in Absalom and Achitophel?

5.Analyse the tone and style of Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel. In what manner do these aspects augment the poem's political message?

Module-II

JOHN MILTON

PARADISE LOST-BOOK- 1

Contents

Objective

Unit - 4 About the Author

Unit - 5 Explaination

Unit - 6 Major Themes

Objective: The objectives of the chapter is to understand the epic central theme of Paradise Lost by John Milton including the nature of free will, the problem of evil, and the fall of man. The purpose is to analyzes Milton's depiction of key biblical figures such as Satan, Adam, and Eve, and examine how their choices lead to the fall from grace. Additionally it also focuses on Milton's use of language, style, and literary devices, such as epic conventions and blank verse, while exploring the philosophical, theological, and political implications of the work in the context of the 17th century

About the Author:

John Milton, a renowned English poet and intellectual giant, entered the world on December 9, 1608, within the bustling city of London, England. His lineage bore the mark of erudition, with his father, John Milton Sr., distinguished both as a gifted composer and as a meticulous scrivener, engaged in the profession of a legal clerk. Young Milton embarked on his educational voyage at the esteemed St. Paul's School in London, prior to embarking on a scholarly journey that led him to the hallowed halls of Christ's College at the venerable University of Cambridge in 1625. Throughout his academic pursuits, Milton exhibited an unwavering zeal for the traditions of classical learning, mastering the intricacies of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, disciplines that would go on to profoundly shape and inform his future literary endeavors.

Milton's intellectual endeavours were rooted in his Puritan faith, which profoundly shaped his perspective and literary works. In the 1630s, he concentrated on writing in English and producing works addressing religious, political, and philosophical themes, ultimately establishing himself as a pivotal figure in English literature.

His inaugural significant published work, Poems of Mr. John Milton, was issued in 1645, at approximately 37 years of age. The anthology comprised a blend of concise poems and more solemn, religious compositions. During this period, his poetry mirrored his evolving theological perspectives and increasing discontent with the monarchy and the Church of England, both of which would emerge as major topics in his subsequent writings.

Milton's Political and Religious Engagement: Milton ardently championed the Puritan cause throughout the English Civil War, which transpired from 1642 to 1651. He became a staunch advocate of republicanism and opposed the monarchy, which he perceived as corrupt and repressive. His most renowned political works from this period are Areopagitica (1644), a defence of free expression and a critique of governmental censorship, and The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates (1649), when he contended that monarchs may be deposed for infringing upon the rights of their citizens.

Milton's Visual Impairment and Subsequent Years: In the 1650s, Milton commenced the deterioration of his vision. The precise aetiology of his blindness remains unidentified;

nonetheless, it may be associated with his prior political and theological compositions or the physical strain of his rigorous scholarship. Notwithstanding this impairment, Milton persisted in writing extensively, dictating his compositions to aides.

Following the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660, Milton was momentarily incarcerated and then went into concealment owing to his advocacy for the republican cause. His political works rendered him a target of royalist forces; yet, he endured the regime transition and spent the rest of his life in relative obscurity, albeit continuing to write.

Milton's works encompasses a diverse array of genres, including poetry and political tracts. Among his most renowned works are:

Paradise Lost (1667): His monumental work concerning humanity's descent.

Paradise Regained (1671): A concise and concentrated sequel to Paradise Lost, addressing the temptation of Christ.

Samson Agonistes (1671): A dramatic play derived from the biblical narrative of Samson.

Areopagitica (1644): A literary composition advocating for press freedom.

The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates (1649): A political treatise examining the validity of monarchy.

Lycidas (1637): A pastoral elegy dedicated to Milton's companion Edward King.

An Examination of Book 1 of Paradise Lost Paradise Lost is Milton's seminal masterpiece and continues to be a pivotal text in the Western literary canon. The poem, first published in 1667, is an expansive epic in blank verse that narrates humanity's fall from grace, emphasising Satan's rebellion and his followers' expulsion from Heaven, along with the ensuing temptation of Adam and Eve.

The initial book of Paradise Lost presents the primary struggle of the poem and establishes the foundation for the overarching story. Milton begins with an appeal to the "Heav'nly Muse" and thereafter narrates the downfall of Satan and his angels. The insurrection, orchestrated by Satan, culminates in the defeat and banishment of the insurgents from Heaven.

Milton tackles the topic of evil by demonstrating that it originates not from God's creation but from the improper exercise of free will. The rebellion of Satan and the ensuing fall of humanity are shown as a sad outcome of human decisions.

Milton's Style: Book 1 of Paradise Lost demonstrates Milton's mastery of epic diction. He employs elaborate vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and vivid images to establish a heightened and theatrical tone. His blank verse is regarded as one of the premier examples of English poetry, and his incorporation of classical references, coupled with his expertise in theological and philosophical issues, has established his status as one of history's greatest poets.

Milton's Legacy: John Milton passed away on November 8, 1674, at the age of 65. His impact on English literature is incalculable. Paradise Lost has influenced numerous writers, intellectuals, and theologians, and its concepts of liberty, governance, and human nature remain pertinent today.

Milton's oeuvre remains a subject of analysis for its intricate interaction of politics, theology, and human nature. His capacity to integrate classical tradition with Christian doctrine, together his insights on authority, obedience, and freedom, establishes him as a monumental character in literature.

POEM

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit

Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast

Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,

With loss of Eden, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,

Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top

Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire

That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,

In the Beginning how the 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 Rhime.

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

Before all Temples th'upright heart and pure,

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

Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread

Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss

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

Illumin, what is low raise and support;

That to the highth of this great Argument

I may assert Eternal Providence,

And justifie the wayes of God to men.

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

Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause

Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,

Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off

From thir Creator, and transgress his Will

For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?

Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile

Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd

The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride

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

Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring

To set himself in Glory above his Peers,

He trusted to have equal'd the most High,

If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim

Against the Throne and Monarchy of God

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

With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power

Hurld headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie

With hideous ruine and combustion down

To bottomless perdition, there to dwell

In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,

Who durst defieth' Omnipotent to Arms.

Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew

Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe

Confounded though immortal: But his doom

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

Both of lost happiness and lasting pain

Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes

That witness'd huge affliction and dismay

Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:

At once as far as Angels kenn he views

The dismal Situation waste and wilde,

A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round

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

No light, but rather darkness visible

Serv'donely to discover sights of woe,

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace

And rest can never dwell, hope never comes

That comes to all; but torture without end

Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed

With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:

Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd

For those rebellious, here thir prison ordained

In utter darkness, and thir portion set

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

As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole.

O how unlike the place from whence they fell!

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

With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

He soon discerns, and weltring by his side

One next himself in power, and next in crime,

Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd

Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy,

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

Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

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

From him, who in the happy Realms of Light

Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine

Myriads though bright: If he whom mutual league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,

Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd

In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest

From what highthfall'n, so much the stronger prov'd

He with his Thunder: and till then who knew

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

Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage

Can else inflict, do I repent or change,

Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind

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

That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,

And to the fierce contention brought along

Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd

That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd

In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,

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

All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield:

And what is else not to be overcome?

That Glory never shall his wrath or might

Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace

With suppliant knee, and deifie his power,

Who from the terrour of this Arm so late

Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,

That were an ignominy and shame beneath

This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods

And this Empyreal substance cannot fail,

Since through experience of this great event

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

We may with more successful hope resolve

To wage by force or guile eternal Warr

Irreconcileable, to our grand Foe,

Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy

Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.

So spaketh' Apostate Angel, though in pain,

Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:

And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,

That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr

Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds

Fearless, endanger'dHeav'ns perpetual King;

And put to proof his high Supremacy,

Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,

Too well I see and rue the dire event,

That with sad overthrow and foul defeat

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

In horrible destruction laid thus low,

As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences

Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains

Invincible, and vigour soon returns,

Though all our Glory extinct and happy state

Here swallow'd up in endless misery.

But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now

Of force believe Almighty, since no less

Then such could havorepow'rd such force as ours)

Have left us this our spirit and strength intire

Strongly to suffer and support our pains,

That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,

Or do him mightier service as his thralls

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

Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,

Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;

What can it then avail though yet we feel

Strength undiminisht, or eternal being

To undergo eternal punishment?

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

Fall'nCherube, to be weak is miserable

Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,

To do ought good never will be our task,

But ever to do ill our sole delight,

As being the contrary to his high will

Whom we resist. If then his Providence

Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,

Our labour must be to pervert that end,

And out of good still to find means of evil;

Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps

Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb

His inmost counsels from thirdestind aim.

But see the angry Victor hath recall'd

His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit

Back to the Gates of Heav'n: the Sulphurous Hail

Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid

The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice

Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,

Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,

Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now

To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.

Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,

Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.

Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,

The seat of desolation, voyd of light,

Save what the glimmering of these livid flames

Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend

From off the tossing of these fiery waves,

There rest, if any rest can harbour there,

And reassembling our afflicted Powers,

Consult how we may henceforth most offend

Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,

How overcome this dire Calamity,

What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,

If not what resolution from despare.

Thus Satan to his neerest Mate

With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes

That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides

Prone on the Flood, extended long and large

Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge

As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,

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

Briareos or Typhon, whom the Den

By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast

Leviathan, which God of all his works

Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:

Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam

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

Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,

With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind

Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night

Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delayes:

So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay

Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence

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

And high permission of all-ruling Heaven

Left him at large to his own dark designs,

That with reiterated crimes he might

Heap on himself damnation, while he sought

Evil to others, and enrag'd might see

How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth

Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn

On Man by him seduc't, but on himself

Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.

Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool

His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames

Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld

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

Then with expanded wings he stears his flight

Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air

That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land

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

With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;

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

Of subterranean wind transports a Hill

Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side

Of thundring Aetna, whose combustible

And fewel'dentrals thence conceiving Fire,

Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,

And leave a singed bottom all involv'd

With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,

Both glorying to have scap't the Stygian flood

As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength,

Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

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

Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat

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

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he

Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid

What shall be right: fardest from him is best

Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream

Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields

Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrours, hail

Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell

Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings

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

The mind is its own place, and in it self

Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.

What matter where, if I be still the same,

And what I should be, all but less then he

Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least

We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:

Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce

To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:

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

But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,

Th' associates and copartners of our loss

Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,

And call them not to share with us their part

In this unhappy Mansion, or once more

With rallied Arms to try what may be yet

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

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub

Thus answer'd. Leader of those Armies bright,

Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld,

If once they hear that voyce, thir liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft

In worst extreams, and on the perilous edge

Of battel when itrag'd, in all assaults

Thir surest signal, they will soon resume

New courage and revive, though now they lye

Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire,

As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,

No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend

Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield

Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,

Behind him cast; the broad circumference

Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb

Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views

At Ev'ning from the top of Fesole,

Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands,

Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.

His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast

Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,

He walkt with to support uneasie steps

Over the burning Marle, not like those steps

On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime

Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;

Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach

Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd

His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't

Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks

In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades

High overarch'timbowr; or scatterd sedge

Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd

Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew

Busirus and his Memphian Chivalry,

While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd

The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld

From the safe shore thir floating Carkases

And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown

Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,

Under amazement of thir hideous change.

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

Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates

Warriers, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,

If such astonishment as this can sieze

Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place

After the toyl of Battel to repose

Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find

To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n?

Or in this abject posture have ye sworn

To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds

Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood

With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon

His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern

Th' advantage, and descending tread us down

Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts

Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.

Awake, arise, or be for everfall'n.

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung

Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch

On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,

Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.

Nor did they not perceave the evil plight

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

Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd

Innumerable. As when the potent Rod

Of Amrams Son in Egypts evill day

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

Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern Wind,

That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh hung

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

So numberless were those bad Angels seen

Hovering on wind under the Cope of Hell

'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;

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

Of thir great Sultan waving to direct

Thir course, in even ballance down they light

On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;

A multitude, like which the populous North

Pour'd never from her frozen loyns, to pass

Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous Sons

Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread

Beneath Gibralter to the Lybian sands.

Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band

The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood

Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms

Excelling human, Princely Dignities,

And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones;

Though of thir Names in heav'nly Records now

Be no memorial blotted out and ras'd

By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.

Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve

Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth,

Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man,

By falsities and lyes the greatest part

Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake

God thir Creator, and th' invisible

Glory of him that made them, to transform

Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd

With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,

And Devils to adore for Deities:

Then were they known to men by various Names,

And various Idols through the Heathen World.

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

Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery Couch,

At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth

Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,

While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof?

The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell

Roaming to seek thir prey on earth, durst fix

Thir Seats long after next the Seat of God,

Thir Altars by his Altar, Gods ador'd

Among the Nations round, and durst abide

Jehovah thundring out of Sion, thron'd

Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd

Within his Sanctuary it selfthir Shrines,

Abominations; and with cursed things

His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd,

And with thir darkness durst affront his light.

First Moloch, horrid King besmear'd with blood

Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,

Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud

Thirchildrens cries unheard, that past through fire

To his grim Idol. Him the Ammonite

Worshipt in Rabba and her watry Plain,

In Argob and in Basan, to the stream

Of utmost Arnon. Not content with such

Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart

Of Solomon he led by fraud to build

His Temple right against the Temple of God

On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove

The pleasant Vally of Hinnom, Tophet thence

And black Gehenna call'd, the Type of Hell.

Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moabs Sons,

From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild

Of Southmost Abarim; in Hesebon

And Heronaim, Seons Realm, beyond

The flowry Dale of Sibma clad with Vines,

And Eleale to th' Asphaltick Pool.

Peor his other Name, when he entic'd

Israel in Sittim on thir march from Nile

To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.

Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd

Even to that Hill of scandal, but the Grove

Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;

Till good Josiah drove them hence to Hell.

With these cam they, who from the bordring flood

Of old Euphrates to the Brook that parts

Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names

Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,

These Feminine. For Spirits when they please

Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft

And uncompounded is thir Essence pure,

Nor ti'd or manacl'd with joynt or limb,

Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,

Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose

Dilated or condens't, bright or obscure,

Can execute thir aerie purposes,

And works of love or enmity fulfill.

For those the Race of Israel oft forsook

Thir living strength, and unfrequented left

His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down

To bestial Gods; for which thir heads as low

Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear

Of despicable foes. With these in troop

Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd

Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns;

To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon

Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs,

In Sion also not unsung, where stood

Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built

By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,

Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell

To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,

Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd

The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate

In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,

While smooth Adonis from his native Rock

Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood

Of Thammuz yearly wounded; the Love-tale

Infected Sions daughters with like heat,

Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch

Ezekial saw, when by the Vision led

His eye survay'd the dark Idolatries

Of alienated Judah. Next came one

Who mourn'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark

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

In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,

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

Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man

And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high

Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast

Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon

And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.

Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful Seat

Was fair Damascus, on the fertil Banks

Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.

He also against the house of God was bold:

A Leper once he lost and gain'd a King,

Ahaz his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew

Gods Altar to disparage and displace

For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn

His odious offrings, and adore the Gods

Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear'd

A crew who under Names of old Renown,

Osiris, Isis, Orus and thir Train

With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd

Fanatic Egypt and her Priests, to seek

Thirwandring Gods Disguis'd in brutish forms

Rather then human. Nor did Israel scape

Th' infection when thirborrow'd Gold compos'd

The Calf in Oreb: and the Rebel King

Doubl'd that sin in Bethel and in Dan,

Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox,

Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass'd

From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke

Both her first born and all her bleating Gods

Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd

Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love

Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood

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

In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest

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

With lust and violence the house of God.

In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns

And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse

Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,

And injury and outrage: And when Night

Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons

Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.

Witness the Streets of Sodom, and that night

In Gibeah, when the hospitable door

Expos'd a Matron to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;

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

Th' Ionian Gods, of Javans issue held

Gods, yet confest later then Heav'n and Earth

Thir boasted Parents; Titan Heav'ns first born

With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd

By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove

His own and Rhea's Son like measure found;

So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Creet

And Ida known, thence on the Snowy top

Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle Air

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

Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds

Of Doric Land; or who with Saturn old

Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian Fields,

And ore the Celtic roam'd the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks

Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd

Obscure some glimps of joy, to have found thir chief

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost

In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast

Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride

Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd

Thirfanting courage, and dispel'dthir fears.

Then strait commands that at the warlike sound

Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard

His mighty Standard; that proud honourclaim'd

Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall:

Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld

Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't

Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind

With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,

Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while

Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:

At which the universal Host upsent

A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond

Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night.

All in a moment through the gloom were seen

Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air

With Orient Colours waving: with them rose

A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms

Appear'd, and serried Shields in thick array

Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move

In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood

Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd

To hight of noblest temper Hero's old

Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage

Deliberate valourbreath'd, firm and unmov'd

With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,

Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage

With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and chase

Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain

From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they

Breathing united force with fixed thought

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

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

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

Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise

Of Warriers old with order'd Spear and Shield,

Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief

Had to impose: He through the armed Files

Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse

The whole Battalion views, thir order due,

Thir visages and stature as of Gods,

Thir number last he summs. And now his heart

Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength

Glories: For never since created man,

Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these

Could merit more then that small infantry

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

Of Phlegra with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd

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

Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds

In Fable or Romance of Uthers Sons

Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;

And all who since Baptiz'd or Infidel

Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,

Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond

Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore

When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell

By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond

Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd

Thir dread commander: he above the rest

In shape and gesture proudly eminent

Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost

All her Original brightness, nor appear'd

Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess

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

Looks through the Horizontal misty Air

Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon

In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds

On half the Nations, and with fear of change

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

Above them all th' Arch Angel; but his face

Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care

Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes

Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride

Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast

Signs of remorse and passion to behold

The fellows of his crime, the followers rather

(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd

For ever now to have thir lot in pain,

Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't

Of Heav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung

For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood,

Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire

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

With singed top thir stately growth though bare

Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar'd

To speak; whereat thirdoubl'd Ranks they bend

From wing to wing, and half enclose him round

With all his Peers: attention held them mute.

Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spight of scorn,

Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last

Words interwove with sighs found out thir way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers

Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife

Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,

As this place testifies, and this dire change

Hateful to utter: but what power of mind

Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth

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

How such united force of Gods, how such

As stood like these, could ever know repulse?

For who can yet beleeve, though after loss,

That all these puissant Legions, whose exile

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

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

For mee be witness all the Host of Heav'n,

If counsels different, or danger shun'd

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

Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure

Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,

Consent or custome, and his Regal State

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

Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.

Henceforth his might we know, and know our own

So as not either to provoke, or dread

New warr, provok't; our better part remains

To work in close design, by fraud or guile

What force effected not: that he no less

At length from us may find, who overcomes

By force, hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife

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

Intended to create, and therein plant

A generation, whom his choice regard

Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:

Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps

Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:

For this Infernal Pit shall never hold

Caelestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyss

Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts

Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,

For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr

Open or understood must be resolv'd.

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

Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs

Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze

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

Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped A

rms

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

Hurling defiance toward the Vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far whose griesly top

Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire

Shon with a glossiescurff, undoubted sign

That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,

The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed

A numerous Brigadhasten'd. As when Bands

Of Pioners with Spade and Pickax arm'd

Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,

Or cast a Rampart. Mammon led them on,

Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell

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

Were always downward bent, admiring more

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

Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd

In vision beatific: by him first

Men also, and by his suggestion taught

Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands

Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth

For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew

Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound

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

That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best

Deserve the precious bane. And here let those

Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ringtell

Of Babel, and the works of Memphian Kings

Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame,

And Strength and Art are easily out-done

By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour

What in an age they with incessant toyle

And hands innumerable scarce perform.

Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd

That underneath had veins of liquid fire

Sluc'd from the Lake, a second multitude

With wond'rous Art found out the massie Ore,

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

A third as soon had form'd within the ground

A various mould, and from the boyling cells

By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,

As in an Organ from one blast of wind

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

Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge

Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound

Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,

Built like a Temple, where Pilasters round

Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid

With Golden Architrave; nor did there want

Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n,

The Roof was fretted Gold. Not Babilon,

Nor great Alcairo such magnificence

Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine

Belus or Serapis thir Gods, or seat

Thir Kings, when Aegypt with Assyria strove

In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile

Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores

Op'ningthir brazen foulds discover wide

Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth

And level pavement: from the arched roof

Pendant by suttle Magic many a row

Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed

With Naphtha and Asphaltus yeilded light

As from a sky. The hasty multitude

Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise

And some the Architect: his hand was known

In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,

Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence,

And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King

Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,

Each in his Hierarchie, the Orders bright.

Nor was his name unheard or unador'd

In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land

Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell

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

Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements; from Morn

To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,

A Summers day; and with the setting Sun

Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,

On Lemnos th' Aegaean Ile: thus they relate,

Erring; for he with this rebellious rout

Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now

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

By all his Engins, but was headlong sent

With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Mean while the winged Haralds by command

Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony

And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim

A solemn Councel forthwith to be held

At Pandaemonium, the high Capital

Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd

From every Band and squared Regiment

By place or choice the worthiest; they anon

With hunderds and with thousands trooping came

Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates

And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall

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

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

Defi'd the best of Panim chivalry

To mortal combat or carreer with Lance)

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

Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees

In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,

Pour forth thir populous youth about the Hive

In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers

Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,

The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,

New rub'd with Baum, expatiate and confer

Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd

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

Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd

In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons

Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room

Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race

Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faerie Elves,

Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side

Or Fountain some belated Peasant sees,

Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon

Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth

Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth and dance

Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;

At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.

Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms

Reduc'dthir shapes immense, and were at large,

Though without number still amidst the Hall

Of that infernal Court. But far within

And in thir own dimensions like themselves

The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim

In close recess and secret conclave sat

A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat's,

Frequent and full. After short silence then

And summons read, the great consult began.

Unit -5

Explanation and Summary

Lines 1 -25:

It is impossible to fully comprehend Milton's intentions when he wrote Paradise Lost without first gaining an understanding of the poem's initial verses. His first step is to make a formal request to the "Heav'nly Muse," in the hopes of receiving divine inspiration. In spite of the fact that it serves a more profound spiritual purpose, Milton's "Muse" is a representation of the traditional muse that epic poets call. Instead of the pagan Muses that are associated with ancient mythology, he refers to the Muse as "that Spirit" that inspired the prophets and holy persons in the Bible. This suggests that the Muse was inspired by divine inspiration.

The purpose of the epic is articulated by him in the first line, which is to justify the methods in which God interacts with humans. This is an illustration of Milton's principal purpose, which was to shed light on the existence of evil in a cosmos that was created by a creator who was both all-powerful and all-compassionate. A number of subjects, including humanity's struggle, its fall from grace, and the consequences of disobedience, will be investigated in the poem. Milton is not only recounting the rebellion of Satan and the fall of Adam and Eve, but he is also making an effort to explain the reasoning behind the divine administration's decision to permit such a tragedy to occur.

Within the first quarter of a hundred lines, Milton makes a reference to his desire to write an epic that is on par with the masterpieces that Homer and Virgil have created. Using language that is formal, solemn, and lofty, the author creates the atmosphere for an epic that deals with important philosophical and religious topics. In addition to presenting the concept of humanity's original disobedience and the repercussions of tasting the forbidden fruit, he makes a reference to the "fall" of Satan, which has already taken place. Milton emphasises the magnitude of the event by depicting it as a cosmic uprising that will have repercussions that will continue forever through his writing.

Throughout the entirety of the epic, the invocation of Milton and the reference of the "fatal flaw" contribute to the creation of an atmosphere that is pervasively melancholy and inescapable. The term "fatal flaw" has been used to refer to the deterioration in status of both Satan and humanity, highlighting the fact that the consequences of disobeying the will of God will continue to reverberate throughout eternity.

There are several fundamental purposes that are performed by the first 25 lines of Paradise Lost. These lines offer the broad theological and philosophical principles of the poem, establish the tone of the epic, and directly state Milton's desire to explain the ways in which God relates to humans. An ambitious story that intends to investigate important questions like sin, free will, and divine justice has begun with an invocation to the Muse, which marks the beginning of the story.

Lines 26 - 50:"

Milton continues his invocation by describing the "Heav'nly Muse" and begging for assistance in presenting the story of Satan's rebellion in this section of the poem. The grand epic tradition is invoked, and a reference is made to the "Fall of Man," which serves as the backdrop for the cosmic conflict between good and evil. Milton knows that this narrative has been recounted previously—biblical traditions of Satan's fall and humanity's subsequent downfall—but he wishes to portray it in a manner that delves into the profound philosophical and theological repercussions of these occurrences.

The horrific enormity of the uprising in Heaven was brought out by Milton through the use of lofty and strong diction all throughout the poem. The revolt that is taking place transcends the sphere of the earth and represents a cosmic and eternal war that will determine the fate of humanity. Milton makes a precise presentation of the idea that

Satan, who was originally the most powerful archangel, was exiled from Heaven and became the leader of a rebellious organisation. Milton offers the framework for studying Satan's motivations and the consequences of his actions, and his arrogance and aspirations were the factors that led to his downfall.

Lines 51 - 75:

There is further context provided by Milton regarding Satan's rebellion. He paints a picture of Satan's former glory in heaven, when he was the only person behind God in terms of importance. Because of his arrogance and his desire to model himself after God, he disobeyed the authority of the divine. In an effort to seize God's position, Satan and those who followed him engaged in a fight in heaven. This uprising, on the other hand, was not at all successful. As a result of the victory of the angelic army, which was led by the Archangel Michael, Satan and his followers were punished by being cast into Hell.

Milton emphasises the severity of the uprising by describing it as a battle of cosmic dimensions. He describes Satan's troops as fighting in "dire" warfare against the forces of the heavens or the universe. The depiction of the conflict is striking and powerful, with Satan's army being "thrown headlong in flames" into Hell as a result of their loss. A demonstration of the futility of challenging God's absolute authority is provided by the uprising and the subsequent failure of the uprising.

Lines 76 - 100:

This episode introduces Satan and his disciples who have fallen from grace after they awaken in Hell after being defeated during the previous segment. For the purpose of illustrating the great devastation that Satan and all who follow him go through, Milton paints a picture of the desolate and hellish landscape that is Hell. Despite the fact that he has been brought down, Satan continues to be stubborn and refuses to accept his punishment. Through speech that is both fervent and defiant, he addresses his

supporters, thereby revitalising them. He steadfastly refuses to repent and declares that he would rather rule in Hell than serve in Heaven. He is adamant about this.

In this passage, Milton contrasts the audacity of Satan with the agony of those who follow him. In spite of the fact that they are steeped in great despair, Satan's powerful words and leadership inspire them to stand up once more and continue their rebellion through perseverance. The beginning of Satan's role as the leader of the fallen angels, who are now facing eternal damnation but continue to be steadfast in their defiance, is indicated by this fact.

Lline 101 - 125:

At the same time that he addresses his followers with a mixture of pride, rage, and defiance, Satan proceeds with his talk. It is made quite clear that he will not surrender to the will of God, despite the fact that they have been condemned to Hell. The famous statement made by Satan, "Better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven," is an example of his refusal to submit to authority. He maintains that the fallen angels are neither weak nor defeated, but rather will gain strength by their rebellion. He says this because they are not weak or defeated.

Throughout the talk, Satan's complex personality is brought to light. In spite of the fact that he displays pride, arrogance, and rage, there is a profound nobility in the fact that he is unwilling to give in. Although Milton's portrayal of Satan makes him a tragic character, whose hubris ultimately leads to his destruction, he continues to be steadfast in his refusal to acknowledge the existence of divine justice.

126- 150:

At the same time that Milton goes into his feelings of hate and acrimony, Satan continues his impassioned oration. Satan contemplates his "glorious" past in Heaven and compares it to his current state in Hell. He does this by comparing their histories. He expresses his outrage at the decree that God made to exile him, claiming that his downfall is not a matter of justice but rather a consequence of envy and tyranny. He says that his downfall is a consequence of both of these things. The inability of Satan to acknowledge

his own responsibility for the rebellion is illustrative of his arrogance and his inability to demonstrate repentance.

The concept of "Hell" is presented by Milton not just as a place where one can experience physical agony, but also as a mental state. The internal turmoil, bitterness, and rebellion that Satan experiences creates a psychological Hell for him, in which his pain manifests itself in both a physical and a mental sense. It is essential to have this perspective on Hell in order to have a complete understanding of the concept of eternal punishment. This is because Satan's inability to repent ensures that his agony will be unending and self-imposed.

Lines 151 - 175

As a result of Satan's speech, the fallen angels demonstrate that they are willing to accompany him and continue to participate in the uprising. But despite the fact that they are aware of their current situation in Hell, they refuse to submit to God's authority. Milton highlights the united determination of Satan and his followers, who, despite their fallen position, continue to maintain their unity of defiance and pride until the very end. Under this section, Satan's leadership qualities become more and more apparent, as he is able to successfully rally his minions even under the most hopeless of circumstances. In spite of the suffering they are experiencing, the fallen angels share his determination to disobey the order of God. The groundwork for Satan's continuous position as a leader of revolt is laid by this instance of solidarity and resolution that took place in Hell.

Lines 176 - 200:

Milton's portrayal of Satan and the fallen angels highlights the complexity of their rebellion by offering a glimpse into their lives. Despite the fact that Satan is portrayed as a sad figure whose downfall is the result of his hubris and his refusal to submit to the will of God, he is also portrayed as a charismatic leader who is capable of inspiring his followers even while they are in Hell. Both Satan's argument that he and his followers

are not truly defeated and his denial of his own responsibility are examples of the hubris and obstinacy that Satan possesses.

Milton made advantage of Satan's talk in order to stimulate profound philosophical questions into the nature of evil, divine justice, and free will. The reason that Satan disobeys God is because he is convinced that God's authority is unjust. However, this conviction is fundamentally rooted in Satan's own pride and his refusal to admit his own responsibility for the rebellion. Milton provokes the reader to contemplate the consequences of pride and rebellion, which are not only applicable to Satan but also to humanity as a whole through his writing.

Lines 201 - 225

The fallen angels are led by Satan to a lake of fire that is located in Hell. A feeling of agony and hopelessness is evoked by the presence of the image of fire and darkness that predominates. Due to the fact that Satan is adamant about his intention to "seek revenge" and question divine authority, this particular instance highlights Satan's denial of the power that God possesses. Although they are in excruciating pain, the fallen angels continue to be unwaveringly loyal to Satan and refuse to submit to God's authority.

Milton's depiction of Hell as a world of psychological misery highlights the key idea that Satan's torment covers not only physical pain but also discomfort on a spiritual and emotional level as well. The decision of the fallen angels to continue their rebellion brings to light the primary issue of the poem, which is the everlasting essence of divine justice and the consequences that result from disobeying divine authority.

Lines 226 to 250

After discussing Satan and the fallen angels, Milton moves on to discuss the wider cosmic repercussions of their rebellion. The "depths of Hell," which are a location where the rebellious angels are imprisoned for their rebellion, are the subject

of discussion in this section of the story. Even though they are suffering from agony and desolation, Satan and those who follow him continue to be defiant and proud of themselves. The stark contrast between their current suffering and the grandeur they formerly had in heaven is striking, and it serves to emphasize the tragic nature of their descent.

Milton articulates the concept of divine justice, implying that Satan and those who follow him have brought upon themselves the consequences of their actions by their own choices. Despite the fact that divine justice cannot be avoided, the fallen angels are responsible for their own demise, which highlights the concept of free will. A consequence of their disobedience is the penalty that they will receive.

Lines 251 - 275

It is in the final words of Book 1 that Satan and his followers reflect on the situation in which they find themselves. In spite of the fact that he is incarcerated in Hell and is subjected to unending suffering, Satan continues to plot defiance against God. In his statement, he expresses a desire for vengeance and declares that he will invent a technique to poison humanity, which is God's creation. The basis for Satan's future plots is laid by his steadfast refusal to repent and his constant disobedience of God's will.

Milton brings Book 1 to a close by introducing the basic conflict of the poem, which is Satan's desire to corrupt mankind, which is God's new creation made by God. In spite of the fact that his story is not yet over, it is unquestionable that Satan has been destroyed. The story will continue to progress despite the fact that he and his followers continue to be unyielding and unrepentant, and their rebellion will continue.

Character Analysis

SATAN

Justify Satan as a Hero and not a villain in Milton's Paradise Lost-Books-1

Satan Character Analysis

Some readers consider Satan to be the hero, or protagonist, of the story, because he struggles to overcome his own doubts and weaknesses and accomplishes his goal of corrupting humankind. This goal, however, is evil, and Adam and Eve are the moral

heroes at the end of the story, as they help to begin humankind's slow process of redemption and salvation. Satan is far from being the story's object of admiration, as most heroes are. Nor does it make sense for readers to celebrate or emulate him, as they might with a true hero. Yet there are many compelling qualities to his character that make him intriguing to readers.

One source of Satan's fascination for us is that he is an extremely complex and subtle character. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, for Milton to make perfect, infallible characters such as God the Father, God the Son, and the angels as interesting to read about as the flawed characters, such as Satan, Adam, and Eve. Satan, moreover, strikes a grand and majestic figure, apparently unafraid of being damned eternally, and uncowed by such terrifying figures as Chaos or Death. Many readers have argued that Milton deliberately makes Satan seem heroic and appealing early in the poem to draw us into sympathizing with him against our will, so that we may see how seductive evil is and learn to be more vigilant in resisting its appeal.

Milton devotes much of the poem's early books to developing Satan's character. Satan's greatest fault is his pride. He casts himself as an innocent victim, overlooked for an important promotion. But his ability to think so selfishly in Heaven, where all angels are equal and loved and happy, is surprising. His confidence in thinking that he could ever overthrow God displays tremendous vanity and pride. When Satan shares his pain and alienation as he reaches Earth in Book IV, we may feel somewhat sympathetic to him or even identify with him. But Satan continues to devote himself to evil. Every speech he gives is fraudulent and every story he tells is a lie. He works diligently to trick his fellow devils in Hell by having Beelzebub present Satan's own plan of action.

Satan as the Protagonist in Paradise Lost, Book 1

John Milton's Paradise Lost offers a notably intricate and captivating depiction of the literary character Satan. Traditionally seen as the personification of evil in Christian theology, Milton's Satan appears in Book 1 as a heroic figure—charismatic, bold, and steadfast in his insurrection against divine power. Despite his inevitable demise, he has numerous characteristics typical of the classical epic hero: bravery, eloquence,

ambition, and an indomitable resolve. This chapter examines Satan's character in Book 1, his heroic attributes, and his renowned speeches that delineate his role as an anti-hero in the overarching story of Paradise Lost.

Heroic Attributes of Satan

Satan's depiction in Book 1 is profoundly anchored in classical epic traditions, especially resembling heroes such as Achilles or Odysseus. He demonstrates exceptional endurance, leadership, and eloquence when addressing his fallen angels in the infernal depths of Hell.

Resistance Against Oppression

From the beginning, Satan represents the essence of defiance. Instead of succumbing to despair following his defeat in the celestial war, he rouses his forces with unwavering determination. His defiance is embodied in his audacious proclamation:

"Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven."

This is one of Satan's most iconic lines, expressing his preference for power and autonomy, even if it means suffering, rather than submitting to God's rule in Heaven.

Articulation and Conviction

In the first book, Satan's speeches are rich in eloquence and marked by a remarkable level of rhetorical sophistication that captivates the audience. His ability to craft powerful and persuasive arguments is on full display, allowing him to effectively motivate and sway those who follow him, highlighting his prowess as a masterful orator.His discourse with Beelzebub and the other fallen angels revitalizes their hope and strengthens their determination:

"What though we are fallen, we are not cast out."

Satan, with unwavering resolve, confidently takes on the role of the eternal adversary to God, never wavering in his defiance. He cunningly masks his insurrection as a noble cause, cloaking his defiance in the garb of righteousness rather than acknowledging its true nature as an act of pure malevolence.

"What though the field be lost? / All is not lost—the unconquerable will, / And study of revenge, immortal hate, / And courage never to submit or yield."

Resolve and Independence

In contrast to other epic heroes such as Achilles and Odysseus who heavily rely on the gods' favor for their success and protection in battle, Satan from John Milton's "Paradise Lost" exhibits a strikingly different demeanor. Instead of seeking divine intervention, Satan boasts in his independence and self-reliance, proudly asserting his autonomy and unwavering self-sufficiency throughout the epic poem. His most renowned and audacious proclamation occurs when he affirms the influence of the mind in determining one's destiny:

"A mind not to be changed by time or place

The mind in its own place and in itself

Can make a heaven of hell or hell of heaven"

Book 1, Lines 254-255

This philosophical assertion, which effectively highlights his steadfast determination and remarkable ability to bring about change through sheer willpower, provides valuable insight into the essence of his character. In the midst of overwhelming torment, his resolute refusal to yield to any form of divine rule vividly exemplifies his unwavering convictions and unwavering dedication to his personal beliefs. This unyielding resolve amidst adversity not only reinforces his depiction as a tragic hero but also brings to the forefront the profound depth of his internal struggles and the intricate layers of his character that make him so compelling and multifaceted.

The Tragic Paradox: Valour and Arrogance

Notwithstanding his heroic attributes, Satan's character is characterized by an intrinsic dichotomy. His most significant strengths—pride, ambition, and defiance—are concurrently his most pronounced weaknesses. His rejection of divine power is not merely an act of bravery but also a manifestation of hubris. His renowned statement:

"It is better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven." Book 1, Line 263 exemplifies his deadly flaw: he prefers to reign in anguish rather than be dominated in contentment. This unyielding pride reflects the archetypal tragic hero, whose demise is triggered by his failure to compromise or acknowledge his own limitations.

The Heroic but Doomed Model

In Paradise Lost, Book 1, Milton depicts Satan as a multifaceted and intriguing character who, despite his insurrection against divine authority, embodies certain traits typically linked to a hero. His defiance of tyranny, eloquence, and resilience render him an object of admiration. Nevertheless, his arrogance and refusal to yield to a superior authority finally rendered him a tragic hero instead of a triumphant one. By depicting Satan in a large and charismatic manner, Milton encourages readers to contemplate the complexities of free will, ambition, and the repercussions of rebellion. Satan's depiction in Book 1 of Paradise Lost is one of the most compelling and formidable representations in literary history, regardless of whether he is perceived as a heroic figure or the quintessential deceiver.

Satan's character—or our perception of his character—changes significantly from Book I to his final appearance in Book X. In Book I he is a strong, imposing figure with great abilities as a leader and public statesmen, whereas by the poem's end he slinks back to Hell in serpent form. Satan's gradual degradation is dramatized by the sequence of different shapes he assumes. He begins the poem as a just-fallen angel of enormous stature, looks like a comet or meteor as he leaves Hell, then disguises himself as a more humble cherub, then as a cormorant, a toad, and finally a snake. His ability to reason and argue also deteriorates. In Book I, he persuades the devils to agree to his plan. In Book IV, however, he reasons to himself that the Hell he feels inside of him is reason to do more evil. When he returns to Earth again, he believes that Earth is more beautiful than Heaven, and that he may be able to live on Earth after all. Satan, removed from Heaven long enough to forget its unparalleled grandeur, is completely demented, coming to believe in his own lies. He is a picture of incessant intellectual activity without the ability to think morally. Once a powerful angel, he has become blinded to God's grace, forever unable to reconcile his past with his eternal punishment.

Unit -6

MAJOR THEMES IN PARADISE LOST-BOOK1

In Paradise Lost Book 1, John Milton examines the issue of disobedience and its effects, centering on Satan's rebel against God and the subsequent consequences of his fall. The poem commences with an appeal to the Muse, wherein Milton articulates his objective: to elucidate the ways of God to humans. This establishes the framework for a narrative that explores the essence of good and evil, free will, and the repercussions of challenging heavenly power.

The central issue of Book 1 pertains to the essence of disobedience and insurrection. Satan, formerly a prominent angel, challenges God's dominion due to hubris and ambition. His failure to comply leads to his banishment from Heaven, accompanied by the other angels that supported him. Now consigned to Hell, Satan rejects defeat and, rather than repenting, opts to persist in his defiance against God. His renowned assertion, "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven," epitomizes his rebellious disposition, indicating that he prioritises power and independence over compliance and virtue. This incident underscores the detrimental consequences of excessive ego and ambition, as Satan's obstinacy in rejecting divine authority results solely in agony.

Milton illustrates a dichotomy between good and evil by portraying the downfall of Satan and his adherents as an unavoidable result of their decisions. God, as an omniscient and just sovereign, permits Satan to exercise his free will, so underscoring the notion that insurrection results in self-imposed anguish. The fallen angels, formerly exalted entities, are now diminished to anguished souls in Hell, highlighting the repercussions of their insubordination. Instead of accepting accountability, Satan and his adherents persist in rationalizing their conduct, exemplifying the propensity of sinful entities to justify their own demise.

A key theme in Book 1 is the dichotomy between free will and determinism. Satan asserts that his demise resulted from his own volition, rather than divine compulsion, so emphasizing the notion that every being possesses the autonomy to make choices, even if those choices culminate in destruction. Milton posits that God, in His boundless

wisdom, anticipated this revolt and permitted its occurrence, prompting enquiries on the equilibrium between divine omniscience and human (or angelic) agency.

The depiction of Satan in Book 1 undermines conventional concepts of heroism. Initially, he displays traits of a quintessential epic hero—courage, articulateness, and leadership. His address to the fallen angels, in which he urges them to rebel against God anew, exemplifies his tenacity and capacity to motivate. Nonetheless, his heroism is fundamentally spurious, as his goals stem from arrogance and vengeance rather than justice or virtue. His resolve to persist in his rebellion, despite insurmountable challenges, renders him a compelling figure, yet his activities result solely in additional suffering.

Milton constructs a robust theological and philosophical foundation that underlies the entire epic through these themes. Book 1 narrates Satan's fall while also examining profound themes of hubris, justice, free choice, and the essence of evil. By depicting Satan as a multifaceted and fascinating character, Milton compels the reader to confront the ramifications of disobedience and the perpetual conflict between good and evil.

SURRENDERING TO THE DIVINE:

Paradise Lost begins with a declaration that the primary theme of the poem is "Man's first Disobedience." This statement is made in several verses. Milton narrates the tale of Adam and Eve's insubordination, elucidates the circumstances and motivations behind it, and situates the narrative within the greater context of Satan's rebellion and Jesus' resurrection. Raphael reveals to Adam the disobedience of Satan in order to present him with a comprehensive comprehension of the danger that is posed by both Satan and the disobedience of humanity. In Paradise Lost, two different moral trajectories are depicted as a result of disobedience: the decline into increasing sin and degradation, which is exemplified by Satan, and the trip to redemption, which is personified by Adam and Eve.

In contrast to Satan, who is the first of all God's creations to rebel against him, Adam and Eve were the first people to disobey God. His determination to revolt is entirely self-generated; he was neither affected nor inflamed by the actions of other people around him. Furthermore, the fact that he persists in disobeying God as he is being cast into Hell ensures that God will not forgive him for his actions. On the other hand,

Adam and Eve make the decision to seek absolution and make amends for their sins. When compared to Satan, Adam and Eve are aware that their disobedience to God will be made up for via the effort of subsequent generations on Earth. Due to the revelations that are found in Books XI and XII, it is apparent that this path is the correct decision. These revelations demonstrate that faithfulness to God, despite innumerable transgressions, can culminate in the rescue of humanity.

The Organization of the Universe in a Hierarchical Structure Alongside its examination of obedience, Paradise Lost also delves deeply into the concept of hierarchy. A hierarchical system that is predicated on proximity to God and His grace is illustrated by the configuration of the universe, which consists of Heaven on top, Hell on the bottom, and Earth placed in the middle. As a consequence of this spatial order, a social hierarchy is established, which includes angels, people, animals, and devils. The Son places himself in the closest proximity to God, followed by the archangels and cherubs. Adam and Eve, along with the creatures that inhabit Earth, come before Satan and the other fallen angels, who come in last place. Respecting this hierarchy is what it means to adhere to God.

Satan does not acknowledge the Son as his superior, so posing a challenge to the heavenly system that God has established. During the time that the angels who belong to Satan's group are revolting, they have the goal of defeating God and, as a result, destroying what they consider to be an unjust order in Heaven. Following the victory of the Son and the angels who are virtuous over the angels who are disobedient, the latter are sentenced to exile at a far location from Heaven. After some time has passed, Satan asserts that they are able to create their own hierarchy within Hell; nonetheless, they continue to be subject to the overarching system that God has established, in which they are at the lowest level. Satan continues to challenge God and his hierarchy while simultaneously working to ruin humankind.

The insubordination of humanity, on the other hand, produces a perversion of the divine hierarchy. Before the fall, Adam and Eve honour the visiting angels with the respect and honour that they deserve because of their close relationship with God. Eve, on the other hand, accepts the subservient role that has been assigned to her within the context of her marriage. In light of the fact that Eve was designed to serve both God and him, both God and Raphael convey to Adam the message that she is

slightly further apart from the grace of God than Adam is. After Eve has succeeded in persuading Adam to let her work independently, she confronts him, who is her superior, and he gives in to her, who is his subordinate. Again, when Adam eats the apple, he is wilfully disobeying God by giving in to Eve and his baser instincts rather than sticking to divine authority and rationality. This is the second time that Adam has done this intentional transgression against God. In Books XI and XII, Adam has visions that demonstrate additional instances of disobedience to God and the cosmic order. These visions also indicate that the sacrifice of the Son would ultimately restore this arrangement.

When Adam sees the vision of Christ's deliverance of humanity in Book XII, he describes his own transgression as a felix culpa, which literally translates to "happy fault." This implies that the fall of people, despite the fact that it is initially viewed as a complete calamity, ultimately results in positive outcomes. Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, God is able to exhibit His mercy and moderation in the punishments that He imposes on them, as well as His unending providence for all of humanity. This manifestation of love and compassion, which was given onto humanity through the Son, is therefore a gift to humanity. It is now necessary for humanity to go through the experience of pain and mortality; yet, individuals have the opportunity to experience compassion, redemption, and grace in ways that would have been unreachable if they had not rebelled against God. In spite of the fact that humanity has lost favour, it is still possible for individuals to gain redemption and salvation by maintaining a firm dedication and loyalty to God.

The redemption of humanity, which is accomplished by the sacrifice and resurrection of the Son, has the ability to restore humanity to its initial state. The essence of the matter is that virtue will emerge from sin and mortality, which will finally lead to the reintegration of mankind. The fact that this beneficial conclusion occurred lends credence to God's reasoning and sheds light on His comprehensive plan for human beings.

PARADISE LOST-BOOK-1 AS AN EPIC

An epic is an extensive narrative poetry that narrates the heroic exploits of a principal character or collective, typically with significant and broad consequences. These poems are typically composed in a formal, elevated manner and aim to depict the beliefs,

customs, and ideals of a specific culture. In English literature, epics frequently narrate tales of national or historical significance, with the protagonists confronting formidable challenges or quests.

The epic genre originated in ancient societies, particularly within Greek, Roman, and Mesopotamian traditions, exemplified by works such as Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid, and the Epic of Gilgamesh. This genre evolved over time, adapting to the cultural and philosophical circumstances of different literary periods, such as the Renaissance, exemplified by John Milton's Paradise Lost.

Heroic Protagonist:

The protagonist of an epic is typically a hero of significant stature, valour, and skill, capable of executing remarkable deeds. The hero's deeds frequently determine the destiny of a nation, kingdom, or the world at large. The hero is generally depicted with virtuous attributes, however they may also possess imperfections or encounter ethical quandaries that render their path intricate and relatable. In Paradise Lost, Satan assumes the role of the tragic hero, with his insurrection and defiance against God catalysing the tale.

Majestic, Lofty Aesthetic:

Epics are generally written in a formal and lofty style of language, specifically designed to elevate the richness of their content. This often involves the strategic use of intricate sentence structures, elaborate vocabulary, and vivid imagery to emphasize the grandiosity inherent in epic narratives. For instance, in English epics, blank verse, characterized by unrhymed iambic pentameter, serves as a prominent stylistic feature, contributing significantly to the overall majestic and dignified tone of the work, as exemplified in Milton's enduring classic Paradise Lost.

Supernatural Components:

Epics frequently include deities, supernatural entities, or divine intervention that significantly influence the progression of events. These aspects illustrate the relationship between humanity and transcendent, supernatural forces. In Paradise Lost, celestial beings such as God, Satan, and angels engage with human characters, and their actions profoundly influence the narrative's progression.

Epic Similes and Figurative Language:

Epics are renowned for their elaborate similes, termed epic similes, and other figurative language that engender vivid imagery and parallels. These similes may extend across several lines and are frequently employed to underscore the heroic attributes of persons or the magnitude of events. In Paradise Lost, Milton often employs long metaphors and similes to depict the enormity of Heaven and Hell, or to liken Satan's forces to formidable storms or other potent natural occurrences.

Expedition or Pursuit:

Numerous epics encompass a journey or mission that the hero is compelled to embark upon. This journey is frequently both physical (to a far location or unfamiliar domain) and moral/spiritual (entailing the hero's personal development or conflict). Although Paradise Lost does not conform to a conventional "journey" as a physical expedition, Satan's odyssey through Hell and his ensuing temptation of Adam and Eve represent journeys of both rebellion and spiritual degradation.

Invocation to the Muse:

A conventional introductory element of numerous classical epics is the invocation of the muse. The poet invokes a muse to inspire and aid in narrating the tale.

In Paradise Lost, Milton commences with an invocation to the "Heav'nly Muse" for assistance in narrating the tale of humanity's fall and to rationalise God's actions to mankind.

Official Discourse and Prolonged Conversations:

Characters in epics frequently articulate formal speeches that disclose their inner ideas, motivations, and emotions. These speeches frequently transpire during pivotal points of the narrative, highlighting the speaker's heroic attributes. Satan's words in Paradise Lost are remarkably potent and articulate, especially his renowned assertion: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" (Book 1, Line 263).

Thematic Concentration on Good vs Evil:

Epics frequently centre on themes of ethical conflict, especially the struggle between good and evil. The hero generally symbolises virtue, whereas antagonists (sometimes supernatural entities like as monsters or tyrants) personify malevolence.In Paradise Lost, the primary fight between God and Satan embodies this struggle, with Satan epitomising rebellion, pride, and malevolence, whereas God signifies justice, order, and virtue.

The Function of Destiny and Autonomy:

Epics often explore themes of fate, autonomy, and divine influence. The hero's actions are frequently shaped by fate, divine intervention, or personal choices, which drive the progression of the narrative. Paradise Lost thoroughly examines the concept of free will, particularly in relation to Satan's insurrection and humanity's downfall. The concept of free will is essential for comprehending the religious ramifications of the poetry.

Dimensions and Composition:

Epics are generally extensive and segmented into various sections or volumes. These books frequently address many phases of the narrative, culminating in a climactic finale.

Paradise Lost comprises twelve books, each exploring a distinct facet of the biblical narrative concerning the Fall of Man.

The epic is a genre characterised by its formal structure, expansive scope, and deep examination of universal themes including heroism, fate, divine justice, and the essence of good and evil. In English literature, epics such as Milton's Paradise Lost, Beowulf, and Spenser's The Faerie Queene perpetuate the epic tradition from ancient antiquity, employing an elevated language and supernatural aspects to address the intricate themes of their eras. While traditional epics typically emphasise physical confrontations and heroic endeavours, Milton's Paradise Lost presents a more introspective examination of theological and philosophical disputes, showcasing his distinctive fusion of epic tradition with Christian teaching.

Epic Conflict and Battle: Grand conflicts, both psychological and physical, that have a big impact on the characters engaged are common in classical epics. The initial

book of Paradise Lost establishes the framework for the monumental cosmic conflict between Heaven and Hell, although the confrontation itself is not illustrated until subsequent sections of the poem. Book 1 delineates the consequences of the celestial war—the insurrection orchestrated by Satan and his adherents, their subsequent defeat, and their expulsion from Heaven.

The fallen angels, following their banishment from Heaven, are portrayed as residing "in the bottomless deep" (Book 1, Line 44), a chaotic and stormy realm that metaphorically symbolises their internal strife. The "battle" described is mostly a psychological and spiritual conflict; the angels' rebellion against God is rooted not in physicality but in their pride and refusal to acknowledge the divine rule.

When Satan summons his adherents, he incites them to rebel against divine authority; nonetheless, the external conflict between Heaven and Hell yields to interior struggles of the soul, as the fallen angels grapple with their destiny and their animosity towards God. This internal conflict reflects the psychological struggles encountered by great epic heroes, such Achilles or Odysseus, yet possesses a uniquely Christian and philosophical dimension.

In Book 1 of Paradise Lost, John Milton skilfully utilises several patterns of the epic genre, while concurrently integrating these aspects with Christian theology and philosophy. Milton constructs an epic that adheres to classical traditions through his appeal to the muse, exalted diction, the tragic heroism of Satan, divine intervention, and portrayal of cosmic war, while simultaneously providing a profound examination of pride, free will, and divine justice. The epic components enhance the narrative, rendering Paradise Lost a remarkable fusion of literary tradition and theological exploration.

1.Who is the leader of the fallen angels in Paradise Lost?

a) Adam b) Satan c) Gabriel d) Beelzebub

Answer:a) Adam

2. Where are Satan and his followers cast down to at the beginning of Paradise Lost?

a) Hell b) Earth c) The Garden of Eden d) Heaven

Answer: a) Hell

3. What is Satan's main goal in Paradise Lost?

a) To seek revenge against God b) To deceive Adam and Eve c) To regain his place in Heaven d) To destroy the Earth

Answer:a) To seek revenge against God

4. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of Satan in Book 1 of Paradise Lost?

a) Vengeful b) Noble c) Defiant d) Submissive

Answer:d) Submissive

5. Who is the first to speak in Book 1 of Paradise Lost?

a) Satan b) Beelzebub c) God d) The narrator

Answer: a)Satan

Short answer question

1. Who does Milton invoke before the beginning of the epic poem?

Answer: Milton invokes the God of Muse before beginning the poem.

2. What secret weapon does God use to defeat Satan?

Answer: God uses thunder as the secret weapon to defeat Satan.

3. What is the atmosphere of the place where Satan wakes up after long slumber?

Answer: Satan wakes up in a place that has burning sulphur and the place was called chaos.

4. How is Satan compared in the poem?

Answer: Satan is compared as a Leviathan.

5. What is the name of Satan's palace?

Answer: Satan's palace is called 'Pandemonium".

Short answer types

1. What is the primary theme of Book 1 of Paradise Lost?

Answer:The primary focus of Book 1 is the downfall of Satan and his adherents following their unsuccessful insurrection against God. Milton examines topics of insubordination, aspiration, autonomy, and divine retribution. The poem commences with Satan and his fallen angels in Hell, contemplating their loss yet steadfastly refusing to yield. Satan's renowned assertion, "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven," underscores his arrogance and rebellion. The novel establishes the foundation for the monumental struggle between good and evil, depicting Satan as both a sad and astute character.

2. In what manner does Milton portray Satan in Book 1?

Answer: Milton depicts Satan as a charismatic and formidable leader, whose hubris and ambition precipitated his demise. He is shown as a sad man, with immense tenacity and resolve despite his failure. His orations galvanise the fallen angels, showcasing his capacity to influence and mobilise his adherents. His refusal to repent and his proclamation of perpetual conflict against God underscore his hubris. Milton's depiction of Satan is intricate, rendering him both commendable for his tenacity and perilous due to his duplicitous character.

3. What is the importance of Hell's depiction in Book 1?

Answer:Milton depicts Hell as a realm of anguish, replete with fires that emit no illumination, symbolising desolation and perpetual torture. This presents a stark contrast to the splendour of Heaven, underscoring the repercussions of defiance

against God. The phrase "darkness visible" underscores the duality inherent in suffering and retribution. The expansive and barren terrain reflects the fallen angels' despair. Nonetheless, Satan and his adherents endeavour to convert Hell into their new dominion, demonstrating their defiance despite their torment.

4. Who are the principal fallen angels presented in Book 1, and what functions do they serve?

Answer: Prominent fallen angels mentioned include Beelzebub, Moloch, Chemos, Belial, and Mammon. Beelzebub, Satan's foremost accomplice, endorses his strategy to perpetuate their insurrection by subterfuge rather than overt conflict. Moloch, a formidable combatant, champions an unrestrained conflict against Heaven. Belial, renowned for his duplicity, advocates for silent acquiescence to save additional anguish. Mammon, fixated on affluence, suggests that they capitalise on Hell and establish their own dominion. Each angel embodies distinct facets of sin and insurrection.

5. What function does the invocation to the Muse serve in Book 1?

Answer:Milton commences Paradise Lost with an invocation to the Muse, specifically the "Heavenly Muse," denoting the Holy Spirit. This adheres to the epic convention of poets pursuing divine inspiration for their creations. Milton seeks direction in narrating the tale of humanity's descent and divine justice. This invocation establishes a solemn and exalted tone for the poem, marking it as a piece of religious and literary importance. Through the invocation of supernatural assistance, Milton underscores that his epic seeks to "justify the ways of God to men."

Key points to remember

1. **The Fall of Satan:** The poem begins with Satan and his followers being cast out of Heaven after their rebellion against God, marking their fall from grace and their new role as fallen angels in Hell.

2. **Satan's Character**: Satan emerges as a charismatic and defiant leader, showcasing his pride, ambition, and desire for revenge against God, which drives much of the action throughout the epic.

3. **The Theme of Rebellion:** Book 1 emphasizes the consequences of rebellion against divine authority. Satan's refusal to submit to God's will reflects the central theme of free will and the consequences of choosing defiance.

4. **The Setting of Hell:** After their fall, Satan and his followers find themselves in Hell, which Milton describes as a dark, fiery, and desolate place of torment, a direct contrast to the beauty and order of Heaven.

5. **Satan's Speech to His Followers:** Satan delivers a stirring speech to rally his fallen angels, expressing their defiance and determination to fight against God, embodying themes of pride, heroism, and revenge.

6. **The Council of Hell:** Satan calls a council in Hell, where he seeks to plot a way to undermine God's plan. This council highlights the disarray and suffering in Hell, contrasting with the order of Heaven.

7. **The Theme of Free Will:** Milton introduces the concept of free will early in the epic, focusing on Satan's choice to rebel and the consequences of exercising free will in opposition to divine authority.

8. **The Battle Between Good and Evil:** Book 1 sets up the epic struggle between good (God) and evil (Satan), establishing the conflict that will unfold throughout the poem.

9. **The Heroic and Tragic Aspects of Satan:** While Satan's actions are clearly evil, Milton portrays him as a tragic and heroic figure, creating a complex character who is both admirable in his resolve and ultimately doomed by his pride and defiance.

10. **Milton's Use of Epic Conventions:** Book 1 follows the conventions of the epic genre, including a grandiose style, invocation to the muse, and a focus on cosmic conflict, establishing the tone and structure for the entire poem

Essay type questions

1.In Book 1 of Paradise Lost, Milton depicts Satan as simultaneously a tragic hero and an antagonist. In what manner does Milton illustrate Satan's descent, and what insights does this provide into his character?

2.Analyse the function of free will in Book 1 of Paradise Lost. In what manner does Milton explore the concept of choice concerning insurrection and divine authority?

3.In what manner does Milton employ classical and biblical allusions in Book 1 of Paradise Lost to augment the thematic intricacy of the epic?

4.Examine the representation of God and the celestial hierarchy in Book 1 of Paradise Lost. In what manner does Milton depict divine justice and order?

5.Examine Milton's employment of epic conventions in Book 1 of Paradise Lost, emphasising his depiction of the conflict between the fallen angels and the celestial forces.

MODULE-III

SIR ROGER AT HOME- JOSEPH ADDISON

(ESSAY)

PICKWICK PAPERS-CHARLES DICKENS

(NOVEL)

Contents

Objective: The objective of this topic Sir Roger at Home by Joseph Addison is to analyze the portrayal of Sir Roger de Coverley as a character who embodies the virtues and flaws of the English country gentleman. It also examines Addison's use of satire and humor to reflect on social norms, manners, and human nature, while exploring themes of simplicity, tradition, and moral integrity in contrast to the complexities of urban life.

Unit--7

Detail Study of *Sir Roger at Home* - Joseph Addison

Having often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country-house,where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please ; dine at his own table, or in my chamber, as I think fit ; sit still, and say nothing, without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields, I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him: by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother; his butler is grey-headed; his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen; and his coachman has the looks of a privy-councillor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog; and in a gray pad, that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure, the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he

coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man, who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense, and some learning, of a very regular life, and obliging conversation: be heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem; so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humourist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are, as it were, tinged by a certain extravagance, which make them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned: and, without staying for my answer, told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table ; for which reason, he desired a particular friend of his at the University, to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. "My friend (says Sir Roger) found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and, though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a law-suit in the parish since he has

lived among them: if any dispute arises, they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once, or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday be would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly, he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity."

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow, (for it was Saturday night,) told us, the Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Doctor Barrow, Doctor Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and, instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be easier to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

BACKGROUND OF THE ESSAY:

Written by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, the de Coverley Paper reflects the way of life and attitude of the eighteenth century, both of the city and the rural. One of Addison and Steele's close friends, Sir Roger captures the way rural England was lived in eighteenth century. Class strife in eighteenth-century becomes one of the main social determinant. Being a country squire, Sir Roger gets along perfectly with his

staff. Serving here for a long time, the very devoted servants love him. Besides, he keeps a fatherly relationship and treats them kindly. Though he loves his servants, he never gives them his used items. He believes that the class difference will be evident if the servants treat his cast-off items as a landlord. Considered as "Age of reason" is the eighteenth century. The scientific revolution is helping people to get more sensible. For eighteenth century, Sir Roger represents reason as the emblem of wisdom. Beside Sir Roger's mansion, there is a haunt whereby house servants avoid going out of dread. They can sense or see supernatural objects, including ghosts. Then to help his staff overcome their anxiety, Sir Roger orders his clergyman to spend a night in that haunt. Sir Roger therefore shows that the feeble mind creates everything and that there is no ghost. The main cause of societal conflict in the eighteenth century is absolutely money-oriented. Sadly, during that period, people's deception about money was somewhat frequent.

To spend lavishly, they borrow money from others. This vacuous pride reveals only dishonesty. Less wealthy people should spend their money within reasonable limits and should not feel ashamed of their poverty. But a typical picture of eighteenth century is the guilt of poverty. In eighteenth-century England was a mono-centered nation. Everybody wish to travel to London in order to survive in a better environment. Instead of just losing the simplicity of honesty, a country man tries to copy the city folks when he visits London. Simplicity is thus seen as guilt by the brutality of metropolitan life. Coverley Paper's main focus is on satirically challenging society. Though this is the age of enlighten, scientific revolution has occurred and people become educated; social, psychological, political conflict has developed; all these things are shown by Addison and Steele through wit irony and symbols.

Sir Roger at Home Summary in English

'Sir Roger At Home' is a reflection on the author's experiences during a brief visit to a friend's countryside residence. Roger, a companion of the author, extended an invitation to him. He was wary of the writer's habits and preferences. Throughout his stay, he never expressed any objections to his behaviour or habits. The writer felt

quite at ease with Roger's family, comprised entirely of composed individuals. The knight was the greatest master globally.

He had never replaced her maids. The servants and other associated individuals aged alongside the knight. The venerable knight embodied both the paternal figure and the authority of the household. All the members were in high spirits. The author was placed under the specific supervision of Roger's butler. Other members were also exceedingly amiable in their assistance. Roger consistently occupied himself in the woods or fields. The writer's primary companion was a highly esteemed man who had been in Roger's house for over thirty years. He was, in fact, a gentleman possessing sound judgement and a degree of education. He maintained a friendly relationship with all family members.

Sir Roger, despite his several commendable traits, was a humorist. His qualities, together with his shortcomings, were tinged with a certain excess that rendered him distinct. He was an amiable individual. The writer's friend informed him that the individual was exceptionally thoughtful and adept at handling any issue effectively. Upon his initial settlement with Roger, Roger gifted him a collection of all the esteemed sermons published in English. Roger asked him to deliver one of them from the pulpit each Sunday. The man organised them into a sequence that flowed effortlessly from one to the next. It was quite intriguing.

Meanwhile, the person in question arrived and commenced a discussion over the sermon scheduled for the following day, as it being Saturday night. He thereafter presented the annual roster of preachers. The writer acknowledged and endorsed the excellence of the man's commendable traits and distinct voice. He seemed to be an elegant actor. The author hoped that more of the country's clergy would emulate such an individual. Rather of engaging in arduous self-composition, they should focus on eloquent expression. They should not only be softer on themselves but also more enlightening to others.

Sir Roger had a small eccentricity. This emotional exuberance rendered his usual virtues spectacular. He desired a pastor who would refrain from disparaging him with his Latin and Greek at the dining table. He consequently requested a friend to find a

pastor who possessed common sense above excessive knowledge, exhibited a social disposition, had a pleasant demeanour and a clear voice, and, ideally, had some familiarity with gaming. The current pastor possesses all these attributes while also being an academic. He had not solicited a single favour from Sir Roger, and Sir Roger had provided ample provisions for him in his will. The knight requested his pastor to provide sermons composed by renowned theologians of history instead of composing his own. He provided the priest with a collection of similar sermons. The Spectator, having attended one of the sermons, concurred with Sir Roger and believed that this model should be copied by other rural clergymen. The clergy should focus on efficient delivery rather than expend excessive time crafting their own sermons.

Lines 11 to 19. Sir Roger commenced at: The Spectator has finally consented to visit Sir Roger's country estate. He describes how Sir Roger rendered his visit exceedingly enjoyable. He meticulously attended to his every comfort. He ensured that the Spectator received everything in accordance with his preferences. Recognising that Spectator occasionally preferred silence, he allowed him solitude during those moments and refrained from compelling him to be jovial and loquacious. Sir Roger recognised that the Spectator was inherently reticent and made precautions to avoid introducing him to all the rural gentlemen who visited Sir Roger. Instead, he permitted them to observe the Spectator from afar. While strolling through the fields, the Spectator noticed gentlemen covertly observing him from behind the hedges, having been informed of his aversion to being gazed upon. This is a comedic portrayal of Sir Roger's benevolent intentions and amiable, friendly nature. Sir Roger's apprehension over offending his guest leads to the Spectator being scrutinised as if he were a zoological exhibit. This excerpt reiterates the timid and reticent disposition of the Spectator. Indeed, Addison was, in reality, a reticent individual who refrained from extensive conversation in the presence of unfamiliar individuals.

Lines 25 to 31. It would require several years. Sir Roger's household is a harmonious one characterised by a positive rapport between the servants and the master. The servants are all solemn, respectful, and elderly. His personal servant appeared so respectable and dignified that he could easily be mistaken for the knight's sibling. The

butler was elderly and respectful. The groom, who tended to the horses, was a solemn-looking man. The coachman appeared as solemn and authoritative as a privy councillor. The elderly companion dog reflects the master's kindness in its gaze. The aged horse in the stable, now rendered useless, is still cared for with kindness as a gesture of appreciation for its previous contributions. Addison elaborates on the characterisation of Sir Roger as presented by Steele. He provides subtle nuances, such as his kindness to the dog and horse, thereby impressing onto the reader the principal characteristics of Sir Roger, particularly his inherent friendliness towards all who encounter him. The chapter contains a subtle comedy, with the coachman resembling a privy councillor, among other observations.

Lines 38 to 46. Simultaneously, all of his attendants: Sir Roger had an exemplary rapport with his servants. He embodied the roles of both a father and a master. He shown a personal concern for the servant's wellbeing and, when arriving at his country residence, enquired about both his own matters and the well-being of his servants. He was esteemed by all due to his benevolence and courtesy. Despite making one of the slaves the target of his amusement, all of them relished the moment, particularly the individual subjected to the jest. However, if he exhibited any indication of his deteriorating health through coughing or other ailments, they were all consumed with concern. Their apprehension was clearly evident on their expressions. This demonstrated the affectionate rapport between the lord and the servants.

Lines 68-76. While I was walking... of backgammon: Sir Roger possessed a quirky quality in all his attributes. His qualities and shortcomings were both profuse, distinguishing him from others. This peculiarity enhanced his character. This attribute influenced his decision to engage a chaplain. While walking with the Spectator, he enquired about the Spectator's opinion of the chaplain. He expressed his discontent with the idea of being insulted in his own home by a show of Latin and Greek with which he was not well acquainted. He requested his buddy to select a pastor who demonstrated practical wisdom above extensive classical knowledge, possessed an amiable demeanour, a distinct voice, and a congenial temperament. Sir Roger remarked that it would be preferable if this individual could engage in a game of backgammon.

The attributes of a clear voice, an impressive personality, and common sense, rather than formal education, are undeniably significant for any individual from a rural background. Addison appears to tacitly concur with Sir Roger's expectations of a clergyman. This excerpt illustrates how Addison imbues a character with vitality by subtle infusions of human traits. Sir Roger's intrinsic passion for backgammon is evident in his request for a clergyman familiar with the game, enabling them to play together. Sir Roger's deficiency in education is evident here, as he seemingly fears being ridiculed at his own table by the chaplain employing languages of which he is unaware.

Lines 109 to 118. A sermon reiterated to the congregation: It is noteworthy that Addison frequently concludes his articles with a didactic remark. He concurs with Sir Roger that a rural preacher ought to possess eloquence and a respectable demeanour. Sir Roger's chaplain delivered lectures derived from a compilation of discourses authored by esteemed religious philosophers of antiquity. This practice was deemed prudent by the Spectator. The priest articulated the esteemed author's ideas with clarity and eloquence. The listeners were inevitably impressed and would consequently acquire substantial knowledge as well. It resembled a skilled actor delivering renowned lines from a playwright. The substance and style were effectively integrated. The statement contains a clever analogy. Addison, in his role as the Spectator, advocates for a synthesis of commendable history. He believes that this technique should be adopted by other clergymen as well, rather than dedicating their efforts to the arduous task of composing lengthy sermons independently, which, yet, could not rival the quality of those crafted by prior authors. This would also be more beneficial for individuals who would consequently acquire greater knowledge. This passage aligns with the Spectator's objective of articulating ideas that prioritise public good.

The essayist persists in his "endeavour to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality" (Joseph Addison) in his essay Sir Roger at Home. Upon receiving an offer from Sir Roger to reside for several days at his country estate, Addison, in his capacity as Mr. Spectator, proceeded to the country house. The villagers visited Addison, but Sir Roger deemed it a disruptive action. He prohibits the rural inhabitants from approaching Addison. Addison states, 'While traversing his fields, I have noticed

them covertly observing me from behind a hedge, and I have overheard the knight instructing them not to let me to see them, as I detest being scrutinized.' Furthermore, this essay introduces a character named Chaplain who 'resides in the household of Sir Roger more as a relative than as a subordinate.' He possesses exceptional skills in Latin and Greek. Moreover, he was an adept orator with a distinct vocal clarity. In summary, he was a someone of commendable intellect and morality. However, his master, Sir Roger, was apprehensive about being subjected to Latin and Greek at his own table, as he lacked proficiency in these languages. He subsequently advises the clergyman to seek guidance from the Bishop of St. Asaph and Dr. South. It is also amusing because it is not the appropriate method to cultivate a clergyman's creative abilities. Addison's works are surely rife with comedy. Humour is predominantly conveyed through irony. Addison conveys these humours through the actions and demeanour of Sir Roger. His primary objective is not to elicit laughter from readers, but to rectify and educate society.

Addison asserts that wit and humour can suitably amuse a "good or prudent man"; and that literature characterised by raillery, governed by "discretion or morality," serves the same purpose as that of more serious authors, but in a different manner. The simpler approach employed by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele liberated readers from "severe contemplations," enabling them to engage a broader audience and reveal their vices and follies, thereby effectively enhancing their moral standards.

Dr. Johnson first referred to Addison's technique as 'middle style.' He asserts, "His prose exemplifies the middle style; accessible yet not vulgar, refined yet not pretentious: serious topics are approached without formality; light subjects are treated without subservience, maintaining a lack of scrupulosity, precision without overt elaboration; consistently balanced and effortless, devoid of florid language or embellished phrases or incisive statements."

Conclusion

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele sought to elevate the English language by employing the vernacular of clubs and coffee houses, characterised by brevity, clarity, wit, and

humour, while eschewing vulgarity in their writings to achieve a polished and sophisticated style. The Spectator essays serve as a record of 18th century British society, leading commentators to describe them as "the social chronicle of the times." In his articles, Sir Roger at Church and Sir Roger at Home, Addison employs the character of Sir Roger to satirise national customs, political ideologies, and the relationship with the Church, so critiquing the rural Tory party and advocating for Whiggish civility. Furthermore, outside their political ties, Addison and Steele undertook the endeavour to educate the public on social etiquette and moral principles by composing pieces in a periodical accessible for discourse among individuals of varying social classes. Through Mr. Spectator's observations, Addison and Steele tried to introduce a nuanced and intricate transformation in the English language and society.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The essay, Sir Roger At Home, demonstrates Addison's exceptional skill at characterization. The essay elaborates on the characterization of Sir Roger as presented in the preceding essay by Steele, titled Of the Club. Sir Roger's persona is vividly rendered by Addison. Vividness is derived from comments that appear to be made randomly. However, all these observations imbue the personality with vibrancy and depth. Subtle aspects of behaviour or appearance are presented, so imprinting the principal traits of a character in the reader's consciousness. The cumulative impact of all the intricate nuances results in the formation of lifelike characters. Addison presents several statements to underscore a specific personality feature. Numerous assertions in the article highlight that, while without a conventional family, Sir Roger possessed a semblance of family among his household of servants. The portrayal is distinctly established of a benevolent and equitable ruler who appeared 'humorous' due to his extreme goodness. The same proficiency in characterization is seen in the portrayal of the chaplain. His characterization is both vivid and engaging. It is executed in a manner that reinforces the previously established perception of Sir Roger's character as a man of common sense, virtue (which appears quirky due to its extremity), and charity. He is sufficiently generous to have included provisions for the priest in his will, and his pragmatism is evident in his preference for a chaplain with practical wisdom over excessive erudition.

The text contains striking elements of the nuanced and delicate comedy for which Addison is renowned. It is jovial rather than raucous. He elicits amusement through the episode of the country gentlemen observing the Spectator from behind the hedges, adhering to Sir Roger's request that they remain unseen, as he despised being scrutinized. The Spectator is regarded as a zoological specimen, albeit with the finest intentions! Sir Roger's rationale for not engaging a 'learnt' chaplain is equally amusing. The descriptions of the servants exhibit humour through their solemn and stately personas.

The essay's style is articulate, fluid, and dignified. His phrases exhibit a deft balance that illustrates the nuanced creativity of his style. Several sentences exemplify this equilibrium, such as, "I am seldom more at ease in Sir Roger's family, as it comprises sober and staid individuals." This contrivance never distracts from one's focus. Addison's age exemplified didacticism, and he asserted that he was writing for the advantage of his contemporaries. Consequently, he consistently remembers his responsibilities as a moralist and educator. He expresses his perspective on the manner in which an effective cleric ought to deliver sermons.

Character sketch ofSir Roger:

Characteristics of Sir Rogers Sir Roger de Coverley is a fictional figure that was developed by the Whig authors Addison and Steele to serve as a humorous lord caricature of the bygone age. He was inspired by the character of Sir Roger de Coverley. His personality is a well-balanced combination of qualities such as hospitality, humanity, love, helpfulness, disappointment, superstition, singularities, kindness, honesty, and goodness. Addison's satire is quite moderate, and because of this, Sir Roger is a figure that is rather nice. This is despite the fact that the character was created to mock the characteristics of the Tory generation that existed in the past. Although his actions may at times appear to be somewhat peculiar, they are actually the result of his sound judgement. People who know him regard him more a cherished than an appreciated individual. As a result of Sir Roger's portrayal of the archaic country gentleman caricature, The Spectator was able to mock him as a remnant of the past. Another example of a country trait that the authors tried to parody is the traditional paternalistic attitude that Sir Roger displays when he is interacting with his tenants and servants. Their efforts, on the other hand, resulted in Sir Roger appearing compassionate and respectable. This was a striking contrast to the new generation of

landed aristocracy who were known for their hard-heartedness. In contrast to these new landowners, Sir Roger maintained to practise the traditional traditions of hospitality that are associated with country living. Upon receiving an invitation from Sir Roger, the author travelled to Sir Roger's country residence to receive the invitation. In this instance, we see that he is very hospitable and that he did everything in his power to ensure that his friend was content, comfortable, unrestricted, and free from disturbances. The manner in which Sir Roger treats his servants is addressed in "Sir Roger at Home" in a manner that is satisfactory. He had a warm and cordial relationship with everyone of them, and he made sure to enquire about their well-being and family life. He loved each and every one of them. His kind demeanour towards them contributed to the development of such a deep affection for him that they appeared disheartened in the event that they were unable to find work. If they were fortunate enough to have a master like Sir Roger, the servants who worked in his home felt themselves to be pretty fortunate. Regardless of what he ordered them to do, they appeared to take pleasure in performing it. In his view, there should be no distinction between masters and servants. The fact that he treated his subordinates in a perfect manner is demonstrated by this evidence. Even his retired horse or his favourite dog were not left without affection in his life.

The love that existed between the master and his servants grew to such a degree that its manifestation manifested itself in the form of tension in the expressions of his servants whenever the master coughed or shown any signs of the weakness that age brings. The eccentricity of Sir Roger can be taken into consideration to a certain extent. The essay "Sir Roger at Church" reveals his peculiarity in the manner in which he conducted himself in a position of power. In "Sir Roger at Church," Sir Roger's interactions with the local church are described in a manner that is highly satirical, despite the fact that his healthy lifestyle and paternalistic communal contacts are depicted with a covert adoration. Mr. Spectator was unable to contain his amusement as he wrote, "As Sir Roger is Landlord to the whole congregation; he keeps them in very good order, and he will suffer no body to sleep in it besides himself." This statement was written in response to Sir Roger's complete power within the church. On a regular basis, the squire would cause disturbances by doing things like elongating the verses of psalms, standing while others were kneeling in order to keep track of any absences, and

interrupting the sermon in order to warn people not to disturb the crowd by squirming or making noise.

However, Mr. Spectator was of the opinion that the worthiness of his character made these behavioural anomalies appear to be foils rather than flaws of his fine characteristics. In addition to this, he made the observation that none of the other parishioners were courteous or knowledgeable enough to acknowledge the absurdity of Sir Roger's actions within the church establishment and his influence over it. It is crucial to the authors' initial objective for establishing the character, which was to criticise the seemingly backwards rural Tory, that these remarks of Sir Roger's fondness of the highAnglican church in the countryside be made. In conclusion, it is possible to assert that Sir Roger, despite being a man of high honour, is considered to be a humourist and occasionally eccentric due to the fact that he possesses some anomalies or idiosyncrasies within him. On the other hand, the ultimate purpose of Addison was not to demonstrate his hilarious statements for the sole purpose of making people laugh; rather, he wanted to make amends for our absurdities and follies. However, the primary objective of Mr. Spectator was to rectify the problems that exist in society and to improve every aspect of life with the introduction of the character Sir Roger.

Multiple choice questions

1.In Sir Roger at Home, where does Sir Roger de Coverley live?

a) London b) A country estate c) The city d) A palace in France

Answer: b) A country estate

2. What is Sir Roger's most prominent characteristic in Sir Roger at Home?

a) Cruelty b) Generosity c) Greed d) Vanity

Answer: b) Generosity

3. How does Sir Roger's household reflect his personality?

a) It is full of chaos and disorder. b) It is a picture of discipline and strictness. c) It reflects a relaxed and contented lifestyle. d) It mirrors the opulence of the nobility.

Answer c) It reflects a relaxed and contented lifestyle

4. Who is the narrator in Sir Roger at Home?

a) Sir Roger de Coverley himself b) A fellow club member c) An anonymous observer d) A distant relative of Sir Roger

Answer b) A fellow club member

5. What is the tone of Sir Roger at Home?

a) Sarcastic b) Humorous and affectionate c) Critical and harsh d) Dramatic and tragic

Answer b) Humorous and affectionate

1.How does Addison portray Sir Roger as?

Answer: Sir Roger is portrayed as a benevolent, magnanimous, and somewhat unconventional country gentleman

2. How does Sir Roger treat his servants?

Answer: Sir Roger regards his servants more as family members than as subordinates.

3.How do people know Sir Roger?

Answer: Sir Roger is known for his hospitality and concern

4.What is the setting of the essay Sir Roger at Home?

Answer: The essay on Sir Roger at home is set in 18th Century England.

5.What does the essay Sir Roger at Home examine?

Answer: The essay examines the coexistence of ancient customs with evolving eras.

Question and answer

1. In what manner does Addison depict Sir Roger's character in "Sir Roger at Home"

Answer: Sir Roger is portrayed as a benevolent, magnanimous, and somewhat unconventional country gentleman. He treats his servants with warmth and affection, in contrast to other harsh masters. His benevolence encompasses the inhabitants of his community, where he is both esteemed and adored. Despite adhering to outdated traditions, his amiable disposition renders him a charming individual. His rapport with his servants displays his conviction in mutual respect above authority. His hospitality and concern for others' well-being demonstrate his robust moral character. Addison depicts Sir Roger as the quintessential rural squire.

2. What is Sir Roger's rapport with his servants?

Answer: Sir Roger regards his servants more as family members than as subordinates. Rather of governing with stringent discipline, he permits them some liberties, positing that a content servant is a faithful one. He does not disregard them for trivial errors, but instead to rectify them with care. A multitude of his servants have remained with him for years, attesting to his equitable treatment. He appreciates their loyalty and guarantees their comfort within his residence. His methodology stands in stark contrast to the severe treatment of servants by other lords of his era. This friendship demonstrates his altruistic and tender disposition.

3. In what manner does Sir Roger engage with the inhabitants of his village?

Answer: Sir Roger is esteemed in his community and actively engages in the welfare of its inhabitants. He is not merely a landlord but a parental figure who attends to his tenants' welfare and ensures their well-being. He frequently visits them, soliciting their

needs and providing assistance as required. His governing strategy is founded on compassion and empathy rather than rigid regulations. He contends that exemplifying behaviour is the most effective method to sustain societal harmony. His constituents revere him for his magnanimity and sagacity. Sir Roger exemplifies the quintessential portrayal of a fair and benevolent country gentleman as depicted by Addison.

4. What does Sir Roger's way of life indicate about rural England in the 18th century?

Answer: Sir Roger's way of life exemplifies the simplicity and robust communal ties characteristic of rural England in the 18th century. In contrast to the rapid and frequently superficial urban lifestyle, the countryside prioritises tradition, interpersonal connections, and a more leisurely pace of life. The connection between the landlord and renters is founded on mutual respect rather than solely economic considerations. His engagements with servants and villagers demonstrate a more compassionate and paternalistic style of leadership. His commitment to antiquated rituals underscores the dichotomy between rural traditions and burgeoning modern concepts in England. Sir Roger serves as Addison's vehicle for idealising rural existence as tranquil and ethically superior to metropolitan life.

5. What is the central theme of "Sir Roger at Home"?

Answer: The central theme of "Sir Roger at Home" is the virtue of benevolence and the exemplary traits of an effective leader. Sir Roger embodies a magnanimous leader who governs with empathy rather than dominion. His engagements with his servants and people exemplify his conviction in equity, fidelity, and reciprocal respect. A significant subject is the juxtaposition of rural and urban life, portraying the countryside as more virtuous and tranquil. The essay examines the coexistence of ancient customs with evolving eras. Addison employs Sir Roger to exemplify the notion that authentic leadership arises from comprehension and compassion rather than authoritarian dominance.

Essay type questions

1. In what manner does Joseph Addison's depiction of Sir Roger de Coverley in Sir Roger at Home illustrate the social and cultural values of early 18th-century England?

2. Examine the character of Sir Roger in "Sir Roger at Home." In what manner does Addison employ humour and satire to portray the existence of the English country gentleman?

3. Examine the function of the Spectator Club in "Sir Roger at Home." In what manner does it operate as a microcosm of modern society?

4. In what manner does Addison's employment of narrative voice in Sir Roger at Home enhance the characterisation of Sir Roger and the overarching theme of the essay?

5. In Sir Roger at Home, Addison combines personal observation with social critique. In what manner does this strategy augment the essay's efficacy in analysing current society?

Key Points to remember:

1. Character of Sir Roger de Coverley: Sir Roger is portrayed as a kind, honorable, and somewhat old-fashioned country gentleman who embodies traditional English values, with a sense of humility and integrity.

2. Social Class and the Country Gentleman: Addison highlights the contrast between Sir Roger's simple, moral life in the countryside and the more complex, often corrupt urban society, emphasizing the virtues of rural life.

3. Sir Roger's Eccentricities: Sir Roger is presented as somewhat eccentric, with his peculiar behaviors, such as his interest in local affairs and his fondness for his servants, which add to his charm and humor.

4. Sir Roger's Estate: His estate is described as a reflection of his character—well-maintained, orderly, and infused with a sense of old-fashioned dignity, showcasing his role as the benevolent, responsible master.

5. The Role of Servants: Addison uses Sir Roger's relationships with his servants to reveal his character. He treats them with respect and kindness, highlighting his humility and sense of responsibility.

6. Humor and Satire: Addison employs humor and satire to depict Sir Roger's interactions with his household and neighbors, poking fun at the simplicity of his life and some of his more outdated views without being cruel.

7. Social Commentary: Through Sir Roger, Addison comments on the values of society, contrasting the simplicity, integrity, and benevolence of the country gentleman with the greed and hypocrisy often found in urban life.

8. Sir Roger's Morality: Sir Roger is depicted as a man of high moral character, guiding his actions by principles of fairness, generosity, and kindness, serving as a model of virtue for others.

9. The Idealized English Gentleman: Addison presents Sir Roger as an idealized figure of the English gentleman, representing a bygone era of nobility, honor, and social responsibility in contrast to the rapidly changing world of his time.

10. Narrative Perspective: The piece is written in the form of a personal reflection by the narrator, who accompanies Sir Roger on his daily activities, offering an insightful and often humorous commentary on his character and actions.

Unit -8

Detail Study of *Pickwick Papers* - Charles Dickens

Objectives: The purpose of the chapter is to acquaint the students with the contemporary themes of the time. It also helps the students to explore the themes of social class, human folly, and the contrast between personal integrity and societal corruption. Students learn to analyze Dickens' use of humor, satire, and vivid characterizations to critique Victorian society, while appreciating the novel's structure and the development of the Pickwick Club's adventures.

Author Introduction

Charles Dickens was born in 1812 in Portsmouth, a coastal town in England. Hewas a British author and editor of the nineteenth century, renowned for his novels, short stories, comics, and novellas. He authored several of the most renowned literary works of his day, including Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, A Tale of Two Cities, and A Christmas Carol. Dickens commenced his career by composing amusing drawings and comics for journals, several of which he self-published. He is renowned for his vivid portrayals of the underclass in Victorian London, emphasising the financial disparity and enhancing social consciousness among his readers. His oeuvre persists in shaping literature and popular culture, with numerous pieces being imparted to young readers. In 1838, Dickens released his inaugural novel, Oliver Twist. It initially emerged in serialised segments in his self-published journal, Bentley's Miscellany. Subsequent to Oliver Twist, Dickens released fifteen novels and numerous novellas throughout his lifetime, some of which were serialised in monthly or weekly installments. He edited other journals, including Household Words, and established his own publication, All The Year Round. In 1842, Dickens embarked on a tour of the United States, conducting public readings and advocating against slavery. He authored the travelogue American Notes derived on this encounter.

Six Elements of Charles Dickens' Literary Style

Dickens' stylistic approach and favoured themes have led to the designation "Dickensian," which denotes a portrayal of Victorian society characterised by

exaggerated characters representing extremes of wealth. Below are few characteristics of Dickens' writing style.

1. Victorian-era London settings: Dickens is renowned for his depictions of the socially stratified landscape of London during the Industrial Revolution. In Dickens' London, the sky is obscured by gunmetal grey clouds, stovepipe chimneys emit smoke, and every stone and brick edifice is coated in black soot.

2. Exaggerated principal characters: Dickens' characters frequently possess physical traits that symbolise aspects of their nature. Greed and affluence manifest as corpulent figures, whilst austere personalities have excessively rigid postures and angular faces. This is also evident in their whimsical and alliterative names, such as Martin Chuzzlewit, Nicholas Nickleby, and Barnaby Rudge.

3. Satirical tone: Dickens' novels, such as Our Mutual Friend, The Pickwick Papers, and Hard Times, employ satire to augment the social commentary within his oeuvre. Amplifying the injustices experienced by his characters to humorous extremes underscores his social critique of the workhouse system, industrialisation, the judiciary, and economic disparity.

4. Lexical repetition: Dickens favoured the reiteration of words or phrases for rhythmic impact. A renowned illustration of anaphora, defined as the repeating of words at the commencement of successive clauses, is the opening line of A Tale of Two Cities: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

5. Loss of innocence: Numerous protagonists in Dickens' works have coming-of-age trips that confront them with the more severe facts of existence. Oliver Twist, Martin Chuzzlewit, and Nicholas Nickelby exemplify protagonists whose formative years

are disrupted by traumatic events, typically associated with their impoverishment or shifts in social status.

6. Frequent utilisation of cliffhangers: Due to Dickens's practice of publishing numerous novels serially prior to their complete book release, his chapters frequently conclude with a cliffhanger, a moment of impending drama abruptly halted, designed to attract readers to return for the subsequent themes.

BACKGROUND

This is Dickens's inaugural novel and my preferred work. It is undoubtedly the most humorous. Although it lacks the structural and narrative sophistication of some of Dickens's later works, this reflects the adaptability of the piece, which originated as a serialised story about a group of sports gentlemen and transformed into Dickens's magnum opus. It possesses an exceptional vitality, and its episodic structure provides an accessible entrance point for those seeking to engage with Dickens. Among all of Dickens' novels, this one most effectively employs its serial publication; each installment was released at the month's conclusion, often revealing what Pickwick had experienced during that period: in February, Dickens presents a Valentine episode; in December, a Christmas episode. Throughout a year and a half, Dickens's readers became acquainted with Pickwick and his companions as friends and frequent correspondents. Pickwick craze engulfed the nation, accompanied by various goods, theatrical adaptations, unlicensed sequels, and Pickwick clubs.The Pickwick Papers, formally titled The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, recount the escapades of Samuel Pickwick, a gentleman, with his three companions: the idealistically romantic Mr. Tupman, the unfortunate sportsmen Mr. Winkle, and the aspiring poet Mr. Snodgrass. Accompanied by Pickwick's audacious yet reliable servant Sam Weller, the members of the Pickwick Club traverse the South East of England, encountering numerous unpleasant predicaments, frequently created by the roguish con artist Mr. Jingle. Throughout the narrative, numerous individuals have romantic entanglements or inadvertently become embroiled in other love intrigues.

Every fresh scene and quest presents a varied assortment of caricatures to entertain the reader. Despite often encountering absurd situations, Pickwick consistently demonstrates his benevolence and earns affection in each trip. Nevertheless, the singular misfortune that befalls him involves his landlady, Mrs. Bardell, who erroneously assumes that Pickwick has proposed to her and then sues him for damages.

The initial portion of the novel is predominantly episodic, reflecting Dickens' approach to its inception, although the latter half exhibits greater coherence, concentrating primarily on the trial of Bardell vs. Pickwick and its subsequent ramifications. Pickwick declines to pay damages on principle and is subsequently incarcerated, where he encounters Alfred Jingle once again, along with Mrs Bardell, who has been swiftly imprisoned by her own solicitors due to their inability to collect fees as a result of Pickwick's obstinacy. The narrative concludes with Pickwick victorious, liberated from incarceration and aiding both allies and adversaries in achieving improved lives and fresh starts.

SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

In May 1827, the Pickwick Club of London, led by Samuel Pickwick, resolves to form a travelling society wherein four members traverse England and document their experiences. The quartet comprises Mr. Pickwick, a benevolent retired entrepreneur and philosopher whose musings remain unremarkable; Tracy Tupman, a womaniser who fails to achieve any romantic success; Augustus Snodgrass, a poet devoid of any written verses; and Nathaniel Winkle, a remarkably incompetent sportsman.

The Pickwickians convene to embark on their inaugural excursion and are assaulted by an irate cabman, who suspects them of being informers, as a hostile mob assembles. Alfred Jingle rescues them and accompanies them to Rochester. Jingle is an adventurer attracted to affluent women, and during this initial excursion, he entangles the naive Winkle in a confrontation with Dr. Slammer, an irascible military officer.

In Chatham, the Pickwickians observe military manoeuvres, experience turbulence, and encounter Mr. Wardle, a rural squire who extends an invitation to his estate at Dingley Dell. Following several incidents involving horses, Mr. Pickwick and his companions reach Mr. Wardle's Manor Farm, where they partake in card games,

flirtation, storytelling, hunting, and a cricket match. Mr. Tupman becomes enamoured with Mr. Wardle's unmarried sister, Rachael, while Mr. Snodgrass develops affections for his daughter, Emily. Nonetheless, Tupman is outwitted by the spirited, unscrupulous Jingle, who absconds with Rachael. Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Wardle chase Jingle and Rachael to London, where, aided by attorney Mr. Perker, they negotiate with Jingle and save Rachael Wardle from an undesirable marriage.

In London, Mr. Pickwick encounters Sam Weller, a boot cleaner and general handyman, whom he employs as a valet. Sam is a cosmopolitan Cockney: astute, clever, and proficient at physical confrontations. Upon Mr. Pickwick informing his widowed landlady, Mrs. Bardell, of his acquisition of a servant, she infers from his vague phrasing that he wants to propose marriage to her. Mrs. Bardell collapses in his embrace precisely as Tupman, Snodgrass, and Winkle arrive – a compromising situation.

Sam Weller's father, Tony, a coachman who unfortunately married a widow, offers a continuous commentary throughout the narrative on the perils of marriage. Tony's wife has become involved with a duplicitous, drunken evangelist, causing her husband considerable distress till her demise. Both Tony Weller and Mr. Pickwick are targets for widows, as Mrs. Bardell promptly initiates a breach-of-promise lawsuit against Mr. Pickwick.

Concurrently, Mr. Pickwick and his companions travel to Eatanswill to observe an election characterised by both brutality and absurdity. Mr. Pickwick and Winkle reside with Mr. Pott, the editor of a biassed newspaper, and Winkle inadvertently becomes entangled in Pott's familial disputes. While at Eatanswill, the Pickwickians receive an invitation to a costume party hosted by the local literary figure, Mrs. Leo Hunter, showcasing various forms of absurdity. At the celebration, Mr. Pickwick encounters Alfred Jingle, whom he follows to a nearby town. Jingle's servant informs Mr. Pickwick that Jingle intends to pursue a young lady at a boarding school, prompting Mr. Pickwick to intervene to thwart the elopement. This information is a deception that results in Mr. Pickwick's humiliation and an onset of rheumatism. The Pickwickians convene at

Bury St. Edmunds, where Mr. Wardle is engaged in a hunting expedition, and Mr. Pickwick regains sufficient strength to accompany him. He discovers that Mrs Bardell has initiated legal proceedings against him via Dodson and Fogg, a duo of unscrupulous solicitors.

Mr. Pickwick returns to London to seek legal assistance.

In London, Mr. Pickwick discovers that Jingle is in Ipswich and travels there to confront him. Due to a confusion regarding accommodations at an Ipswich Inn, Mr. Pickwick is summoned before the magistrate, a local henpecked despot named Mr. Nupkins. Jingle frequently visits Nupkins, who is interested in the daughter. Mr. Pickwick liberates himself by demonstrating that Jingle is an impostor.

The Pickwickians ultimately return to the Wardle estate to commemorate Christmas and the nuptials of Mr. Wardle's daughter, Isabella. During the celebrations, Snodgrass persists in his courtship of Emily, while Winkle becomes enamoured with Arabella Allen, a companion of Mr. Wardle's daughters.

On Valentine's Day, 1831, Mr. Pickwick is adjudicated for breach of commitment. Mr. Pickwick is deemed guilty and mandated to pay damages due to the rhetorical accusations of Serjeant Buzfuz and the circumstantial proof, which he declines to fulfil.

As it is two months until Dodson and Fogg can incarcerate him, the Pickwickians embark on a journey to Bath. Winkle encounters further complications involving a middle-aged woman and subsequently escapes to Bristol, where he discovers that his beloved, Arabella Allen, has been concealed by her brother. Sam Weller and Mr. Pickwick come in Bristol to assist Winkle in locating Arabella to express his intentions.

Upon his return to London, Mr. Pickwick is incarcerated in the Fleet Prison for debtors due to his refusal to pay damages. In prison, he observes considerable suffering,

dirt, and degradation, and for a short period, he is preyed upon by two predatory inmates. He encounters Alfred Jingle and his servant in complete destitution and provides them with assistance. Mr. Pickwick instructs Sam Weller to depart, although Sam voluntarily incarcerates himself for debt to remain with his benevolent boss. Distressed by the anguish of incarceration, Mr. Pickwick leases a solitary cell and emerges alone during the evenings. Upon Mrs. Bardell's arrest and subsequent incarceration due to her inability to remunerate her solicitors, Mr Pickwick starts to exhibit signs of compassion. Additionally, Winkle has wed Arabella and requires Mr. Pickwick to mediate on their behalf with her brother and his own father. Ultimately, Mr. Pickwick resolves to settle the expenses, therefore exonerating both himself and Mrs. Bardell, in addition to discharging Jingle's debts.

After Mr. Pickwick's journey to Bristol to share the news of Arabella's marriage with Ben Allen, it became evident that Ben was quite overwhelmed by the revelation, resorting to the solace of consuming substantial amounts of alcohol to cope with his emotions. Following this emotional scene, Mr. Pickwick proceeded to travel to Birmingham to deliver the news to Winkle's father. Upon hearing the news, Winkle's father displayed a clear sense of anger and disgust, which was palpable in his demeanor and reactions. The stark contrast in the reactions of Ben Allen and Winkle's father highlighted the varying ways in which individuals process unexpected news, and served as a reminder of the complexities of human emotions and reactions.

Upon returning to London, Mr. Pickwick compensates Dodson and Fogg, dispatches Jingle and his attendant to the West Indies to start anew, and discovers that Emily Wardle intends to elope with Snodgrass. Mr. Pickwick persuades Mr. Wardle of Snodgrass's merit as a gentleman, leading to the couple's marriage in Mr. Pickwick's recently acquired residence. Meanwhile, Sam Weller has been wooing an attractive housemaid named Mary, and with Mr. Pickwick's support, they are wed. Although the London Pickwick Club has been disbanded, Samuel Pickwick continues to serve as a godfather to numerous children.

This is fundamentally a serious novel, however its gravitas is conveyed through a comedic lens. Dickens does not present the reader with a grim truth disguised by humour. The significant values are specifically those that harmonise with comedy. The Pickwick Papers celebrates the delights of travel, the enjoyment of fine dining and drinking, camaraderie among men, innocence, kindness, vitality, and romance. Dickens conveys these ideas by juxtaposing them with pretty harsh facts. Comfortable travel is juxtaposed with the sluggish misery of Fleet Prison. Quality cuisine and beverages are contrasted with the unsanitary provisions and wine of incarceration. Male friendships are contrasted with predatory wives, widows, spinsters, and dishonest males. Innocence and youth are vulnerable to doubt, deceit, and confinement. Romance is juxtaposed with many plots for transactional unions. Consequently, we obtain a comprehensive understanding of the significance of these attributes and circumstances. The reader learns to value goodness and simplicity as exemplified by Mr. Pickwick through contrasts. However, we perceive things via the lens of comedy.

The novel's most prominent characteristic is its macho aspect. The issue lies not only in the predominance of male characters but also in the unsympathetic portrayal of most female characters. The principal characters are not notably hostile, violent, or controlling. The novel's masculinity primarily derives from Dickens' nuanced and precise depiction of male relationships. Women are shown either as innocent young romantic figures or as menacing middle-aged aggressors. They are either sentimental or comedic characters and lack the realism with which Dickens portrays individuals. Dickens comprehends men and revels in their peculiarities, however women remain an enigma to him. A woman seeking insight into the world inhabited by most guys would benefit greatly from reading this story.

Augustus Snodgrass A youthful, unassuming individual, he presents himself as the poet of the Pickwick Club, despite never composing a single line of poetry. He becomes enamoured with Emily Wardle and weds her.

Nathaniel Winkle An exceedingly clumsy teenage athlete, Winkle possesses a talent for mishaps. A member of the Pickwick Club, he seeks Mr. Pickwick's assistance in his courtship and marriage to Arabella Allen.

Mr. Blotton An undesirable club member with a discerning perception of deception.

Alfred Jingle A amorous adventurer who plots for multiple mercenary unions, which Mr. Pickwick endeavours to obstruct. He is incarcerated in the Fleet Prison and then rehabilitated by Mr. Pickwick.

Unit -9

Theme of the novel

Politics and the law

According to Dickens, numerous societal issues were centred on law and politics. In his youth, he was employed at a law office and then worked as a journalist reporting on Parliament for several years. Consequently, he became distrustful and even disdainful of solicitors and politicians. In The Pickwick Papers, attorneys and politicians predominantly prioritize their own interests over public service.

Politicians have a fleeting presence in The Pickwick Papers, emerging during the farcical election in Eatanswill. Numerous participants approach the election with profound gravity, however substantive discourse on topics is absent. Sam exuberantly recounts electoral machinations aimed at suppressing voter expression, including administering laudanum to incapacitate people. Ultimately, the "right" candidate prevails, however his designation as such is solely due to the endorsement of the Pickwickians' social network. His specific ideas on any subject remain ambiguous.

Attorneys assume a far greater role in the narrative, especially Perker, Mr Pickwick's counsel, and the unscrupulous duo of Dodson and Fogg. All the attorneys depicted in The Pickwick Papers exhibit callous behaviour, consistently deceive their clients, and are primarily motivated by financial gain. Perker instructs his clerk to deceive a client by asserting that he is out of town. Subsequently, the clerk admits Mr. Pickwick to his presence. What is the rationale? The client is persistently enquiring about his case. Perker is perplexed as to why Mr. Pickwick refuses to settle the damages and proceed beyond the Bardell lawsuit. Subsequently, when Pickwick intends to utilise his funds to assist Mr. Jingle, Perker exhibits much scepticism.

Dodson and Fogg are also depicted in a derogatory manner. They exhaust all legal avenues to secure victories and financial gain for themselves. Their case against Pickwick is predominantly contrived, yet they possess the acumen to present it effectively and achieve victory. Upon failing to receive their payment from Mr. Pickwick, they incarcerate Mrs. Bardell, demanding that she remit the owed sum. They

consistently provoke Pickwick to offend them, eagerly anticipating the chance to litigate against him for slander, assault, or any other conceivable offence.

Most concerning is that neither solicitors nor politicians address the atrocities of debtors' prison. Debtors' jails, as Dickens saw from own experience, were a fraudulent scheme. Affluent inmates, such as Mr. Pickwick, can remunerate the guards to acquire various amenities, including private quarters, alcoholic beverages, and gourmet meals. The bulk of prisoners, incarcerated only because of their inability to settle a debt, were confined in squalid quarters, undernourished, and subjected to maltreatment at the discretion of the guards. The election in Eatanswill possesses a whimsical quality; but, with reflection, the prospect that the absurd Blue candidate could potentially alter the circumstances within the prisons—if only he could divert his attention from deriding his Buff rival—highlights the profound injustice at hand.

The Affliction of the Impoverished

Each Dickens work examines the plight of the impoverished in some manner. Dickens was profoundly impacted by his father's incarceration for debt. In The Pickwick Papers, Dickens critiques a system that entraps individuals, subjecting them to suffering from which they cannot escape.

The Pickwick Papers contains narratives of virtuous individuals unable to extricate themselves from poverty or debtors' incarceration. While incarcerated, Mr. Pickwick and Sam lease accommodations from inhabitants (the Chancery prisoner and the cobbler) who have endured prolonged hardships. The cobbler received an inheritance but incurred excessive legal expenses, resulting in debt; the Chancery prisoner perished in debtors' prison. Dickens would again explore the topics of Chancery and legal expenses, most notably in Bleak House (1853). Numerous narratives that Mr. Pickwick compiles throughout the text depict profound anguish resulting from destitution.

Dickens simultaneously illustrates that certain individuals residing in poverty exhibit indifference, exemplified by some inmates encountered by Mr. Pickwick in debtors' prison. Some impoverished individuals resort to immoral means to escape the hardships

of poverty, seemingly prepared to go to any lengths to evade it. Mr. Jingle's adventures are a continual struggle to evade his financial obligations; upon failure, he finds himself incarcerated and would have perished there, were it not for Pickwick. Mr. Pickwick listens to accounts of impoverished men who resort to alcohol or physically abuse their spouses. Dickens suggests that these individuals may have made more advantageous decisions had they not been ensnared in their destitute condition.

Mr. Pickwick is affluent, which shields him from the distressing situations faced by other characters in Dickens's works. Both he and Sam witness the adversities of poverty as spectators, potentially facilitating the reader's ability to empathise with them. Indeed, Dickens was instrumental in highlighting the atrocities of debtors' prison. The Marshalsea prison, where he and his family endured hardship, was shut down in the 1840s, just after the publication of The Pickwick Papers. Dickens frequently depicted debtors' jails in his literature, particularly in David Copperfield (1850) and Little Dorrit (1857).

Conjugality and Affection

This work predominantly examines the themes of love and marriage, which do not consistently align within this society. Dickens posits that marriage discord arises when individuals wed for societal motives, such as financial gain or social status, whereas unions founded on love yield happiness.

Certain single individuals in the novel desire marriage to achieve financial stability or affluence. Mr. Jingle courts other women and ultimately elopes with Miss Rachael Wardle due to her financial independence. Mr. Weller's second spouse wed him for the wealth he acquired from his first wife. She maintains strict control over her finances throughout her life; nonetheless, Sam and Mr. Weller inherit the assets upon her demise. This truth offers some solace to the twice-widowed Mr. Weller.

Marriage can enhance an individual's social status. Miss Rachael Wardle rejects the propositions of Mr. Tupman and subsequently Mr. Jingle due to her necessity for financial assistance. Instead, she desires the enhanced social standing that marriage would confer upon her. Mrs. Bardell is astounded when she perceives Pickwick's

proposal, partly due to the significant enhancement of her standing as Mrs. Pickwick. This may also explain why Pickwick never considers that she might perceive his intentions as a proposal. As her social inferior, he would have no motive to propose to her unless he were profoundly in love with her.

Dickens contends that marriages based on societal considerations are unsuccessful. Mr. Weller cautions Sam and everyone who will heed about the dangers of matrimony, especially with unions with a widow. Upon learning of Mr. Winkle's marriage, Mr. Pott expresses cynical pleasure. In the book, married males such as Mr. Pott and Mr. Hunter, whose spouse is the poetess and hostess of the costume party brunch, frequently appear silly due to their wives. Mr. Weller experiences profound distress when his wife becomes infatuated with "the shepherd" and religious beliefs.

Nonetheless, not all marriages are detrimental. Numerous joyous unions include Mr. Trundle and Bella Wardle, Mr. Winkle and Arabella Allen, Mr. Snodgrass and Emily Wardle, as well as Sam and Mary. None of these unions occur for societal reasons; no individual gains financially or socially. The Winkles' marriage jeopardises their social status, as it appears their families may disown them. As he was just married while composing The Pickwick Papers, he may have had a personal connection to this issue.

Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth, Hampshire, England, on February 7, 1812, to John and Elizabeth Barrow Dickens. He experienced a modest yet joyful upbringing, spending adventurous years traversing the English countryside with his seven siblings.

At the age of 12, Dickens's father, who perpetually had financial difficulties, was incarcerated in debtors' prison due to his inability to settle a bakery bill. His mother, unable to afford a home independently, had little alternative but to relocate herself and the younger children into the prison with their father. Young Dickens, of sufficient age to earn a livelihood, was dispatched to a boot-blacking factory. Rather than engaging in academic pursuits or socializing with peers, he dedicated 10 hours daily to affixing labels onto jars in a squalid, rodent-infested factory. He earned a negligible sum weekly, which was allocated to assist in repaying his father's debt.

At the age of 15, Dickens sought employment as a clerk in a legal firm. Shortly thereafter, he became a newspaper journalist who reported on legislative activities and debates in Parliament. This experience enhanced Dickens's proficiency as a writer, particularly in crafting authentic dialogue. Dickens developed an aversion to the legal system and governmental authority.

His various life experiences, including time spent in debtors' prison, working in a law office, and reporting on political matters, deeply shaped his convictions, particularly in relation to how the lower classes should be treated. Simultaneously juggling the roles of a court reporter and a budding writer, he delved into crafting short stories. An opportunity to collaborate with a distinguished artist on captions for sports illustrations came his way, only to end in tragedy with the artist's sudden and untimely demise after producing three parts of the project. Undeterred by this setback, he immersed himself in producing a serialized novel in 20 parts, titled The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, set in defiance of a debtors' prison backdrop. Through this engaging narrative featuring the whimsical escapades of Samuel Pickwick and his comrades, he not only entertained but also shed light on the harsh realities of incarceration. The publication gained widespread acclaim, propelling the author, Charles Dickens, to the heights of literary renown.

Symbols in the novel

Food

Food is very important in The Pickwick Papers. It represents abundance, comfort, and happiness. Dickens spends a lot of time describing the meals eaten by the Pickwickians. Several characters—Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman, and Mr. Weller, not to mention Joe the servant boy—are described as being overweight. At the time, people would see that as a sign of prosperity rather than a health issue, and Dickens provides meals to match. Even the description of Manor Farm when they first arrive (Chapter 5) emphasizes the food stored in the kitchen. During the Bardell v. Pickwick trial, one of the letters Mr. Pickwick has written to Mrs. Bardell focuses on food, specifically "chops and tomata sauce." The prosecuting attorney claims he couldn't possibly have written a letter to Mrs. Bardell merely to

ask for chops and tomata sauce, but given the importance of food in this book, the reader finds it quite plausible.

Lacking in food, or eating only poor quality food, also functions symbolically in the book. As Sam points out in Chapter 22:

'It's a wery remarkable circumstance, Sir,' said Sam, 'that poverty and oysters always seem to go together ... The poorer a place is, the greater call there seems to be for oysters. Look, here, Sir; here's a oyster stall to every half-dozen houses—the street's lined vith 'em. Blessed if I don't think that ven a man's wery poor, he rushes out of his lodgings, and eats oysters in reg'lar desperation.'

In fact, oysters were considered a "poor man's food" because they were easy to store in tubs and they would "keep" a long time. Compare that to Mr. Pickwick who, in Chapter 2, dines on fresh-caught sole. Dickens points out that in prison Mr. Jingle and Job—before Pickwick helps them—are planning to eat "a small piece of raw loin of mutton" (Chapter 42). Mutton is the meat of an older sheep; it has a strong flavor and is very tough unless cooked properly. After Pickwick's help, Job tells Sam they will eat "half a leg of mutton, baked ... with the potatoes under it, to save boiling" (Chapter 45). They are still eating inexpensive food, but there is much more of it and it will be prepared in a more appetizing way. In contrast, Mr. Pickwick's meal in Chapter 51, when he travels with Bob Sawyer and Ben Allen, is described by Sam as "pair of fowls, Sir, and a weal cutlet; French beans, 'taturs, tart, and tidiness."

Clothes

Clothes in The Pickwick Papers function as a symbol of a character's identity. Interestingly, the focus is far more on men's clothes than on women's. In Chapter 2 the narrator states that "Great men are seldom over-scrupulous in the arrangement of their attire." Mr. Pickwick is one of these men who is not "over-scrupulous;" in fact he is so often described as wearing gaiters that when he leaves them off to dance at Christmastime, his friends are shocked (Chapter 28).

More unusual or outlandish clothes make a statement about the character as well. In Chapter 1 Dickens provides descriptions of some of Mr. Pickwick's friends more elaborate clothing choices, such as Mr. Snodgrass's cape and Mr. Winkle's hunting coat. These clothes, which draw attention to their owners, seem to be a youthful manifestation of self-doubt; Dickens makes sure to note in Chapter 57 that Mr. Winkle, once married and settled, "exchanged his old costume for the ordinary dress of Englishmen." In Chapter 15 Pickwick and Mr. Tupman almost come to blows when Pickwick ridicules Mr. Tupman's idea of appearing in a costume at the costume party breakfast.

Lack of the proper clothes also makes a statement about a character. When the Pickwickians first meet Mr. Jingle in Chapter 2, Dickens slips in a comment that his clothes do not fit properly and his only luggage is a "brown paper parcel, which presented most suspicious indications of containing one shirt and a handkerchief." In Chapter 3 Mr. Jingle borrows Mr. Winkle's beautiful new suit to attend the party, which only gets Mr. Winkle into trouble because the distinctive suit is how Dr. Slammer identifies the man who insulted him. Later, when Mr. Pickwick finds Mr. Jingle in prison, Dickens describes him as "in tattered garments, and without a coat; his common calico shirt yellow and in rags" (Chapter 42). Mr. Jingle confesses that he and Job have pawned coats, extra shirts, a silk umbrella, and even boots, just to get enough money to live.

Dickens provides detailed descriptions of Sam's clothing throughout the story, particularly emphasizing the significance of his attire when he first meets Mr. Pickwick. Sam, recognizing the importance of presentation in his role, upgrades his previously coarse garments to higher-quality clothing as a reflection of his employment with Pickwick. This transformation in his attire is highlighted during the trial, where Sam recalls the distinct memory of his first day working for Mr. Pickwick, attributing it to the "reg'lar new fit out o' clothes" he had that morning, a rare occurrence for him at the time. The pride Sam takes in his new clothes is indicative of how a servant's attire often symbolized their status and connection to their employer. This notion is further exemplified when Sam attends a servants' party and engages in a conversation about

the impact uniforms have on perception, with one of the servants remarking on the allure a good uniform holds, especially with regards to attracting attention from women. It becomes evident that within the social hierarchy depicted in the story, clothing plays a significant role in defining individuals and shaping their interactions, underscoring the idea that one's outward appearance can influence their standing and relationships, even among those in service.

Multiple choice questions

1.Who is the main character in The Pickwick Papers?

a) Samuel Pickwick b) Mr. Winkle c) Charles Dickens d) Mr. Tupman

Answer: a) Samuel Pickwick

2. What is the primary focus of the Pickwick Club in The Pickwick Papers?

a) Business ventures b) Traveling and documenting adventures c) Political reforms d) Literary criticism

Answer b) Traveling and documenting adventures

3. Which character is known for being the loyal servant of Mr. Pickwick?

a) Mr. Tupman b) Sam Weller c) Nathaniel Winkle d) Mr. Pickwick's cousin

Answer b) Sam Weller

4. In The Pickwick Papers, Mr. Pickwick's first trip is to:

a) Paris b) Rochester c) Plymouth d) Bath

Answer b) Rochester

5. Which of the following best describes the tone of The Pickwick Papers?

a) Dark and tragic b) Lighthearted and satirical c) Serious and philosophical d) Romantic and passionate

Answer b) Lighthearted and satirical

Very Short Answer Type Questions:

1. How do we better know Pickwick in Pickwick Papers?

Answer: Mr. Pickwick is better known as Samuel.

2. Who does Pickwick owe money?

Answer: Pickwick owes money to Mrs. Bardell.

3. What is one distinct habit of Mr. Pickwick?

Answer: Mr. Pickwick is in the habit of taking notes.

4. How is Mr. Pickwick portrayed in the novel?

Asnwer: Mr. Pickwick is portrayed as generous and good-hearted gentleman.

5.What is the theme of the novel?

Answer: The theme of the novel is kindness and redemption.

Long answer type Questions

1.Who is Samuel Pickwick, and what is his function in the narrative?

Answer:Samuel Pickwick is the principal character and founder of the Pickwick Club, an entity committed to investigating and chronicling the exploits of its members. He is shown as a benevolent, affluent, and somewhat dumb gentleman possessing a profound sense of curiosity and fairness. Throughout the story, Jack undertakes a succession of comedic and occasionally ludicrous escapades with his buddies. His experiences, including a wrongful incarceration, facilitate his growth in wisdom and comprehension of human nature. Given his sporadic folly, Pickwick is a cherished character recognised for his magnanimity and benevolent disposition.

2. What is the importance of Mr. Jingle in The Pickwick Papers?

Answer: Mr. Alfred Jingle is an engaging yet duplicitous figure who functions as an antagonist in the narrative. He is famous for his rapid, disjointed speech and his capacity

to use individuals for personal advantage. Jingle often misleads others, like seeking to elope with an affluent woman for her wealth. His demise occurs when he is incarcerated for debt, underscoring the repercussions of deceit. Notwithstanding his deceit, Pickwick ultimately forgives him, illustrating the novel's themes of benevolence and atonement.

3. In what manner does The Pickwick Papers portray English society in the early 19th century?

Answer: The work offers a vivid and comedic depiction of English society, emphasising its merits and absurdities. In the escapades of Pickwick and his associates, Dickens examines several socioeconomic strata, ranging from nobles to debtors and servants. The story attacks judicial corruption, particularly in the portrayal of Pickwick's unjust prosecution and incarceration. It also underscores concerns such as social hypocrisy, institutional inefficiencies, and the challenges faced by the lower class. Notwithstanding these criticisms, Dickens offers a predominantly jovial and humorous perspective on English life.

4. What is Sam Weller's function in the novel?

Answer: Sam Weller, the clever and tenacious servant of Pickwick, swiftly emerges as one of the most cherished characters in the narrative. His astute demeanour and witty insights juxtapose Pickwick's innocence, rendering him an indispensable ally. Sam's allegiance to Pickwick is steadfast, exemplified by his voluntary decision to accompany him to prison. His incisive humour and astute observations frequently deliver comic relief while simultaneously illuminating social inequities. Sam's character embodies the working-class sagacity that Dickens often esteemed in his literary works.

5. Which subjects are examined in The Pickwick Papers?

Answer: The work examines themes of camaraderie, benevolence, and the irrationalities of human conduct. In Pickwick's journeys, Dickens explores themes of legal corruption, social stratification, and the inadequacies of institutions such as the judiciary and penal systems. The notion of redemption is notable, exemplified by Pickwick's benevolent handling of characters such as Jingle. Humour and satire are essential components, rendering the work both engaging and socially perceptive. Ultimately, The Pickwick Papers extols the virtues of human nature despite its imperfections.

Key Points to remember

1. Introduction of the Pickwick Club: The story centers around the Pickwick Club, particularly its founder, Samuel Pickwick, and his eccentric companions, who set out on various adventures to observe and document the world.

2. Satire of Victorian Society: Dickens uses the novel to critique and satirize various aspects of 19th-century English society, including class distinctions, legal systems, and social conventions.

3. Characterization of Mr. Pickwick: Mr. Samuel Pickwick is portrayed as a kind, well-meaning, and somewhat naive gentleman whose adventures provide a humorous and insightful commentary on human nature and society.

4. Humor and Farce: The novel is full of humor, often in the form of situational comedy, wordplay, and absurd situations, making it a delightful exploration of Dickens' wit and satirical style.

5. The Role of the Comic Episodes: Many episodes in the book are farcical, such as the trial scene, which highlight the absurdities and inconsistencies of social and legal institutions.

6. The Various Supporting Characters: The novel features a rich variety of secondary characters like Sampson Brass, Tracy Tupman, Alfred Jingle, and Winkle, each contributing to the humor and thematic depth of the story.

7. **Themes of Friendship and Loyalty:** The strong camaraderie and loyalty within the Pickwick Club are central themes, especially the bond between Mr. Pickwick and his loyal servant, Wright, or Trotter.

8. **Commentary on Legal and Financial Systems:** Dickens satirizes the legal and financial systems through characters like Mr. Winkle and various comical court scenes, exposing the flaws and absurdities within them.

9. **Social Critique:** The novel critiques the class system and the hypocrisy inherent in social structures, often depicting how those in power take advantage of the poor and powerless.

10. **Serialized Format:** The novel was originally published in serialized form, which influenced its episodic nature and the development of characters and plot over time, making it an early example of Victorian serialized fiction.

Essay type Questions:

1. Analyse the function of humour and satire in The Pickwick Papers. In what manner does Diickens employ these literary techniques to critique societal norms?

2. Examine the character of Samuel Pickwick. How do his innocence and benevolence influence the narrative and his interactions with others?

3. Investigate the theme of friendship in The Pickwick Papers. In what ways do the relationships between Mr. Pickwick and his companions enhance the novel's overarching message?

4. How does Dickens depict the legal and penal systems in The Pickwick Papers? Discuss the implications of Mr. Pickwick's experiences in the Fleet Prison.

5. Compare and contrast the various social classes illustrated in The Pickwick Papers. How does Dickens utilise his characters to reflect on 19th-century English society?

Module-IV

THE WAY OF THE WORLD- WILLIAM CONGREVE

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL- R.B. SHERIDAN

Content

Objective: The objective of the paper is to explore the intricate interplay of love, marriage, and social class within the framework of Restoration comedy. Students should analyze Congreve's use of wit, satire, and clever dialogue to critique the moral and social dynamics of the time. By examining the characters' motivations and behaviors, students will gain insight into themes such as deception, power, and the battle of the sexes, while appreciating the structure and style of Restoration theatre.

Unit -10

About the Author-William Congreve

William Congreve (1670–1729) was an English dramatist and poet, renowned for his refined comedies of manners in the Restoration era. He was born on January 24, 1670, in Leeds, England, to William Congreve and Mary Browning. His father, a soldier, was assigned to Youghal, Ireland, where Congreve spent a significant portion of his boyhood. Subsequently, he enrolled in Kilkenny College and later at Trinity College, Dublin, where he formed a friendship with the illustrious satirist Jonathan Swift. Circa 1690, Congreve relocated to England and matriculated at the Middle Temple in London to pursue legal studies, but he swiftly forsook this trajectory in favour of literature. His inaugural published work was the love comedy Incognita (1692), authored under the pseudonym "Cleophil."

Congreve premiered his inaugural play, The Old Bachelor, in 1693 at the Theatre Royal in London. The play achieved remarkable popularity and solidified his status as a prominent dramatist. His latter works are The Double Dealer (1693), Love for Love (1695), The Mourning Bride (1697), and The Way of the World (1700). Despite The Way of the World being regarded as his magnum opus today, it initially had a tepid reception. His plays are famous for their astute humour, refined dialogue, and penetrating social critique, satirising the behaviours and intrigues of the English nobility.

Congreve's style is characterised by sophistication, cleverness, and irony. His style is polished and sophisticated, frequently utilising balanced sentences and antithesis to embody the neoclassical principles of harmony and order. His dialogues are characterised by wit, seamlessly integrating humour with a scathing examination of modern society. He distinguishes between authentic wit and superficial pretentiousness, asserting that wit must align with a character's temperament. His plays are imbued with both dramatic and verbal irony, amplifying their humorous and satirical impact.

The deterioration of Congreve's theatrical career corresponded with a transformation in public preferences and heightened critique of Restoration humour. In 1698, critic Jeremy Collier released A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, which condemned Congreve and his colleagues for their alleged moral laxity. This may have impacted Congreve's choice to cease playwriting. He opted for poetry,

opera librettos, and translations. He briefly served in the Civil Service and as a wine commissioner, living comfortably on income derived from his literary endeavours and inheritance.

Congreve remained unmarried but was purportedly romantically linked to the actress Anne Bracegirdle and the Duchess of Marlborough, Henrietta Godolphin. Many contend that he was the progenitor of Lady Mary Godolphin, the daughter of Godolphin. Congreve passed away on January 19, 1729, due to injuries incurred in a carriage accident. He was interred in Westminster Abbey, and a monument was constructed in his tribute.

Although his literary output was very limited, Congreve's impact on English humour was substantial. His writings contributed to the definition of the comedy of manners, emphasising the scathing portrayal of upper-class society over complex narratives. His renowned quote, "Music has charms to soothe the savage beast," is still widely acknowledged. The Way of the World remains esteemed for its inventiveness, wit, and artistry, inspiring contemporary adaptations and performances. Critics, such as Michael Billington and Sam Marlowe, have lauded the play's originality, wit, and sarcastic excellence, solidifying Congreve's status as one of the preeminent playwrights of the English theatre.

Unit-11

Detail Study of T*he Way of the World Summary*

Prior to the commencement of the play, several significant events had transpired in the lives of the principal characters, which Congreve elucidates throughout the narrative. Arabella's initial spouse, Languish, has passed away, bequeathing her his wealth. She initiates a clandestine liaison with Edward Mirabell. They terminate the relationship, and she marries a guy chosen by Mirabell (Fainall) due to Mirabell's apprehension over the possibility of their conceiving a child out of wedlock, but Congreve does not elucidate why Mirabell does not marry her himself. Mirabell and Mrs. Arabella Fainall maintain their friendship following the conclusion of the affair.Mirabell initiates a courtship with Millamant, the cousin of Mrs. Fainall, who resides with her aunt and Mrs. Fainall's mother, Lady Wishfort. To secure Wishfort's approval for his union with Millamant, Mirabell employs flattery and bestows considerable attention upon her. Wishfort gets convinced of her devotion and becomes enamoured with him. Subsequently, upon Mrs. Marwood, Wishfort's closest confidante, disclosing Mirabell's actions, her affection for him transforms into animosity. She will not consent to Mirabell marrying Millamant, a significant issue as she governs Millamant's £6,000 dowry.The evening preceding the inaugural scene of the play, marking Mirabell's return to Wishfort's residence since discovering his scheme, Wishfort abruptly expels Mirabell from her "cabal night" assembly in the presence of Millamant, who fails to defend him, along with several others. Undeterred, Mirabell has commenced devising a strategy to compel Wishfort to acquiesce to the marriage, a scheme that Millamant discovers through Foible.During this period, Fainall had been engaged in an affair with Mrs. Marwood, a friend of his wife and Lady Wishfort. Mirabell is the sole individual who harbours suspicions regarding this situation. Foible and Mincing had observed the incident but have been bound to confidentiality by Marwood.The play transpires over the course of a single day, commencing in the morning. Mirabell awaits confirmation that his servant, Waitwell, and Wishfort's servant, Foible, have wed as per his scheme. Meanwhile, he is engaging in a card game with his adversary, Fainall. Mirabell insinuates his awareness of the affair between Fainall and Marwood. He also discloses to Fainall his affection for both the qualities and

shortcomings of Millamant's character. Upon hearing this, Fainall urges him to wed her.Subsequently, Witwoud and Petulant join the two men. Mirabell discovers from the two that Wishfort deliberated the previous night about her intention to wed Millamant to her uncle, Sir Rowland, with the aim of disinheriting Mirabell from his uncle's estate (it remains unknown that Sir Rowland is fictitious and that this is a component of Mirabell's scheme).Mirabell's scheme progresses smoothly until Marwood, concealed in a closet, eavesdrops on Mrs Fainall and Foible, so uncovering the entirety of Mirabell's intentions. She divulges this information to Fainall, and they devise a scheme to undermine Mirabell and extort Wishfort.That afternoon at Wishfort's residence, Millamant accepts Mirabell's proposal and declines Sir Wilfull's, whom Lady Wishfort wished her to marry.Marwood and Fainall collaborate to thwart Mirabell's scheme. They disclose Foible's treachery and Sir Rowland's authentic identity (Waitwell) to Wishfort, prompting Fainall to have Waitwell apprehended. He menaces Wishfort, asserting that if she does not relinquish her inheritance, encompassing Millamant and Mrs. Fainall's shares, he will disclose Mrs. Fainall's liaison with Mirabell to the community, so inflicting considerable shame upon her family. He also insists that Wishfort herself consent to never marry (unless he grants permission).Mrs. Wishfort believes she has discovered a flaw in Fainall's scheme upon learning that Millamant and Sir Wilfull have consented to marry. Nonetheless, Fainall remains resolute as he can still seize control of Wishfort and her spouse's wealth.All seemed hopeless for Wishfort and her family until Mirabell intervenes. Prior to extending his assistance, he requires Wishfort to guarantee her consent for him to wed Millamant, to which she simply acquiesces.He then summons Mincing and Foible to disclose the liaison between Fainall and Mrs. Marwood. Wishfort is discontented that this is Mirabell's ultimate advantage, although Mirabell possesses an additional stratagem. He summons Waitwell, who presents a deed for all of Arabella Languish's assets. Prior to her marriage to Fainall, Mirabell and Arabella harboured suspicions regarding Fainall's potential deceit, prompting Arabella to consent to transfer her inheritance to Mirabell as a safeguard. As her trustee, Mirabell retains control over her wealth, and the legally enforceable instrument consequently precludes Fainall's claim to his wife's riches.After successfully overcoming the challenges posed by Fainall and Marwood and safeguarding the financial status and public image of Mrs. Fainall and Wishfort, Sir Wilfull takes the admirable step of releasing Millamant from her

engagement, clearing the path for her to unite with Mirabell as he follows his intended journey. Concurrently, Mirabell dispatches the necessary documents to Arabella, providing her with the strategic tools needed to effectively handle the volatile and vengeful character of Fainall in a manner that will protect those involved and maintain the delicate balance of their newly established relationships.

MAJOR THEMES IN THE PLAY

The play serves as a theatrical portrayal of several forms of love in England during the year 1700. The intricate management of romantic dynamics between Mirabell and Millamant is important. They embody the quintessential Restoration ethos, characterised by intensity and equilibrium, with their affection rooted on mutual respect and the preservation of individuality. In contrast, Mirabell's earlier and ambiguous romantic involvement with Mrs. Fainall is notable; the illicit passion between Fainall and Mrs. Marwood, presumably intense yet devoid of mutual trust; the insincere advances young Witwoud makes towards Millamant; the straightforward and somewhat crude manner of Sir Wilfull; and, at the opposite extreme, the undignified and ageing desires of Lady Wishfort, characterised by vanity, unrealistic expectations, eagerness, desperation, and a touch of pathos.

Affection and Wealth

This technique is closely associated with love a la mode, however they are not synonymous. In the depicted world, love and wealth are values that must be considered at all times. Mirabell's genuine affection does not obscure his awareness of Millamant's wealth. Fainall enters into matrimony for financial gain to sustain an illegal affair; evidently, the prospect of marrying Mrs. Marwood without sufficient funds (regardless of how "sufficient" is interpreted) is inconceivable. Financial resources constitute Lady Wishfort's exclusive leverage over her offspring and her ward. The union of the servants is predicated on the assurance of a substantial monetary sum. This is the manner of the world. Affection devoid of financial resources is an unattainable emotional aspiration, yet capital frequently taints the love that exists.

A Collection of Portraits

Congreve's assertions in the dedication, prologue, and epilogue imply that this could be an appropriate subtitle. Given society's tendency to value youth, Mirabell and Millamant epitomise all that is commendable. Mirabell epitomises the ideal: refined, composed, logical, and equitable, possessing wit and insight without being excessively cerebral. Millamant is the epitome of beauty: feminine, attractive, clever, unreserved, yet possessing a strong feeling of self-worth. She has evaded the complications and indignity of sexual entanglements. In opposition to Mirabell are aspiring intellectuals, respectable yet inelegant clods, and cunning schemers. Contrary to Millamant are ladies who partake in infidelity and an elderly dowager without propriety. Each character unveils their identity through action, collectively creating a gallery of self-portraits.

Thicket of Elevated Intrigue

This subtitle would emphasise certain values of London society. All are embroiled in scheming: Mirabell plots to secure Lady Wishfort's approval for his marriage, which entails layers of deception, as he harbours distrust towards Waitwell. Fainall conspires in response. All individuals, including Mrs. Fainall, Mrs. Marwood, and the servants, are implicated in these plans. Even Lady Wishfort, in her eagerness to wed Sir Rowland, harbours a double intention – vengeance against Mirabell. Mrs. Fainall's marriage to her husband was part of a conspiracy, as was his marriage to her. In the play, victory is awarded to Mirabell, not due to his virtue, but only because he is the most adept intriguer. All these potential subtitles collectively contribute to the satirical criticism on society encapsulated in the title, The Way of the World.

Love and Affection:

The romantic relationship between Millamant and Mirabell is central to The Way of the World. To contemporary readers, their connection may appear perplexing, even peculiar; nonetheless, their clever dialogues and apparent lack of physical intimacy epitomise the ideal partnership perceived during the Restoration Period. Exemplary relationships during the Restoration Period, exemplified by Mirabell and Millamant, were defined by equality and autonomy; however, societal norms continued to scrutinise women's chastity more severely than men's, as evidenced by the disparate treatment of Mrs. Fainall and Mirabell's liaison, wherein Mrs. Fainall required safeguarding from "scandal," while Mirabell enjoyed relative freedom in his actions. Mirabell parallels Millamant's wit and humour in ways that her other suitors, Petulant, Witwoud, and Sir

Wilfull, fail to do. Their succinct dialogues underscore society's craving for cleverness, especially when juxtaposed with the mundane vulgarity of her other admirers, who are intermittently characterised as inebriated, narcissistic, uninformed, and lascivious. Millamant, as the quintessential heroine—exquisite, resilient, astute, and autonomous—disdains inept suitors such as Sir Wilfull and starkly contrasts with Lady Wishfort, who absurdly fumbles in her attempts to captivate Sir Rowland. In contrast to Mrs. Fainall, who capitulates to the demands of her tyrannical husband only when compelled at the last moment, Millamant refuses to allow Mirabell any influence. She enumerates her stipulations prior to accepting Mirabell's proposal, which include the freedom to dress as she wishes, engage with whomever she desires, avoid entertaining his tedious relatives, dine at her convenience, and maintain seclusion in her quarters. The relationship demands would have been quite popular and contentious during the Restoration Period, when society resisted longstanding conservative gender standards.

Monetary Wealth and Avarice

The play asserts that greed is "The Way of the World." While survival necessitates financial resources, the quest for wealth frequently undermines interpersonal connections. All characters in the play exhibit varying degrees of avarice. Each individual makes choices to safeguard, acquire, or appropriate wealth. The primary conflict of the play centres on Millamant's substantial inheritance and the means of safeguarding it through matrimony. Lady Wishfort, as a condition of her guardianship, withholds Millamant's inheritance unless she marries a man whom she approves. When Mirabell loses Lady Wishfort's favour, he must devise a complex scheme to secure Millamant's hand and safeguard her inheritance. Even Millamant, who evidently adores Mirabell, would probably not wed him without her wealth—she even resorts to becoming engaged to Sir Wilfull, a man she finds repugnant, in a bid to safeguard her inheritance.

Fainall's and Mrs. Marwood's insatiable greed serves to establish them as the primary antagonists within the play, driven by their relentless desire to possess that which does not rightfully belong to them. Fainall strategically marries Lady Wishfort's daughter solely for financial gain, subsequently squandering this acquired wealth on his lover, Mrs. Marwood. Through deceitful plots, he manipulates and threatens Lady Wishfort to yield her riches and deprive Millamant of her inheritance, even going as far as leveraging the ultimatum of divorcing his loyal but unsuspecting wife should his

demands not be met. Unveiling his nefarious intentions, Fainall casually remarks that such conduct is commonplace in society, insinuating that avarice is a pervasive driving force behind societal behaviors. The stark contrast presented in the play highlights the despicable nature of prioritizing wealth over genuine affection, while also portraying the arduous impracticality of pursuing love in the absence of financial security given the intricate interplay of circumstances the characters find themselves entangled within.

The Way of the World as a Theatre of Deceit

The Way of the World is fundamentally a drama of deception. Virtually all characters conspire against one another for personal advantage. Assisted by Mrs. Fainall, Foible, and Waitwell, Mirabell conspires against Lady Wishfort to secure Millamant's hand in marriage. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood conspire against Mirabell and Lady Wishfort with the intention of obtaining the wealth of Mrs. Fainall and Mirabell. Waitwell masquerades as a nobleman, Lady Wishfort applies extensive makeup to conceal her age, Witwoud conceals his modest origins, and Mrs. Marwood dons a mask to obscure her feelings. Mrs. Fainall conceals her previous liaison with Mirabell, while Fainall engages in an unlawful relationship with Mrs. Marwood. No individual is what they appear, and each harbours a secret. In each narrative, the characters endeavour to outsmart one another, demonstrating their dominance. By achieving his objective at the conclusion of the play, Congreve unequivocally portrays Mirabell as the most astute character.

The cleverness and depth of each character are clearly displayed through the way in which Congreve skillfully constructs their dialogues. Mirabell, being the most perceptive character, is portrayed with the utmost elegance in his speech. His words flow smoothly and exude refinement, filled with vibrant descriptions and imaginative language. In contrast, the dialogue of Ignorant Petulant is often blunt, crude, and at times requires further explanation, as shown in the line: "By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what-d'ee-call-'ems." Mirabell and Millamant's conversation regarding their engagement is a masterful display of articulate communication, presenting a sharp juxtaposition to the brief and to-the-point exchanges between spouses Waitwell and Foible, whose relationship, although a charade, lacks the profound romantic depth found in the genuine affection they hold for each other.

In Congreve's play, jealousy, duplicity, and intrigue serve as significant and interconnected plot mechanisms that propel the narrative by generating tension among characters. The play can be perceived as a contest between Mirabell and Fainall, each employing contrasting strategies to manipulate Lady Wishfort and her wealth. Each individual is aided in his endeavour to surpass the other. Fainall is assisted by his mistress, Mrs. Marwood, whereas numerous principal and secondary people engage in Mirabell's scheme to secure Millamant as his wife and preserve her affection and fortune.

Congreve's most deceitful characters, engaged in affairs and plotting against love due to their own unreciprocated affections, exhibit the highest levels of jealousy. Jealousy serves as a significant impetus for the adulterers, Fainall and Marwood, as well as Lady Wishfort, to conspire against Mirabell. Marwood and Wishfort initially harbour affection for Mirabell; but, his lack of reciprocation incites their overwhelming envy, culminating in animosity and schemes to sabotage his prospects with Millamant. Fainall harbours jealousy towards Mirabell due to his appeal to women, especially since Marwood continues to have affections for Mirabell, and because Mirabell poses a threat to acquire a portion of Wishfort's wealth through his potential marriage to Millamant.

Through the depiction of jealousy as a motivating force for these people, Congreve elucidates various teachings regarding the detrimental consequences of envy. Ultimately, all very envious characters fail to achieve their desire for vengeance against Mirabell. Fainall's dishonesty engenders a distrust of others' integrity and leads him to question his mistress, ultimately undermining his scheme by estranging his sole ally. Marwood's case exemplifies the consequences of attempting to undermine multiple individuals simultaneously. While she seeks to assist Fainall in obtaining Wishfort's funds, she simultaneously desires to retaliate against Mirabell by whatever means available. Her jealousy obscures her perception of the repercussions associated with formulating her own independent strategies to thwart Mirabell's union with Millamant. By proposing to Lady Wishfort that Millamant wed Sir Rowland, her action jeopardises the success of Fainall's scheme, compelling the couple to exert greater effort to get the inheritance.

Wishfort's envy causes her to unwittingly assist both Fainall and Mirabell. Her eagerness to harm Mirabell and obstruct his marriage to Millamant leads her to believe she possesses greater control over the situation than she truly does. Rather than embodying Mirabell, she is manipulated by others, many of whom are of inferior social standing yet surpass her in intellect, such as Foible.

Conversely, although jealousy influences Mirabell, he remains unperturbed and does not perceive a threat from Millamant's other admirers. As a result, he maintains an advantage over Fainall and persuades Lady Wishfort to acquiesce to his scheme.

Alongside envy, deception and intrigue further enhance the growing action, rendering the drama both captivating and suspenseful. As the primary conflict between Mirabell and Fainall unfolds, it becomes evident that nearly every character harbours a secret. Deception manifests in overt forms, exemplified by characters adopting complete disguises, such as Mirabell's servant, Waitwell, who impersonates Sir Rowland, or by habitual deceivers like Petulant, who persist in fabricating elaborate stories. Congreve also explores more nuanced forms of deception, such as self-delusion, exemplified by Lady Wishfort, who employs excessive cosmetics to conceal her age from her admirer, Sir Rowland, as well as from herself. A more nuanced form of deception is psychological deception, which Marwood particularly employs as she feigns friendship with Wishfort while plotting to usurp her wealth, or when she persuades Fainall of her loyalty despite her continued affection for Mirabell.

In Congreve's work, his strategic use of deception and mystery goes beyond mere plot dynamics; it intricately weaves through the very fabric of his drama. An example of this can be seen in the hidden relationship between Foible and Waitwell, a clandestine connection unveiled gradually throughout the play. This careful unfolding, starting in the first act and culminating in Act 2, Scene 4, serves as a symbolic representation of the overarching themes of deceit and manipulation that echo throughout the characters' lives. Furthermore, the cryptic interactions and covert exchanges, such as Mrs. Fainall's subtle communication with Mirabell in the closing moments of the play, heighten the intrigue for both the characters and the unsuspecting audience, effectively drawing them into a web of cunning schemes and intricate subterfuge.

Style, Wit, and Irony in The Way of the World.

William Congreve's The Way of the World (1700) serves as a quintessential example of a Restoration comedy, highlighting the playwright's mastery in crafting a satire that is rich in style, wit, and biting sarcasm. Within the play, audiences are immersed in a sophisticated web of intricate romantic entanglements, intricate social maneuvers, and a dazzling display of linguistic prowess, all of which are executed with consummate literary skill. This chapter delves deep into Congreve's adept use of style, humor, and irony by conducting a thorough examination of key instances from the text, showcasing the playwright's ability to deftly weave these elements together to create a compelling and enduring work of literature.

The Way of the World is infused with elegance, humour, and sarcasm. In its most common application, style denotes the author's language selections within concise rhetorical units, specifically the sentence or, at most, the paragraph. It includes the use of words and the rhythmic and melodic characteristics of the sentences. It involves an analysis of the relationships among language, thought, fact, and reality, ultimately intersecting with a discussion on wit and irony.

Congreve's style is characterised by sophistication, accuracy, and lucidity. His speech is succinct and polished, embodying the elegance of the Restoration period. A prime example of this is seen in the interactions between Mirabell and Millamant, especially in the renowned "proviso scene" in Act IV, where they deliberate the conditions of their impending marriage. The language is simultaneously poetic and pragmatic, exemplifying Congreve's literary skill. Millamant asserts, "I shall remain in bed in the morning for as long as I desire." Mirabell responds, "Then I shall rise at my convenience." This amusing exchange illustrates how Congreve's characters employ language not merely for communication but as a tool for exerting dominance and autonomy. The artistic sophistication of their dialogue emphasises the play's examination of love as a contest of intellect. .

A notable characteristic of Congreve's style is his employment of balanced sentences and antithesis, indicative of the Neoclassical influence of his era. Reflect on Fainall's statement in Act II: "To attain happiness, we must seek the means within ourselves,

rather than relying on others." This philosophical observation, articulated in a meticulously constructed statement, embodies the Restoration principles of self-interest and rationalism. Congreve's linguistic elegance transcends social comedy, transforming his themes into enduring reflections on human nature and relationships.

If irony is integrated into the discourse, arbitrary boundaries must be delineated, as irony pervades The Way of the World from specific viewpoints. The title is ironic; the acts are ironic; the connections among the individuals are ironic. This section exclusively examines irony in respect to character dialogue, omitting its connection to plot or theme. It relates to a type of irony closely associated with style and wit.

Wit is probably the quintessential trait of The Way of the World, and Congreve employs it with remarkable proficiency. Restoration humour flourishes through witty dialogue, particularly shown in the character of Millamant. She exemplifies the essence of the clever, autonomous heroine, often outsmarting the men in her vicinity with her incisive wit. In Act II, when faced with Mirabell's love, she remarks, "One's cruelty constitutes one's power; and when one relinquishes one's cruelty, one relinquishes one's power." This assertion is not merely a witty expression but a representation of the overarching topic of control in interpersonal dynamics. Millamant's wit serves as both a protective strategy and a means of self-articulation, highlighting the intricacies of gender dynamics within the play.

Congreve abstains from defining wit; yet, in the dedication, he distinguishes between authentic wit and counterfeit wit, the latter arising from pretentiousness. Congreve's further commentary on wit clarifies his approach. In "Concerning Humour in Comedy," he contends that each character in a comedy is allowed to make pleasant observations. A discerning individual is expected to possess them, yet even a fool may accidently stumble upon them. He asserts, "I contend that comedic characters do not exclude wit; instead, the essence of wit ought to be adapted to the humour." A character with a splenetic and irritable temperament should demonstrate a satirical wit. A cheery and optimistic demeanour should exhibit a humorous wit. Indeed, all of Congreve's characters express "pleasing sentiments." No debate is free from biting wit, sarcasm, or irony.

Congreve's wit extends beyond his protagonists. The ancillary characters, including Lady Wishfort, enhance the play's humorous genius. Her ostentatious vanity and fervent endeavours to preserve her youth offer abundant opportunities for incisive humour. In Act III, upon receiving a love letter from the disguised Mirabell (assuming the identity of Sir Rowland), she declares, "I am astonished by my own favouritism towards myself." I feel embarrassment and humility, yet I cannot feign sincerity. This statement exemplifies self-contradiction, illustrating how humour in The Way of the World frequently stems from characters' ignorance of their own folly. Congreve's skill in creating such moments with seamless sophistication guarantees that his play is among the most humorous in the English literary canon.

Irony pervades The Way of the World, functioning on various levels to augment both the humour and the critique of societal norms. Dramatic irony, in which the spectator possesses greater knowledge than the characters, is effectively employed in Mirabell's intricate plan to wed Millamant. The spectator recognises Mirabell's machinations well before the protagonists do, generating suspense and humour as the narrative progresses. An especially hilarious moment transpires in Act V when Lady Wishfort, who has been exceedingly cautious about deception, inadvertently succumbs to Mirabell's scheme. Her mistaken trust in her own cleverness underscores the play's satirical dimension, revealing the vanity and gullibility of the upper class.

Examinations of style and humour in a play are, in some aspects, uncomplicated. Certain categories of issues ought not to be addressed as they are illusory. Unlike books, plays do not provide extended descriptive passages that may differ in quality; they do not offer detailed expositions of motives. It is unnecessary to determine if the author inhabits the consciousness of his creations or exists independently from them. The characters engage in dialogue, which is open to study. Analysing style or wit in a play involves scrutinising the many styles and forms of wit demonstrated by the characters.

In conclusion, The Way of the World demonstrates Congreve's exceptional command of style, wit, and sarcasm. The play's enduring status as a masterpiece of Restoration comedy is attributed to his refined prose, witty dialogue, and skilful employment of

irony. Through the interactions of his characters, Congreve not only entertains but also delivers an incisive critique of societal norms, love, and power dynamics. The play's persistent relevance and lasting allure attest to his linguistic genius and profound comprehension of human nature.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Congreve crafted his characters with distinctly varied speaking styles and wit. Congreve employed style and wit as methods of characterisation; thus, the content in this section may be seen as supplementary material for character analysis, compiled here to facilitate the examination of a somewhat technical subject in a singular location.

Mirabell

Mirabell's style is complex. We do not perceive him as spontaneous, as his intervals are meticulously planned. The sentences are lengthy, fluid, and syntactically complex. He refrains from using slang or pretentious language. Although he may be caustic in his assessments, his discourse lacks invective. The targets of his displeasure are so skilfully critiqued within his kind remarks that they can hardly perceive the sting.

Mirabell's wit and sarcasm are complex. His assessments of others are astute, encompassing a blend of disgust, tolerance, and amusement. Significant irony is also aimed at himself. His pronounced self-criticism renders him an exceptionally atypical hero.

A multitude of speeches could elucidate these traits; nevertheless, this renowned speech from the first act regarding his sentiments towards Millamant will suffice:

I shall inform you, Fainall, that she once treated me with such insolence that, in retaliation, I dissected her character, analysed her shortcomings, and memorised them. The catalogue was so extensive that I harboured hopes of eventually despising her. To achieve this, I conditioned myself to contemplate them, which, contrary to my intentions and expectations, resulted in diminishing disturbances

over time, until it became customary for me to recall them without irritation. They have become as known to me as my own weaknesses, and likely, in a short while, I will appreciate them equally. The attributes are evident: the extended, fluid phrases (one might recite from "to which end" to the conclusion of the sentence), the genuine humour, the lucid understanding of the speech's purpose, and the sardonic capacity for self-deprecation.

Millamant

The definitive evidence of Millamant's distinctive style lies in the fact that reading the line aloud instantly conveys the character's demeanour and idiosyncrasies. She is irreverent, charmingly pampered, and vivacious. In the fourth act, her unexpected revelation of depth aligns with the stylistic elements. Her inaugural address is abrupt; she transitions not merely between topics but rather between emotions, adeptly transforming any subject into humour.

Mrs. Millamant: Indeed, letters: I possessed letters. I am harassed with letters. I detest letters. No one understands the art of letter writing; however, one possesses them without comprehension of the reason. They are utilised to secure one's hair. Witwoud: I implore you, madam, do you secure your hair with all your correspondence? Mrs. Millamant: Only with those composed in verse, Mr. Witwoud; I never secure my hair with prose. I believe I attempted that once, Mincing.

Mincing: Oh, my dear, I shall always remember it.

Following a succession of brief, dismissive remarks, an insightful notion emerges: "They are utilised to secure one's hair." She subsequently explores the implication of this notion: "Only with those in verse." It is fortuitously agreeable that Mincing can grasp her cue and advance further.

The phrase "One creates lovers at will" parallels "Upon reflection, I am incensed." No, upon reflection, I am content; for I suspect I caused you some distress. The flair and wit define Millamant's character. In the second scene, the tone becomes more sombre, resulting in a shift of pace. While a teasing element persists, there is a reduction in the abrupt transitions between points. Millamant is articulating her stipulations for matrimony:

Trifles — such as the freedom to visit and receive visitors of my choosing; to compose and receive correspondence without your scrutiny or disapproval; to dress according to my preference and engage in dialogue solely based on my inclinations; to be under no compulsion to converse with individuals I find unappealing merely due to their association with you; or to associate with the foolish simply because they are your relatives. . . . If I persist in tolerating you a bit longer, I may gradually transform into a wife.

Fainall

Fainall's style and wit must be distinguished from Mirabell's. His sentences lack the length and depth of Mirabell's, and his wit is more straightforward and somewhat harsher. The indifference of a defeated player diminishes the satisfaction of the victor. I would not associate with a man who disregarded his misfortune any more than I would engage romantically with a woman who trivialised the loss of her reputation. Due to the characteristics of his role, he exhibits a more direct approach in accusations, and his dialogue may rely on clearer parallelism and antithesis. "Could you believe that the vigilant lover slept while the nodding husband remained awake?" He launches a more direct assault: "Claimed a friendship!" "Oh, the virtuous camaraderie among women!"

Young Witwoud

Given Congreve's assertion that readers and audiences often struggle to differentiate between Witwoud and his genuine wits, a meticulous analysis of Witwoud's dialogues

is required. Witwoud's role in the play is non-functional; his dialogues serve to define his persona and to provide humour. The essence of his wit is in "similitude." "Cease your comparisons," Millamant instructs him. Every comparison may be insightful in its own right, entertaining, unconventional, or perhaps startling, shown by the phrase "Friendship devoid of freedom is as tedious as love lacking pleasure." The lines with which he interrupts Millamant in the second act are each a comparison, either humorous or excessive. The quips are contrived; they have been gathered and committed to memory, subsequently retrieved from his repertoire as required. The irony, if present, is superficial; none of the witticisms possesses a specific significance. Nor does the youthful Witwoud comprehend that it ought to.

Lady Wishfort

Lady Wishfort's manner is, similar to all facets of her character, highly remarkable and deserving of attention. Her demeanor carries a certain briskness that mirrors the unpredictable and somewhat despotic nature she embodies with flair. Like many other figures crafted by Congreve, she exhibits a sharp and, perhaps unintentional, wit that sets her apart. Most notably in the play, her verbal attacks on those around her are delivered with a directness that can be accurately likened to the "Boudoir Billingsgate" as characterized by Meredith. Not a single thought is articulated without being wrapped in only a handful of syllables. It becomes apparent that she raises her voice in moments of vexation or annoyance, which to her, seems ever-present: "No, you foolish individual. Not the ratafia, you simpleton. Grant me some patience! I am referring to the Spanish document, you fool; complexion, my dear. Apply that paint once more! Do you understand, you changeling, with your limp hands hanging like bobbins before you? Why are you motionless, puppet? Oh, you wooden figure suspended by wires!"

The concept of irony possesses a distinct interpretation in the context of Lady Wishfort. It is true that she does indulge in heavy-handed sarcasm, but the unconscious irony is more significant. She reacts to the unintended imagery of words with sardonic self-disclosure. Foible reports that Mirabell stated he would "manage" Lady Wishfort. "Would he dare to confront me?" she exclaims, "such an impudent individual." The meaning of "handle" is evident to her, whereas the reader may or may not perceive

the ambiguity of "would he durst." Her discourse, while she attends to her appearance while awaiting Sir Rowland, comprises a series of brief, agitated remarks that reflect her habitual demeanour, an unintentional yet satirical portrayal of her duplicity:

In what form shall I present his heart with its initial impression? The initial impression holds significant importance. May I take a seat? — No, I shall not remain seated — I will walk — indeed, I will proceed from the door upon his arrival; and then confront him directly. — No, that would be excessively abrupt. I will recline — indeed, I will recline — and welcome him in my modest dressing room; there is a couch — yeah, yes, I shall create the initial impression on a couch. I shall not deceive, but rather recline on one elbow, with one foot slightly dangling, pondering thoughtfully — indeed — and then, upon his arrival, I shall startle, yes, be astonished, and rise to greet him in a charming disarray — indeed — oh, nothing is more captivating than a reception from a couch, amidst some disarray. It accentuates the foot, evokes blushes, and provides unparalleled composure.

Instances can indeed be proliferated in various contexts and through different lenses of interpretation. For instance, in one particular instance, one may also take into consideration Lady Wishfort's insightful observation upon the realization that her daughter's fortune remains intact, when she astutely remarks, "'Tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence." This commendation bears a significantly ambiguous undertone, given Mrs. Fainall's rather unsatisfactory romantic involvement with Mirabell, as well as Lady Wishfort's evident misjudgment of the true nature of relationships between Mrs. Marwood and Sir Rowland.

Multiple choice questions:

1. Who are the two main lovers in The Way of the World?

a) Millamant and Mirabell b) Fainall and Lady Wishfort c) Lady Smart and Sir Wilfull d) Sir Rowland and Mrs. Marwood

Answer: a)Millamant and Mirabell

2. What does Mirabell want from Lady Wishfort in The Way of the World?

a) Her fortune b) Her approval to marry Millamant c) Her secret letters d) Her political influence

Answer: b) Her approval to marry Millamant

3. How is The Way of the World categorized in terms of its genre?

a) Tragedy b) Romance c) Restoration comedy d) Epic poetry

Answer: c) Restoration comedy

4. What is the primary theme of The Way of the World?

a) The exploration of love and virtue b) The struggle between the classes c) The corruption of marriage and social relations d) The journey of self-discovery

Answer: c) The corruption of marriage and social relations

5. Who is the antagonist in The Way of the World?

a) Millamant b) Fainall c) Mirabell d) Lady Wishfort

Answer: b) Fainall

Very Short Answer type question:

1. What are the two things that The Way of the World focus on?

Answer: The Way of the World focuses on Marriage and Relationships

2. How can the play The Way of the World be categorised?

Answer: The play can be considered as a Restoration Comedy play.

3. What does the play mock at?

Answer: The play mocks at society's obsession with money.

4. How is Mirabell portrayed in the play?

Answer: Mirabell is portrayed as a crafty gentleman and is full of resources.

5. What genre does the play fall into?

Answer: The play falls into Comedy of Manners genre.

Long answer type questions

1. What is the importance of the title The Way of the World?

Answer:The title The Way of the World captures the elements of deception, manipulation, and social ambition within Restoration culture. The play depicts a realm where marriage, love, and self-interest are interwoven with plots and machinations. Characters such as Mirabell and Millamant must traverse a realm of hypocrisy and pretence to attain their objectives. The title implies that such deceitful conduct is merely customary in elite society. Congreve used wit and satire to reveal the deficiencies of society while simultaneously extolling intellect and genuine affection.

2. In what manner does Mirabell embody the quintessential Restoration gentleman?

Answer: Mirabell is shown as a clever, charismatic, and astute gentleman who comprehends the intricacies of society. In contrast to other characters who employ deception just for personal benefit, Mirabell's machinations are motivated by his affection for Millamant. He meticulously strategises to outwit Lady Wishfort and attain both affection and economic security. His capacity to harmonise wit with authentic devotion distinguishes him from the opportunistic types. Congreve depicts Mirabell

as an exemplary gentleman capable of flourishing in a corrupt society while maintaining his integrity.

3. What is Lady Wishfort's role in the conflict of the play?

Answer: Lady Wishfort is a pivotal character in the play's conflicts, as her consent is essential for the union of Mirabell and Millamant. She is a conceited and elderly widow, yearning for romance, rendering her susceptible to deceit. Mirabell's strategy entails exploiting her yearning for acclaim to secure her advantage. Nonetheless, her obstinacy and emotional impulsiveness present challenges for the protagonists. Congreve critiques the fixation on youth and matrimony in elite society through the character of Lady Wishfort.

4. In what manner does Millamant contest conventional gender norms in the play?

Answer: Millamant is a sagacious, autonomous, and clever protagonist who rejects cultural norms imposed on women. She exerts her autonomy in her relationship with Mirabell, negotiating the conditions of their marriage to safeguard her independence. Her renowned "proviso scene" exemplifies her insistence on marital equality, contesting the notion that women ought to be subservient spouses. In contrast to other female characters that exhibit either manipulation or passivity, Millamant harmonises allure with self-respect. Congreve employs her persona to challenge the restricted roles afforded to women in Restoration society.

5. What is the importance of the proviso scene between Mirabell and Millamant?

Answer: The proviso scene is a pivotal moment in the play, illustrating contemporary conceptions of love and marriage. In this scenario, Millamant and Mirabell deliberate the terms of their prospective engagement, guaranteeing reciprocal respect and autonomy. Millamant resists total subjugation by her husband, asserting her need for

autonomy and personal space. This moment underscores the theme of marriage as a contractual agreement rather than simply subservience. The scene illustrates Congreve's forward-thinking perspective on partnerships, highlighting wit, equality, and mutual understanding between couples.

Key points to remember

1. The Restoration Comedy: The Way of the World is a classic example of Restoration comedy, known for its witty dialogue, satirical treatment of social mores, and exploration of manners and morals in the upper class.

2. Themes of Love and Marriage: The play explores the complexities of love and marriage, focusing on the relationship between Mirabell and Millamant, whose engagement is complicated by social expectations, money, and personal ambitions.

3. Complexity of Characters: The characters in the play are multifaceted and morally ambiguous, particularly Mirabell, Millamant, and the various secondary characters like Fainall and Lady Wishfort.

4. Social Satire: Congreve critiques the superficiality, hypocrisy, and manipulative behavior in the upper class, especially through the portrayal of characters like Lady Wishfort, who is obsessed with status and appearance.

5. The Role of Wit and Humor: The play is filled with sharp, quick-witted dialogue, often used to expose characters' true motivations and to highlight the contrasts between appearance and reality.

6. Mirabell's Schemes: Much of the plot revolves around Mirabell's schemes to secure Millamant's hand in marriage, as he manipulates various characters to achieve his goal, showcasing the theme of deception and cleverness.

7. The Battle of the Sexes: A prominent theme in the play is the battle of the sexes, particularly in the relationship between Mirabell and Millamant, where love, power dynamics, and manipulation are key elements.

8. Social Expectations vs. Personal Desires: The play explores the tension between social expectations and personal desires, as characters navigate issues of love, marriage, and wealth within the rigid constraints of 17th-century English society.

9. Lady Wishfort's Role: Lady Wishfort, a central character, is portrayed as a foolish and self-absorbed woman who is eager to marry off her daughter and secure her own social status, often causing complications in the plot.

10. Happy Ending and Restoration: Despite the characters' various deceptions and manipulations, the play ends with a happy resolution where the true love between Mirabell and Millamant triumphs, and the social order is restored.

Essay Type Questions

1.Discuss the theme of marriage and social contracts in The Way of the World. How does the play reflect the complexities of relationships in Restoration society?

2.Analyze the character of Mirabell. How does he navigate the social intrigues of the play, and what does his character reveal about the ideals of love and wit?

3. Examine the role of Lady Wishfort in The Way of the World. How does Congreve use her character to highlight the vulnerabilities of aging women in a patriarchal society?

4.How does The Way of the World exemplify the characteristics of Restoration comedy? Discuss its use of wit, satire, and the comedy of manners.

5. Discuss the significance of the "proviso scene" between Mirabell and Millamant. How does it represent the balance of power in their relationship and in Restoration marriage?

Unit -12

Detail Study of *The School for Scandal –R.B. Sheridan*

Objective: The objective of studying The School for Scandal is to explore the themes of gossip, social hypocrisy, and moral corruption in 18th-century British society. By analyzing the characters and their relationships, students can examine the impact of social norms and the consequences of deceit and scandal. It explores satirical critique of the upper class, making it relevant for discussions on societal values, human nature, and the role of comedy in exposing societal flaws.

Author Introduction:

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816) was a prominent Irish playwright, poet, and politician, best known for his sharp wit and masterful use of language. His works often focused on the follies and vices of society, blending comedy with social critique. Sheridan was not only a literary figure but also an influential figure in British political life during the late 18th century. Here's a brief look at his life and works:

- Born: October 30, 1751, in Dublin, Ireland.
- Family: His father, Thomas Sheridan, was a playwright and a supporter of Irish language revival, and his mother, Frances Sheridan, was a novelist and dramatist. Sheridan's early exposure to literature was substantial.
- Education: Sheridan was educated in England, attending Harrow School and later the University of Oxford, though he left without completing his degree.

Career and Works:

Sheridan's most notable contributions came through his works as a playwright and his career in politics.

Major Plays:

1. **The Rivals (1775):**

This comedy of manners is one of Sheridan's earliest successes. It revolves around the characters' various romantic entanglements, misunderstandings, and social pretensions. The play introduced the character of Sir Anthony Absolute and his son, Captain Absolute, and is renowned for its lively, satirical commentary on human nature and love.

2. The School for Scandal (1777):

This is perhaps Sheridan's most famous play, a scathing satire of the high-society gossip and scandal-mongering of the time. The play explores the effects of gossip, hypocrisy, and deceit, with memorable characters such as Lady Sneerwell and the clever, scheming Joseph Surface. The play remains a classic example of Restoration comedy.

3. A Trip to Scarborough (1777):

Though it is often seen as a lesser work compared to "The School for Scandal," this comedy also contains elements of social criticism and witty character sketches.

4. The Duenna (1775):

This is a romantic comedy that blends elements of opera and drama, and though not as highly regarded as his other works, it was a popular success in its time.

Sheridan's works, particularly The Rivals and The School for Scandal, remain staples of the English theatrical canon. His ability to blend humor with sharp social critique made his plays timeless. His works are still frequently performed in theaters around the world.

- Influence: Sheridan's use of comedy and satire influenced many writers and playwrights, including Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw. His wit and insight into human nature have made his works continue to resonate with modern audiences.

Sheridan's combination of wit, satire, and sharp social commentary secured his place as one of the most significant playwrights of the 18th century, and his works

continue to be celebrated for their exploration of human folly and their brilliant dialogue.

Summary

The School for Scandal is a comedy of manners by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The play is a satire of the upper class, exposing the frivolities, hypocrisies, and moral failings of the social elite. Set in London, the plot revolves around gossip, deception, and mistaken identities, with much of the action unfolding in high-society drawing rooms.

The story focuses on the lives of two families, the Surface family and the Truewit family, who are at the center of a scandalous world filled with gossip and intrigue.

Lady Sneerwell is a wealthy widow who enjoys gossiping about the personal lives and scandals of others. She is the ringleader of the "School for Scandal," where she spreads malicious rumors about people to destroy their reputations. Her primary target is Maria, a young woman who has caught the eye of two men: Joseph Surface and Charles Surface.Joseph Surface, one of the main male characters, is portrayed as the epitome of hypocrisy. He pretends to be virtuous and moral, but in reality, he is deceitful and corrupt. He tries to woo Maria while secretly being involved in a series of dishonest dealings, including attempting to court a wealthy widow for money.Charles Surface, on the other hand, is portrayed as the more carefree and impulsive character. While he is often seen as morally flawed (due to his gambling habits and careless spending), he is, in fact, much more genuine and honorable than his brother, Joseph.Maria is caught in the middle of the two men. She is in love with Charles but is initially deceived by Joseph's virtuous façade.The play also introduces Sir Peter Teazle, an older man who is married to the much younger Lady Teazle. Lady Teazle is also drawn into the world of gossip and rumors, and her flirtations with other men, particularly Joseph, create tensions in her marriage to Sir Peter.

The conclusion is twisted when the true nature of the characters is revealed. Charles Surface is revealed to be the more honorable brother, and Maria chooses him over Joseph. Meanwhile, Sir Peter's marriage to Lady Teazle is saved when they reconcile.

Key Themes of the Drama

1. Hypocrisy and Deception: A central theme of The School for Scandal is the contrast between appearance and reality. Characters like Joseph Surface represent the dangers of pretending to be virtuous while secretly engaging in immoral behavior. The play critiques the moral decay in society, particularly among the wealthy.

2. Gossip and Reputation: The play is filled with characters who are obsessed with gossip and the reputations of others. Lady Sneerwell's malicious gossip and the spreading of rumors is a key driver of the plot and a criticism of how reputation is often more important than truth or integrity in high society.

3. Marriage and Social Expectations: The play explores the dynamics of marriage, particularly the tensions between Sir Peter and Lady Teazle. It reveals the challenges of maintaining a relationship in a society that values wealth and appearance over love and genuine connection.

4. Social Satire: Sheridan uses humor and wit to expose the absurdities of the social norms and values of the time. The play mocks the behavior of the upper classes, using them as a mirror to reflect the flaws of society.

Critical Analysis:

1. Social Critique:

Sheridan's play is a pointed critique of the aristocracy, particularly the hypocrisy and moral corruption that often accompany wealth and privilege. By creating characters like Joseph Surface, who presents himself as virtuous while secretly engaging in vice, Sheridan emphasizes the danger of outward appearances and the fragility of social reputation. The play serves as an indictment of the social obsession with scandal and gossip, which destroys lives and perpetuates falsehoods.

2. The Comedy of Manners:

As a comedy of manners, The School for Scandal skillfully employs wit, clever dialogue, and farcical situations to both entertain and critique. The characters' behavior is exaggerated for comic effect, and their interactions—particularly in the drawing-room scenes—are filled with sharp repartee and playful insults. Sheridan's ability to create vivid, memorable characters who represent the various facets of society adds depth to the comedy.

3. Gender and Power:

The play also presents an interesting commentary on gender roles. Women like Lady Sneerwell and Lady Teazle are central to the plot's conflicts, but their roles are often shaped by the men around them. Lady Sneerwell, for example, is depicted as a villain, whose manipulation of gossip is used to destroy others. Lady Teazle's flirtations and social aspirations create tension in her marriage, but ultimately she is expected to conform to the expectations of her husband, Sir Peter.

4. Moral Resolution:

While the play's satire is biting, it ultimately concludes with a moral resolution: Charles Surface, though flawed, is revealed to be the more honest and deserving man, while Joseph's hypocrisy is exposed. The reconciliation of Sir Peter and Lady Teazle also suggests that the virtues of love, honesty, and communication can overcome societal challenges.

5. Contemporary Relevance:

Though set in the 18th century, The School for Scandal remains relevant today. The themes of gossip, social media, and the obsession with public image continue to resonate in modern society. In an era of rapid information sharing, where rumors can spread quickly, Sheridan's exploration of how gossip ruins lives and distorts the truth still strikes a chord with audiences.

The School for Scandal is a masterful comedy that blends sharp social commentary with witty humor. Sheridan's ability to create enduring characters and expose the

follies of his society ensures that the play remains a classic of English theatre. Its exploration of hypocrisy, reputation, and marriage continues to make it a relevant and engaging work.

Multiple choice Questions

1. Who is the primary antagonist in The School for Scandal?

   A) Sir Peter Teazle

   B) Lady Sneerwell

   C) Charles Surface

   D) Joseph Surface

   Answer: B) Lady Sneerwell

2. What is the primary theme of The School for Scandal?

   A) The conflict between social classes

   B) The importance of family loyalty

   C) The hypocrisy and moral corruption of the upper class

   D) The struggles of the working class

   Answer: C) The hypocrisy and moral corruption of the upper class

3. Which character is known for pretending to be virtuous but is secretly corrupt?

   A) Charles Surface

   B) Sir Peter Teazle

   C) Joseph Surface

   D) Maria

   Answer: C) Joseph Surface

4. What is the main conflict regarding Maria's romantic choices in the play?

A) She is in love with her guardian, Sir Peter Teazle

B) She must choose between Charles Surface and Joseph Surface

C) She is forced into an arranged marriage with Sir Peter

D) She is forbidden to marry anyone by her uncle

Answer: B) She must choose between Charles Surface and Joseph Surface

5. How does The School for Scandal resolve the conflict between Sir Peter and Lady Teazle?

A) They divorce

B) Sir Peter leaves London

C) They reconcile and their marriage is saved

D) Lady Teazle is disinherited

Answer: C) They reconcile and their marriage is saved

Very Short answer and question

1. Who is the main gossip and antagonist in the play?
    - o Lady Sneerwell
2. Which character pretends to be virtuous but is secretly corrupt?
    - o Joseph Surface
3. Who is the carefree and honest brother in the Surface family?
    - o Charles Surface
4. Who is the woman caught between Joseph and Charles Surface?
    - o Maria
5. What is Sir Peter Teazle's relationship to Lady Teazle?
    - o Husband

6. Which character is constantly caught up in flirtations and rumors?

    o Lady Teazle

7. Who is the older, wealthy character who enjoys gossiping?

    o Sir Oliver Surface

8. Which character is known for his sharp wit and clever dialogue?

    o Charles Surface

9. Where does most of the play's action take place?

    o Drawing-room

10. Which character reveals the hypocrisy of Joseph Surface at the end?

· Sir Peter Teazle

Short answer question

1. How does Sheridan portray the character of Lady Sneerwell in the play?

Lady Sneerwell is depicted as a malicious gossip who spreads rumors to destroy people's reputations. She embodies the dangers of social manipulation and the destruction that comes with scandal-mongering.

2. What is the nature of the relationship between Sir Peter and Lady Teazle?

Sir Peter and Lady Teazle have a turbulent marriage due to their age difference and Lady Teazle's flirtations with other men. Their relationship highlights the themes of marital conflict, social expectations, and personal growth.

3. How is Joseph Surface characterized in The School for Scandal?

Joseph Surface is portrayed as a hypocritical and deceitful character who outwardly appears virtuous but is secretly immoral. His character serves as a critique of false morality and the dangers of pretending to be something one is not.

4. What is the significance of the character Charles Surface in the play?

Charles Surface represents a more genuine but flawed character. Despite his financial irresponsibility and occasional reckless behavior, he is revealed to be morally superior to his brother Joseph, making him the true hero of the play.

5. How does Sheridan use humor and wit to criticize society in The School for Scandal?

Sheridan uses sharp dialogue, exaggerated situations, and humorous character traits to satirize the vanity, hypocrisy, and pretentiousness of the upper class. The play's humor exposes social flaws while entertaining the audience.

Long answer question (Self- Analysis)

1. Discuss the character of Joseph Surface in The School for Scandal. How does Sheridan use him to critique social hypocrisy, and how does his eventual exposure highlight the play's moral themes?

2. In The School for Scandal, Sheridan uses the theme of gossip and reputation as a tool for social commentary. How does Lady Sneerwell represent the dangers of gossip, and what does her character suggest about the importance placed on reputation in 18th-century society?

3. The play features two distinct male characters—Charles Surface and Joseph Surface. Compare and contrast these two characters, focusing on their personalities, moral values, and how they are perceived by other characters in the play. Which of the two emerges as the more honorable character, and why?

4. Analyze the role of Sir Peter and Lady Teazle in The School for Scandal. How do their marriage and personal conflicts contribute to the play's broader themes about love, trust, and social expectations? In what ways does their reconciliation offer a resolution to the play's satire?

5. What role does social class play in The School for Scandal? How does Sheridan use the characters' interactions to critique the upper class's obsession with wealth, appearance, and reputation, and what message

does the play convey about the value of honesty and integrity in a society driven by superficiality?

Key Points to remember

1. Themes of Gossip and Reputation: The play critiques the obsession with reputation and how gossip can ruin lives. Lady Sneerwell is the central character who spreads malicious rumors to damage the reputations of others.
2. Hypocrisy vs. Genuine Virtue: A central theme is the contrast between appearance and reality, particularly embodied in the characters of Joseph and Charles Surface. Joseph pretends to be virtuous but is corrupt, while Charles, though flawed, is more honorable.
3. Lady Sneerwell's Role: She represents the destructive power of gossip in society, using rumors and scandals to manipulate and control others for her own amusement and to destroy her rivals.
4. The Surface Brothers: The two brothers, Joseph and Charles, are central to the plot. Joseph is deceitful and pretends to be virtuous, while Charles, despite his financial irresponsibility, is morally upright and honest.
5. The Marriage of Sir Peter and Lady Teazle: Their troubled marriage, filled with misunderstandings and flirtations, represents the complexities of relationships in high society. Their eventual reconciliation emphasizes themes of communication and trust.
6. Satire of the Aristocracy: Sheridan uses the characters and their behaviors to satirize the upper classes, mocking their preoccupation with wealth, status, and appearance over genuine virtue and moral integrity.
7. Use of Wit and Humor: The play is filled with sharp dialogue, clever wordplay, and comedic situations. Sheridan uses humor to expose the

absurdity of social norms and behaviors, making the play both entertaining and insightful.

8. Character of Sir Peter Teazle: Sir Peter is a character caught between his older age and his younger, flirtatious wife, Lady Teazle. His reactions to the social norms and his attempts to control his wife bring humor and critique to the play.

9. The Resolution: By the end of the play, the moral characters are rewarded, and the hypocrites like Joseph are exposed for their deceit. Charles and Maria are united, and Sir Peter and Lady Teazle reconcile, restoring order.

10. Enduring Relevance: Despite being set in 18th-century London, the play's exploration of social issues such as hypocrisy, reputation, and moral integrity is still relevant today, making it a timeless work of theater.

MODULE –V

THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

CONTENTS

OBJECTIVE

Objective: The objective of studying The Battle of the Books by Jonathan Swift is to explore Swift's satirical critique of the literary and intellectual debates of his time, particularly the conflict between the Ancients and Moderns. Through this allegorical work, students can analyze Swift's use of humor and wit to comment on human nature, scholarly arrogance, and the value of tradition versus progress in literature. It also explores Swift's mastery in blending satire with serious intellectual issues.

Author Introduction of Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift was born on November 30, 1667, in Dublin, Ireland, and became one of the most prominent writers of the 17th and 18th centuries. Swift, a satirist, poet, and essayist, is famous for his sharp wit and caustic societal commentary. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin, before moving to England, where he worked as a secretary to Sir William Temple, a distinguished diplomat and author. Swift's involvement in politics, religion, and social issues profoundly influenced his later works.

Swift's early work, The Battle of the Books (1704), is a satirical fable that champions the supremacy of classical literature over the rising allure of contemporary texts. The book humorously depicts an actual clash between ancient and modern authors, highlighting Swift's concerns on the diminishing respect for classical literature and the intellectual shifts of his era. This work illustrates Swift's skilful use of humour to examine the intellectual trends of his era, combining wit with a deep contemplation of the importance of tradition and education.

Swift's most acclaimed book is Gulliver's Travels (1726), a satirical narrative that examines human nature, politics, and society via the imaginary voyages of Lemuel Gulliver. His other notable works include A Modest Proposal (1729), a satirical essay proposing that the destitute sell their children as food to the wealthy, and The Battle of the Books (1704), a defence of classical literature against contemporary writers. His Drapier's Letters (1724-1725) was a series of pamphlets contesting the devaluation of Irish money, demonstrating his involvement in Irish politics.

Swift's literary style is characterised by dark humour, irony, and satire to expose societal deficiencies. He often employed hyperbole and absurdity to highlight the contradictions of his day, making his writing both captivating and intellectually enriching. Swift's astute critiques of politics, religion, and social injustice reveal his disillusionment with humanity; nonetheless, his deep comprehension of the classics and artistic ingenuity elevate his writings to the realm of timeless masterpieces. Despite his cynicism, Swift's personal life was marked by moments of despair and physical decline, ending in his death in 1745, leaving a legacy of considerable literary influence.

SUMMARY

onathan Swift's The Battle of the Books is a satirical narrative concerning the ongoing debate in England on the relative merits of ancient vs modern authors. Swift elucidates the origin of the conflict between the two factions of books in the opening passages through metaphorical language. He perceives the ancient and contemporary authors as residing on two peaks of a mountain named Parnassus, sacred to Apollo and the Muses, with the peak of the Ancients being superior in elevation to that of the Moderns. A sense of jealousy compels the Moderns to contest the Ancients' entitlement to inhabit the superior pinnacle. According to Swift, the dispute between the inhabitants of the two peaks subsequently extended to the volumes situated on the shelves of St. James's Library. Prior to detailing the actual conflict depicted in the texts, Swift seizes the opportunity to critique Richard Bentley, the custodian of the aforementioned library and an advocate of the Ancients. Swift lampoons Bentley for his rudeness towards individuals seeking to borrow books or manuscripts from the library, as well as for his lack of clarity in thought and his failure to maintain the organisation of the library's collection. Swift subsequently addresses the books and the contention occurring among these books. According to Swift, one of the Ancients attempted to resolve the issue through arbitration but was unable in calming the tempers.

This ancient author asserted that the writers of his day have better wisdom than their modern counterparts and deserved more respect due to their antiquity. However, the Moderns rejected this argument and asserted that they were the more ancient of the two factions. Swift subsequently delineates a significant event that transpired at this moment. A bee, discovering an aperture in a shattered windowpane of the library, entered and alighted on a spider's web.The bee's invasion resulted in a conflict between the spider and the bee. The spider addressed the bee with disdain, highlighting that he possessed a magnificent palace (specifically, his cobweb), whereas the bee had no possessions or substance beyond a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. The bee responded that heaven had bestowed upon him the ability to fly and to sing, and that he frequented all the blooms and blooming of the field and garden, collecting the necessary resources for his purposes. The bee further asserted that the spider's palace, although demonstrating "method and art," was entirely lacking in "duration and matter." The bee asserted that the spider's output was solely venomous, but the bee generated

honey and wax. Aesop asserts that the bee's commendations of itself are applicable to ancient authors, while the bee's criticisms of the spider pertain to modern writers.

Aesop contends that the Moderns lack legitimate justification for their claims of genius or innovation, as, despite their methodical approach and proficiency, they have merely created ephemeral works derived from their own essence, rendering them no superior to mere soil. The Moderns cannot assert any authentic creations of substantial worth. A significant portion of their work can be characterised as simply contention and ridicule, akin to the venom of a spider. The Ancients possess their flights of imagination and their own language. The Ancients sourced their materials from all aspects of Nature, creating masterpieces abundant in honey and wax that have bestowed upon humanity two of its most esteemed qualities: sweetness and light. Swift subsequently references the novels that participated in the conflict. Instead of identifying the books by their titles, he references the writers of the books involved in the conflict.

As the two armies of soldiers prepared for battle, Fame, once a prominent figure in the library, ascended directly to the principal deity, Jupiter, and provided him with an accurate report of the events unfolding on earth. Jupiter promptly convened a council of the deities to determine a plan of action. Nevertheless, due to a divergence of views among the gods and goddesses, Jupiter discreetly perused the Book of Fate and sent directives to his agents to descend to the library and orchestrate events in alignment with those directives. Momus, the deity of envious derision, who had aligned with the Moderns during the assembly of deities, subsequently garnered the assistance of a goddess named Criticism. This goddess was exceedingly malevolent and she provided her complete support to the Moderns. Swift subsequently delineates the combat itself. He informs us that the initial aggressor in the onslaught was Paracelsus, who assailed Galen with a javelin but was subsequently injured by Galen's counterstrike. Aristotle then discharged an arrow at Bacon, but Bacon evaded injury, and the arrow struck and fatally wounded another contemporary philosopher, Descartes. It was now Homer's opportunity to assail the contemporary epic poets. Subsequently, Virgil emerged, another classical epic poet. He encountered the contemporary poet, Dryden, who had likewise endeavoured in epic poetry by translating Virgil's Aeneid. Dryden,

nonetheless, recognised Virgil's pre-eminence over him as an epic poet and endeavoured to reach a reconciliation with the adversary. Another ancient epic poet, named Lucan, criticised two modern poets who had likewise endeavoured in epic poetry.

The Moderns were Richard Blackmore and Thomas Creech.

The ancient poet Pindar, renowned for his Odes, overshadowed contemporary creators of Pindaric Odes, including John Oldham, Afra Behn, and Abraham Cowley. The final episode of The Battle of the Books follows. The primary characters in this final episode are Bentley and Wotton, representatives of the Moderns, and Temple and Boyle, representatives of the Ancients. Swift directs his contempt and derision against Bentley and Wotton. The contemporaries observe Phalaris and Aesop slumbering in the distance, yet they lack the audacity to confront them. Wotton even falters in his endeavour to satiate his thirst at the spring referred to as Helicon. The two buddies subsequently confront Charles Boyle, who assaults them with a lance, resulting in their simultaneous demise. Swift's satirical narrative indicates that Temple and Boyle triumphed in their advocacy for the Ancients, countering Bentley and Wotton, who opposed the Ancient

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Under standing The Prose

The Battle of the Book is a significant literary satire authored by Jonathan Swift. Jonathan Swift is the preeminent figure in the realm of written satire. The Battle of the Book is his inaugural significant work, published in 1704. The work's theme addresses the extensive conflict between the Ancients and Moderns that polarised scholars in seventeenth-century France. The dispute gains importance when Sir William Temple authored an essay on the comparative advantages of 'Ancient and Modern learning.' Temple endorsed the Ancients, and Swift authored Battle of the Book to advocate for him. The dispute between the Ancients and the Moderns is presented as a hypothetical conflict between two collections of books housed in the library at St. James's Palace. The conflict commences with a demand from the Moderns for the Ancients to relinquish the loftier of the two summits of Parnassus that they have inhabited. The proponents of modernity address the issue, but before to the commencement of the conflict, a disagreement arises between a spider residing in the library's corner and a bee inadvertently entangled in the spider's web. Aesop's fable illustrates the conflict between the Moderns and the Ancients through the dispute between the spider and the bee. For him, the spider symbolises the Moderns who fabricate their academic knowledge from within, whereas the bee epitomises the Ancients who derive their wisdom from nature.

The conflict serves as a sarcastic allegory for the intellectual dispute between the Ancients and the Moderns. The interactions and behaviours of the spider and the bee produce a satirical effect.

We, the Ancients, are satisfied with the bee, aspiring to nothing beyond our wings and our voice; in other words, our flights and our language. In summary, all that we possess has been acquired through relentless effort and exploration, traversing every aspect of nature; the distinction lies in our preference for cultivating our endeavours with honey and wax rather than filth and toxins, thereby providing humanity with the two most esteemed elements: sweetness and light. From this point forward, I will utilise this internet material as a reference for quotations.

Pride, under both Christian and classical traditions, constitutes a moral peril that jeopardises the integrity of social and spiritual order. Destructive and divisive pride characterises the Moderns in the "Battle," as they engage in fervent disputes regarding their leadership: "The Moderns were embroiled in intense debates over the selection of their leaders; and only the looming threat from their adversaries prevented them from revolting on this matter." The disparity was most pronounced among the cavalry, where each private trooper aspired to the highest leadership, from Tasso and Milton to Dryden and Wither.

Notwithstanding the threats posed by the Moderns, they ultimately seem ineffective in the allegory of the "Battle." Swift implies the triviality of Bentley's critique when the corpulent Modern can only scurry about Æsop and Phalaris, "trampling and kicking and defecating in their faces." Despite his theft of their armour, they remain unharmed. Likewise, Temple does not perceive the impact of Wotton's lance. Although the conflict remains unresolved, the valiant Ancients appear fated to triumph.

Who ultimately prevails?

Nonetheless, the situation is more complex than it appears. Swift adeptly refrains from disclosing the outcome of the triumph. He depicts the manuscript as having sustained damage in certain areas, thereby leaving the conclusion of the conflict to the reader's interpretation. The incompleteness of the "Battle," due to its missing passages, undermines the stance of the Ancients. We do not possess, as the lengthy title suggests, "A Full and True Account of the Battle Fought last Friday between the Ancient and the Modern Books in Saint James's Library." Consequently, by not guaranteeing the Ancients' triumph, Swift prompts us to question the reliability of ancient knowledge and its preservation across extensive temporal and geographical spans. Additionally, Swift appears to undermine the status of the Ancients in various other respects. The narrator posits that both factions, Ancients and Moderns, exhibit mutual animosity, as he asserts prior to the conflict that "the champions of each side should be paired or otherwise intermingled," so that "akin to the amalgamation of opposing toxins, their malevolence might be utilised against one another."

In the midst of a chaotic scene where spiders crawl, bees buzz, and conflicting texts clutter a musty library on a Friday afternoon, Swift subtly conveys the absurdity of the ongoing dispute. Even though the Ancients appear superior to the Moderns in the literary clash depicted in "The Battle of the Books," the author cleverly leaves his ultimate stance somewhat open to interpretation.

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Critical Explanation

The Ancient vs. Modern Debate

- Nature of the Conflict: Discuss how Swift portrays the clash between ancient writers (like Homer, Aristotle, and Virgil) and modern writers of his time. This debate reflects broader intellectual concerns about tradition versus innovation.
- Swift's Position: Analyze Swift's apparent preference for ancient writers and his critique of modern intellectual trends. How does he use satire to express his views on the value of classical education and knowledge?

Satire as a Literary Technique

- Swift's Use of Satire: Explore how Swift employs satire to mock both sides in the debate. What are the techniques he uses (e.g., exaggeration, parody, and irony), and how do they serve his critique of contemporary literary and intellectual culture?
- Satirical Targets: Consider who Swift targets in this work. Besides the modern writers, does Swift critique the institutions that support the moderns, like universities or publishing?

The Role of Learning and Knowledge

- Education in Swift's Time: Discuss how the work reflects Swift's views on the state of education in the early 18th century. What does Swift say about the loss of classical learning in favor of more modern, utilitarian forms of knowledge?
- The Use of Knowledge: Explore Swift's commentary on how knowledge is used by both ancient and modern scholars. Is it meant to illuminate or simply to advance personal or intellectual agendas?

The Use of Allegory and Personification

- The Battle as Allegory: Analyze how Swift uses the literal battle between the ancient and modern books as an allegory for the intellectual and cultural struggles of his time. What does the battle symbolize in terms of societal values and intellectual priorities?
- Personification of Books: Explore how Swift personifies books and authors in the work. How do the ancient books "fight" in the battle, and how does this technique contribute to the theme of literary conflict?

Irony and Humor in the Poem

- Swift's Irony: Examine the use of irony in The Battle of the Books. How does Swift create situations in which the reader's expectations are upended, and what is the purpose of this irony in terms of his critique?
- Humor's Role: Discuss the importance of humor in the work. How does Swift balance his biting criticism with wit and absurdity to engage readers while conveying serious points about literature and learning?

The Decline of Classical Learning

- Historical Context: Discuss how the poem reflects concerns about the decline of classical learning during the early 18th century. What cultural and intellectual shifts are Swift reacting to in his time, and how does The Battle of the Books reflect these changes?
- Nostalgia for the Past: Consider how Swift's portrayal of the ancients can be seen as a nostalgic return to a "golden age" of intellectual clarity and discipline. How does Swift idealize the past, and what does this reveal about his views on contemporary society?

The Philosophical Implications of the Work

- Philosophy of Knowledge: Discuss the broader philosophical implications of the text. What does Swift's mockery of modern intellectuals suggest about the value of innovation, originality, and progress in knowledge? Does

Swift believe in progress, or is he a defender of a more static, unchanging form of wisdom?

- The Human Condition: What might Swift be saying about the human tendency to argue over intellectual matters? What does the exaggerated nature of the battle reveal about the folly of human pride in intellectual matters?

The Relevance of The Battle of the Books in Modern Times

- Timelessness of the Debate: Explore whether the ancient vs. modern debate in Swift's work still has relevance today. Are there modern equivalents of this conflict in literature, academia, or culture?
- Enduring Legacy of Classical Knowledge: Discuss whether Swift's critique of modern intellectual trends is still relevant in the modern age of information and technology. What can we learn from his critique about the preservation of classical knowledge?

Swift's Critique of Literary Criticism

- Literary Criticism in Swift's Time: Investigate how Swift's work reflects his views on the state of literary criticism and scholarly discourse in his era. Does he critique the methods and attitudes of critics who favor modern works over classical ones?
- Modern Literary Criticism: Compare Swift's treatment of literary criticism in The Battle of the Books with modern-day literary theory. Does his work offer insights into the ongoing tensions in literary criticism today?

The Structure and Style of the Work

- Epic Parody: Examine how Swift uses the conventions of epic poetry (heroic couplets, grandiose language, and elevated themes) in a satirical way. How does he parody the epic form, and how does this contribute to the tone of the poem?

- Structure and Effectiveness: Discuss the structural elements of The Battle of the Books. How does Swift balance the narrative, action, and intellectual debates to create an engaging and meaningful work?

These topics provide a comprehensive overview of the central themes, techniques, and concerns of The Battle of the Books, highlighting Swift's skill in using satire to engage with contemporary debates about literature, knowledge, and intellectual progress.

Multiple choice question

1. What is the primary theme of The Battle of the Books?

   A) The conflict between reason and emotion

   B) The battle between the Ancients and Moderns in literature

   C) The fall of the Roman Empire

   D) The power of the monarchy

   Answer: B) The battle between the Ancients and Moderns in literature

2. In The Battle of the Books, which group represents the advocates for ancient knowledge and classical literature?

   A) The Moderns

   B) The Ancients

   C) The Philosophers

   D) The Scientists

   Answer: B) The Ancients

3. Which of the following works by Swift uses satire to portray the conflict between the Ancients and Moderns?

   A) Gulliver's Travels

   B) A Modest Proposal

C) The Battle of the Books

D) The Drapier's Letters

Answer: C) The Battle of the Books

4. What is the setting of The Battle of the Books?

A) A fictional city

B) A library

C) A university

D) A royal court

Answer: B) A library

5. Who are the Moderns, in the context of The Battle of the Books?

A) Scholars who defend classical knowledge

B) Writers who focus on contemporary science and innovation

C) Philosophers who reject tradition

D) Characters who represent literary traditions

Answer: B) Writers who focus on contemporary science and innovation

6. What literary style is most prominently used in The Battle of the Books?

A) Tragedy

B) Allegory and satire

C) Romanticism

D) Gothic literature

Answer: B) Allegory and satire

7. Which ancient scholar's library is the battleground for the conflict in The Battle of the Books?

A) Aristotle

B) Homer

Multiple choice question

1. **What is the primary theme of *The Battle of the Books*?**

   A) The conflict between reason and emotion

   B) The battle between the Ancients and Moderns in literature

   C) The fall of the Roman Empire

   D) The power of the monarchy

   Answer: B) The battle between the Ancients and Moderns in literature

2. **In *The Battle of the Books*, which group represents the advocates for ancient knowledge and classical literature?**

   A) The Moderns

   B) The Ancients

   C) The Philosophers

   D) The Scientists

   Answer: B) The Ancients

3. **Which of the following works by Swift uses satire to portray the conflict between the Ancients and Moderns?**

   A) *Gulliver's Travels*

   B) *A Modest Proposal*

   C) *The Battle of the Books*

   D) *The Drapier's Letters*

   Answer: C) *The Battle of the Books*

4. **What is the setting of *The Battle of the Books*?**

   A) A fictional city

   B) A library

   C) A university

   D) A royal court

   Answer: B) A library

5. **Who are the Moderns, in the context of *The Battle of the Books*?**

   A) Scholars who defend classical knowledge

B) Writers who focus on contemporary science and innovation

C) Philosophers who reject tradition

D) Characters who represent literary traditions

Answer: B) Writers who focus on contemporary science and innovation

6. **What literary style is most prominently used in *The Battle of the Books*?**

A) Tragedy

B) Allegory and satire

C) Romanticism

D) Gothic literature

Answer: B) Allegory and satire

7. **Which ancient scholar's library is the battleground for the conflict in *The Battle of the Books*?**

A) Aristotle

B) Homer

C) Plato

D) The Library of Alexandria

Answer: D) The Library of Alexandria

8. **In *The Battle of the Books*, who are the primary figures representing the Ancients?**

A) Philosophers and modern poets

B) Classical writers and thinkers

C) Theologians and scientists

D) Political leaders

Answer: B) Classical writers and thinkers

9. **What does Swift's portrayal of the "battle" between the Ancients and Moderns ultimately suggest about his view on intellectual debates?**

A) They are pointless and should be abandoned

B) They are essential for the advancement of knowledge

C) The Moderns are superior to the Ancients

D) Both sides are equally flawed and ridiculous

Answer: D) Both sides are equally flawed and ridiculous

10. Which characteristic of the Moderns does Swift particularly mock in *The Battle of the Books*?

A) Their reverence for tradition

B) Their reliance on ancient texts

C) Their arrogance and self-importance

D) Their rejection of innovation

Answer: C) Their arrogance and self-importance

Very short answer and question

1. Who wrote *The Battle of the Books*?

Answer: Swift

2. What is the primary setting of *The Battle of the Books*?

Answer: Library

3. Which group defends classical literature in *The Battle of the Books*?

Answer: Ancients

4. What literary technique is primarily used in *The Battle of the Books*?

Answer: Satire

5. Which ancient library is featured in *The Battle of the Books*?

Answer: Alexandri.

Question and Answer

1. What is the central conflict in *The Battle of the Books*?

The central conflict in *The Battle of the Books* is the allegorical battle between the Ancients and the Moderns. The Ancients defend classical knowledge and traditional learning, while the Moderns argue for the superiority of contemporary science and innovations, mocking ancient thought.

2. How does Swift use satire in *The Battle of the Books*?

Swift uses satire to humorously critique both the Ancients and the Moderns. He exaggerates their qualities, mocking their intellectual arrogance and rigid adherence to their respective ideologies, thereby questioning the value of blind loyalty to either tradition or progress.

2. What role does the Library of Alexandria play in the story?

In *The Battle of the Books*, the Library of Alexandria serves as the battleground for the intellectual conflict between the Ancients and the Moderns. The library represents a place of vast knowledge, where both groups fight for supremacy in a metaphorical "battle."

3. What is Swift's view on the debate between the Ancients and Moderns?

Swift presents both sides of the debate—Ancients and Moderns—as flawed, using their arguments to satirize the extremes of both viewpoints. He suggests that neither side holds the absolute truth, highlighting the absurdity of blindly following one side without considering the merits of the other.

4. How does Swift use humor to convey his message in *The Battle of the Books*?

Swift employs humor through exaggerated characterizations and absurd situations, making the intellectual debate between the Ancients and Moderns comically trivial. This humor highlights the folly of rigid intellectual positions and encourages readers to consider the value of balance and moderation.

Essay type questions (suggested for practice)

1. **Discuss the significance of the allegorical battle between the Ancients and the Moderns in *The Battle of the Books*. How does Swift use this battle to critique the intellectual debates of his time?**

2. **In *The Battle of the Books*, Swift uses satire to mock both the Ancients and the Moderns. Analyze how Swift portrays both sides of the debate and discuss the effectiveness of his satire in conveying his views on intellectualism and progress.**

3. **How does Swift's portrayal of the Library of Alexandria in *The Battle of the Books* contribute to the central theme of the work? Discuss its symbolic importance and how it reflects the larger conflict between tradition and innovation.**

4. **In *The Battle of the Books*, what role does Swift's use of humor**

play in delivering his critique of contemporary intellectual life? How does he balance comedy with serious commentary on the nature of knowledge and scholarly pursuit?

5. **What does *The Battle of the Books* suggest about the dangers of excessive pride and intellectual arrogance? Discuss how characters from both the Ancients and Moderns exhibit these traits and how Swift ultimately uses them to criticize society's obsession with intellectual superiority**

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