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W	URL: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/CT/1:1.1?rgn=div2;view=fulltext Fetched: 2020-06-22 16:47:11	1
W	URL: https://poets.org/poem/canterbury-tales-general-prologue Fetched: 2020-11-24 20:10:40	4
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W	URL: https://www.termpaperwarehouse.com/essay-on/Canterbury-Tales/237132 Fetched: 2022-09-12 18:10:44	2
W	URL: https://smartenglishnotes.com/2020/12/05/the-prologue-to-the-canterbury-tales-summary-explanat... Fetched: 2022-01-14 18:22:22	1
SA	**013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf** Document 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)	5
W	URL: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/9079/9079-h/9079-h.htm Fetched: 2020-01-19 14:14:48	1

W	URL: https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/shakespeares-sonnets/summary-and-analysis/sonnet-29 Fetched: 2020-10-19 14:01:56	1
SA	**MA - English - SEM 1- Chaucer and the Elizabethan Age (1).pdf** Document MA - English - SEM 1- Chaucer and the Elizabethan Age (1).pdf (D143329215)	1
SA	**II SEM B.A. ENG - 22DCBEN23 - THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.pdf** Document II SEM B.A. ENG - 22DCBEN23 - THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.pdf (D143333349)	4

Entire Document

Assam Don Bosco University Chaucer to Elizabethan Period: Poetry, Drama and Romance
Chaucer to Elizabethan Period: Poetry, Drama and Romance
Table of Contents Module I: Selected Poetry

99% **MATCHING BLOCK 1/50** SA MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

Unit 1 : Introduction to Early English Poetry 1.1 Introduction 1.2 The Anglo-Saxon Invasion 1.3 Anglo Saxon Literature – an Overview 1.3.1 Major Extant Works of the Anglo Saxon Period 1.4 Origin of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.1 Characteristics of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.2 Some Important Anglo Saxon Works 1.4.3 Some Famous Anglo Saxon Poets 1.5 The Coming of the Normans 1.5.1 The Norman Conquest 1.5.2 The Shift of Language 1.6 The Norman Literature 1.7 Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.1 Characteristics of Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.2 Some Important Anglo Norman Works 1.7.3 Some Famous Anglo Norman Writers

Unit 2 : Geofery Chaucer: Prologue to Canterbury Tales- I 2.1 Introduction 2.2 Chaucer's World 2.3 Summary of the Prologue to The Canterbury Tales 2.4 Extracts from The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales 2.5 Explanations 2.5.1
Explanations Lines (43–78) 2.5.2 Explanations Lines (79 – 100) 2.5.3 Explanations Lines (165-187) 2.5.4 Explanations Lines (285-308) 2.5.5 Explanations Lines (331-360) 2.5.6 Explanations Lines (379-387) 2.5.7 Explanations Lines (445-476) 2.5.8 Explanations Lines (623-636) 2.5.9 Explanations Lines (669-679) 2.5.10 Explanations Lines (751-768) 2.6 Textual Analysis 2.7 Critical Approaches
Unit 3 : Geofery Chaucer: Prologue to Canterbury Tales- II 3.1 Introduction 3.2 Critical Essays 3.2.1 In addressing " The General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales" 3.2.2 A Note on the Term Middle Ages 3.2.3 Medieval Christianity 3.2.4 The Renaissance 3.2.5 The Narrator 3.3 Some Thematic considerations 3.3.1 The Opening Sentence 3.4 The General Prologue as an Epic Poem 3.5 Chaucer's Irony 3.5.1 Interpreting Irony 3.6 Satire 3.7 More Considerations 3.7.1 The Pervasiveness of Courtly Love 3.7.2 The Importance of Company 3.7.3 The Corruption of the Church 3.7.4 Motifs 3.8 Symbols

90% **MATCHING BLOCK 2/50** SA MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

Unit 4 : Edmund Spencer: The Faerie Queen 4.1. Introduction 4.2. Objectives 4.3. Edmund Spenser 4.3.1. Life and Works 4.3.2. Poetic Style 4.4. Spenser's contribution in the Field of English Poetry 4.4.1. Spenserian Stanza 4.4.2. Spenserian Sonnet 4.5. What is an allegory? 4.6. The Faerie Queene asan allegory 4.7. The Faerie Queene as an epic

98% **MATCHING BLOCK 3/50** **SA** MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

Unit 5 : Spenser: The Faerie Queene Book1 (Part 2) 5.1. Introduction 5.2. Objectives 5.3. Summary and Critical commentary of The Faerie Queene Book 1 5.3.1. Book 1, Cantos I& II 5.3.2. Book 1, Cantos III, IV & V 5.3.3. Book 1, Cantos VI, VII & VIII 5.3.4. Book 1, Cantos IX & X 5.3.5. Book 1, Cantos XI & XII 5.4. Major characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1

82% **MATCHING BLOCK 4/50** **W**

Unit 6 : Shakespeare's: Sonnets 18, 29,34 55, 65 6.1 Introduction 6.2 Objectives 6.3 Shakespeare as a Poet 6.4 The Shakespearean Sonnet 6.5 Themes and Concerns of the Sonnets 6.6 Sonnet 18 6.6.1 Summary Sonnet 18 6.7 Sonnet 29 6.7.1

Summary Sonnet 29 6.8 Sonnet 34 6.8.1 Summary Sonnet 34 6.9 Sonnet 55 6.9.1 Summary Sonnet 55 6.10 Sonnet 65 6.10.1 Summary Sonnet 65
Unit 7 : Philip Sydney's Astrophel and Stella 7.1 Introduction about the Author Unit 8 : Philip Sydney: Astrophil and Stella 8.1 About Astrophel and Stella 8.2 Astrophel and Stella Summary 8.3 Astrophel and Stella Character List 8.4 Sonnets 8.4.1 Sonnet 1 (Summary and Analysis) 8.4.2 Sonnet 15 (Summary and Analysis) 8.4.3 Sonnet 27 (Summary and Analysis) 8.4.4 Sonnet 34 (Summary and Analysis) 8.4.5 Sonnet 41 (Summary and Analysis) Module II: Selected
Drama Unit 9 : Christopher Marlowe: Edward II 9.1 Introduction 9.2 About the Author 9.3 Critical Appreciation of Edward-II 9.3.1 Edward II: Scene-By-Scene Interpretation 9.3.2 Significant Features of Edward II
Unit 10 : Ben Jonson: The Alchemist 10.1 Introduction 10.2 Objectives 10.3 About the Author 10.3.1 Historical Background of Elizabethan Era 10.4 Critical Appreciation of The Alchemist 10.4.1 Important Passages for Explanation 10.4.2 Character Sketches 10.5 The Alchemist: A Moralist Comedy 10.5.1 The Alchemist: A Play about Possession
Unit 11 : Thomas Dekker: The Shoemaker's Holiday 11.1 Introduction 11.2 Objectives 11.3 About the Author 11.4 Critical Appreciation of The Shoemaker's Holiday 14.4.1 Structure of the Play
Module III: Selected Romance
Unit 12 : Thomas More: Utopia Book I & II 12.1 Introduction 12.2 Objectives 12.3 About the Author 12.4 Critical Appreciation of Utopia Book I & II 12.5 Summary of Book Two (First Half) 12.6 Summary of Book Two (Second Half)
Unit 13 : Bacon's Essays 13.1 Introduction 13.2 Objectives 13.3 About the Author 13.3.1 The Universal Appeal of the Essays of Bacon 13.3.2 Spirit of Renaissance in Bacon's Essays 13.3.3 Bacon's Morality 13.4 Critical Appreciation 13.4.1 'Of Truth' 13.4.2 'Of Nobility' 13.4.3 'Of Ambition' 13.4.4 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation'

98% **MATCHING BLOCK 5/50** **SA** MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

Unit 1- Introduction to Early English Poetry 1.1 Introduction 1.2 The Anglo-Saxon Invasion 1.3 Anglo Saxon Literature – an Overview 1.3.1 Major Extant Works of the Anglo Saxon Period 1.4 Origin of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.1 Characteristics of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.2 Some Important Anglo Saxon Works 1.4.3 Some Famous Anglo Saxon Poets 1.5 The Coming of the Normans 1.5.1 The Norman Conquest 1.5.2 The Shift of Language 1.6 The Norman Literature 1.7. Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.1 Characteristics of Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.2 Some Important Anglo Norman Works 1.7.3 Some Famous Anglo Norman Writers 1.8 Let Us Sum Up 1.9 Answers to Check Your Progress 1.10 References 1.11 Suggested Reading 1.1

Introduction This unit will introduce you to the beginning of English poetry. It

100% **MATCHING BLOCK 6/50** SA MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

will cover the time span from the collapse of the Roman Empire to the Norman period. It will discuss a brief history of the Anglo Saxon and the Norman periods. The characteristics of the Anglo Saxon and Norman literature, in particular poetry will also be explained in this unit. You will also read about some of the earliest extant works of English poetry like Beowulf, Waldere, Widsith and Deor. 1.2

The Anglo-Saxon Invasion The history of early English poetry can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period. The Anglo Saxons invaders came from Germania to Britain in the latter part of the fifth century A.D and eventually established their kingdom in the British Isle. The Anglo Saxons belonged to a group of Teutonic peoples mainly consisting of three related tribes namely the Angles, Saxons and the Juts. From this group the Angles came to Britain from the region of Angeln, a district located in Schelswig Holstein, Germany, the Saxons from the North German plain and the Juts from Jutland in modern Denmark. After reaching the shores of Britain, the Angles established their kingdom in the East, North and Midlands, the Saxons in the South and South West of the country and the Juts in Kent which is in the South East part of the country. As these three tribes were related, a similarity can be witnessed in their language, culture and mode of life. Before the coming of the Anglo Saxons, Britain was inhabited by the native Brythons (now spelled Britons) and the Celt who were driven out from the eastern, central and southern portions of the country and confined to the area we today know as Wales. Besides Wales Celts were also pushed to areas such as the present day Scotland, Cornwall, Brittany and Ireland. As the native Britons had little to offer in the field of literature and it can be safely considered that the arrival of the Anglo Saxons signaled the beginning of the English language and literature. After the conquest, the area inhabited came to be known as “Angles land” which over a period of time became England. This group of Teutonic peoples spoke closely related Germanic languages which developed into a new language called “Angle-ish”, which over a period of time came to be known as English. However, the Anglo Saxon literature did not begin with books but with spoken verse and incantations. The purpose of these verses was to pass along the tribal history, folk lores, heroic tales and values to an audience who could not read. The literature of that time is written in what we today know as Old English or the Anglo Saxon English. 1.3 Anglo Saxon Literature- An Overview A large number of Anglo Saxon manuscripts survive till date. In all there are about 400 surviving manuscripts mainly from the 9th to the 11th centuries. These are written in both Latin and vernacular languages. Out of these 400 manuscripts, 189 are major works while the remaining ones are less recognized. 1.3.1 Major Extant Works of Anglo-Saxon Period The following are some of the major surviving manuscripts of the Anglo Saxon poetry: 1. The Janius manuscript, also known as the Caedmon manuscript, which is an illustrated poetic anthology. 2. The Exeter Book, also an anthology, located in the Exeter Cathedral since it was donated to the Cathedral in the 11th century. 3. The Vercelli Book, a combination of poetry and prose; 4. The Nowell Codex, also a combination of poetry and prose. Not all of the texts of Anglo-Saxon period can be called works of literature and most of them are anonymous. The above-mentioned manuscripts consist of miscellaneous forms of writings including both prose and poetic works. However, as this unit focuses on Early English Poetry, we will be focusing on Old English Poetry only. 1.4 Origin of Anglo Saxon Poetry The early Anglo-Saxon poetry was oral and was recited on various ceremonies. The performers were usually professional gleemen who recited for hours and, in some instances, even for days. These poems were usually recited with the accompaniment of a harp. The poems followed a set pattern which made them easier to memorize. Only about 30,000 lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry still survive. There are three types of Anglo-Saxon poetry, one being heroic poetry, which tells of the achievements of warriors involved in great battles, the second elegiac which lament the death of one’s kith and kin and the third Christian, which was written after Christianity returned to the British Isles after the conversion of these Germanic tribes into Christianity partly by Irish and partly by continental missionaries. The Anglo-Saxon conquest led to the establishment of monasteries which became centres of a literary culture. However, there are other divisions into which Anglo Saxon poetry can be classified further. This will take up later in this section. The Anglo Saxons left behind no poetic rule. Everything we know about the poetry of this period is based on modern analysis. 1.4.1 Characteristics of Anglo Saxon Poetry Now let us study some characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon poetry based on modern analysis, as the Anglo-Saxons did not leave behind any rules for writing poetry and everything we know about the Anglo-Saxon poetry is based on this modern analysis. ➢ Oral form: Most of the Anglo-Saxon poetry is oral as the ballads and popular folk lore were circulated by word of mouth from generation to another. The Anglo-Saxon scops or gleemen who were professional minstrel went about wondering from village to village or from tribe to tribe, chanting to the harp, the popular ballads and their own compositions. The poems followed a set formula of composition which made it easier for the minstrels to memorize. A formal rigid pattern of word stresses gave the lyrics a terse, sing-song effect. ➢ Alliteration: Old English poetry is alliterative in nature. Alliteration is the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. For instance, in the first line of Beowulf “Hwaet ! We Gar-Dena | in gear-dagum" (meaning “Lo! We ...of the Spear Danes in days of yore”), the stressed words Gar-Dena and

gear- dagum alliterate on the consonant "G". ➢ Head Rhyme: Head Rhyme means making words begin with the same sound (this may sometimes also be referred to as alliteration.) ➢ Caesura: Old English poetry is also commonly marked by the German caesura or pause. In addition to setting pace for the line the caesura also grouped each line. ➢ Stress: In Anglo Saxon poetry, stress is usually placed on a syllable containing a long vowel. Words such as God, King and proper nouns are often stressed. It is very rare that a stressed syllable is a preposition or pronoun. The words that are lower in hierarchy are usually unstressed and are short. ➢ Melancholy: Melancholy is one of the chief characteristics of the Old English verse. Even when a poem deals with a heroic theme set in harsh atmosphere, there is always a note of melancholy. ➢ Simile: A simile is a figure of speech that compares two dissimilar things by using a key word such as like or as. By comparing dissimilar things, the writer of a simile shocks the reader into appreciation of the qualities of the things being compared. The epic Beowulf contains many similes. ➢ Metaphor: A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing is spoken of as though it were something else. For example in the Anglo Saxon poem, The Wanderer, "battle" is referred to a "storm of spheres." Through this identification of dissimilar things, a comparison is suggested or implied. In the above given simile, it shows how the Anglo Saxons viewed battle as something that was unpredictable, chaotic and violent in nature. ➢ Kenning: Another important feature of the Anglo Saxon poetry is kenning. Kenning is a figure of speech in the form of a compound (usually two words, hyphenated) that employ a figurative language in place of a more concrete single-word noun. For example, "sea" becomes "whale-road" and "body" is called "life house"; Beowulf in oe " bee-wolf" or "bee-hunter", is a kenning for "bear". 1.4.2 Some Important Anglo Saxon Poetic Works Pagan Poetry: Anglo Saxon poetry has a good body of poetic work. Some of the important poetic works are Beowulf, Widsith and Seafearers. Beowulf: Beowulf is the earliest known English epic, written in Old English. The written version is of 10th century, but the origin of the poem can be traced back to the 7th century. Beowulf tells the story of the legendary pagan hero Beowulf. The story is of Scandinavian origin which tells the exploits of a pagan warrior, renowned for his courage, strength and dignity. It is essentially a warrior's story in which the struggle of Beowulf with a monster named Grendel is given. Grendel for a long time had been raiding the banqueting hall of King Hrothgar of Jutland. Beowulf, the Prince of Sweden, sails from Sweden to help King Hrothgar. He fights Grendel and slays him and later his evil mother too. When Beowulf returns home, he is proclaimed the king of Geats. Later his kingdom is invaded by a fiery dragon whom Beowulf manages to slay. However, he receives a lethal wound in fight and succumbs to his injuries. Beowulf has achieved national epic status on the same level as Illiad and is of interest to historians, anthropologists, literary critics and literature students all over the world. Besides Beowulf, there is a large body of Anglo Saxon verse. There are great poems like some fragments of The Flight of Finnsburh, Waldere, Widsith and Deor. Elegiac Poetry: Related to the heroic tales are a number of short poems from the Exeter Book which are described as "elegies" or "wisdom poetry". These are lyrical and Boethian in their description of the ups and downs of life. The Ruin is gloomy in mood and tells of the decay of the once glorious city of Roman Britain. The Wandereris a poem in which an older man talks about an attack that happened in his youth, where his close friends and kin were also killed. The memories of this slaughter remain with him all throughout his life. The Seafarer, another important work of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, tells the exploits of a somber old seafarer whis away from home on the sea and the only hope of redemption is the joy of heaven. Besides these, Alfred the Great, the West Saxon king, wrote a wisdom poem over the course of his reign based on the philosophy of Boethius called the Lays of Boethius. Christian Poetry: Christian poetry can further be categorised as follows: Saint's Lives- The Vercelli Book and the Exeter Book contain four long narrative poems on the lives of saints lives known as hagiographies. In Vercelli are Andreas and Elene and in Exeter are Guthlac poems A & Band Juliana. Andreas is a1722 lines long poem and it is closest of all the surviving Old English poems to Beowulf in style and tone. It tells the story of Saint Andrew and his journey to rescue Saint Matthew from the Mermedonians. Elene is the story of Saint Helena (mother of Constantine) and her discovery of the True Cross the cult of which was popular in Anglo Saxon England. Guthlacpoems A & B are two poems about the English Saint Guthlac. Juliana is the study of the virgin martyr Juliana of Nicomedia. (i) The Anglo Saxon Chronicle: Besides the above mentioned poetic works, a major work of the Anglo Saxon period is the Anglo Saxon Chronicle , a historical record in English that summarizes important annual events of the period. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle contains various heroic poems. The earliest from The Battle of Brunanburh celebrates the victory of King Athelstan over the Scots and Norse. There are five shorter poems: capture of the Five Boroughs (942); coronation of King Edgar (973); death of King Edgar (975); death of Alfred the Great (1036); and death of King Edward the Confessor(1065) The 325 line poem, The Battle of Maldon celebrates Earl Byrhnoth and his men who fell in battle against the Vikings in 991. It is considered to be one of the finest poems of the anglo- Saxon period, but both the beginning and the end of the poem are missing and the only manuscript was

also destroyed by the fire in 1731. A well known speech made by..... occurs at the end of the poem: Thou shall be the harder, the heart the keener, courage the greater, as our strength lessens. Here lies our leader all cut down, the valiant man in the dust; Always may he mourn who now thinks to turn away from this warplay. I am old, I will not go away, but I plan to lie down by the side of my lord, by the man so dearly loved. Battle of Maldon. 1.4.3 Some Famous Anglo Saxon Poets The following were some of the well-known Anglo-Saxon poets. ➢ Caedmon: Caedmon was a humble, unlearned man, who used to tend the cattle of an abbey on the Yorkshire coast. One night while he was lying down in a cowshed, he heard a voice asking him to sing. Ashamed, Caedmon refused as he could not sing. But the mysterious voice said to Caedmon that he shall sing to it. To this Caedmon asked, 'What shall I sing?' the mysterious voice replied that he should sing about the Song of Creation. Being divinely inspired, Caedmon sang and the song he sang can be considered the first piece of Christian literature to appear in Anglo Saxon England. Caedmon lived in the seventh century and is mentioned in Bede's History. ➢ Cynewulf: Cynewulf was the author of four poems: The Ascension, The Legend of Saint Juliana, Elene. All these four poems are about the discovery of the True Cross on which Christ was crucified and the Fates of the Apostles. The works show Cynewulf to be a scholar, familiar with Latin, and technically a skillful poet. Among his poems Elene and the Ascension are the most praised ones. ➢ Bede: Also referred to as Saint Bede or Venerable Bede, was an English monk at the two monasteries in the kingdom of Northumbria. His most famous work is Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum (The Ecclesiastical History of English People) I tell the story of the conversion and of the English church. This work gained him the title of "The Father of English History." Besides Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum, Bede also wrote scientific, historical and theological works, which reflect his catholic bent of mind. Bede's scientific commentaries employed allegories as a means of interpretation and his history includes accounts of miracles. Modern historians have completed many studies on Bede's works. His life and his works have been celebrated by a series of annual scholarly lectures at St. Paul's Church, Jarrow from 1958 to the present. ➢ Alcuin of York: Alcuin was an English scholar, ecclesiastic, poet and teacher from York, Northumbria. He wrote many theological and dogmatic treatises as well as a few works on grammar and a number of poems. He became the friend and adviser of the Frankish emperor Charlemagne. Alcuin assisted Charlegmagne in making the Frankish court a centre of learning. As a result of the efforts of Alcuin and Charlemagne, the English culture developed considerably. 1.5 The Coming of the Normans The period of English history following the Norman Conquest (1066) when England was ruled by William, Duke of Normandy, and his descendants, ie William 1, 1066-87; William II 1087-1100; Henry I, 1100-1135 and Stephen, 1135-54 is known as the Norman period. The word Norman means 'Northman'. They were originally 'Norsemen' from Norway, descendants of Vikings, who had conquered the province of northern France called Normandy after them. The Normans conquered England in the year 1066 and with the coming of the Normans, the English started becoming French in their way of life. Let us now take a look at how the Normans invaded England and gradually became the masters of the island we today know as the British Isles. 1.5.1 The Norman Conquest As mentioned earlier, by the time the Normans (Northmen from Scandinavia) invaded England, they had become culturally French. Thus, the Norman Conquest was a French conquest as a result of which French aristocracy was established in the English soil. William, the Duke of Normandy, had family ties with Edward the Confessor, the English king, who promised William the throne. When Edward died in 1066, the Saxon witan - council of elders -chose Harold II as king. This angered William of Normandy. William, thereupon, led a few thousand Norman and French troops across the English Channel to claim the throne forcefully. He confronted King Harold at the Battle of Hastings near a seaside village in southern England. Harold's army was defeated and he was killed. The victorious Norman army thereafter marched towards London, ruthlessly crushing all resistance. On Christmas Day, at Westminster Abbey, William was coroneted the King of England. For the next five years, William consolidated his victory. He quelled the Anglo- Saxon forces, confiscated their lands, established Norman controlled governments at all levels, gradually establishing feudalism in England. 1.5.2 Shift of Language With the coming of the Normans, their dialect of French became the language of England. The Normans conducted various businesses in French and Latin. In the law courts too, French was substituted for English. Saxons dealing with the Normans had to learn French. As French displaced English, it suffered heavy losses. The Classical Old English verses died out, but were later revived in very different forms, but prose, continued as sermons, were still written in English and the Anglo Saxon Chronicle was still kept in monasteries. In addition to this, Latin also emerged as an important language for the Anglo-Saxons, who had tried to desperately use the language of the conquerors, failed miserably, as a result of which Latin was employed as a compromise language. 1.7 The Norman Literature The first writing of Norman literature in England is a catalogue of the King's property, i.e. the whole of the country, as William saw himself as the proprietor of the country. Although William

owned the land but he granted it to the nobles who had helped him in the conquest. Thereby, laying the foundation of Feudalism. Feudalism was a pyramid like structure, where the king was at the apex, followed by the nobility and the aristocracy and finally, the poor peasants, who worked as serfs for feudal lord sand were placed at the lowest rung of the ladder. These peasants formed the lower rung of the society. The Norman literature was quite opposed to the grim and melancholy literature of the Anglo- Saxons. The old English verse was black and white whereas the French coloured and looked at the sunnier side of life. It, however, was neither true English literature nor true French literature for the Normans who settled in England had lost touch of the French culture and language because of which the French they spoke lost its purity. Thus, a new form of language emerged which had the characteristics of both French and Old English, and it came to be known as Anglo Norman and the literature written in Anglo Norman came to be known as the Anglo-Norman literature. Furthermore, Anglo Norman may also refer to a period from 1066 to 1204, when the Duchy of Normandy and English were united in the Anglo-Norman realm. Norman literature exploits a lot of ancient Greek and Roman mythical and legendary figures, ranging from Agamemnon to Ulysses and from Aeneas, to Brutus. These great mythical and legendary figures have been portrayed in the works of three writers of the twelfth century, namely Geoffrey of Manmouth, Wace and Laymon, who wrote in Latin, French and English, respectively. Their works were set in the remote past, beginning with a founding of the nation by Brutus, the legendary great grandson of Aeneas, and ending with the Anglo Saxon conquest of the native islanders, the Britons of the fifth and the sixth centuries. 1.7 Anglo Norman Poetry With the coming of the Normans, the language of England shifted from Old English, which by that time had moved to becoming Middle English, to French. As English was displaced by French, a lot of changes were witnessed in all walks of life and all fields of knowledge, including literature and in particular, poetry. Now let us examine some of the changes that came about in the writing of poetry. 1.7.1 Characteristics of Anglo Norman Poetry These changes also formed the chief characteristics of Norman poetry. 1. Rhymed verse: With the coming of the Normans, the French stanza forms replaced the formlessness of Anglo-Saxon poetry, for instance, rhymed verse replaced the alliterative verse and head rhyme of the Anglo-Saxon poetry. 2. Meter: As opposed to the Anglo-Saxon poetry, which was not rhythmical in pattern, the Norman poetry had a rhythmical pattern which makes considerable use of the octosyllabic couplet, meaning a couplet written in eight syllables, which they owe to the French. 3. Courtly sophisticated verse: with the coming of the Normans, the heroic verse of the Anglo Saxons was replaced by new kinds of courtly sophisticated rhymes. This was a feature of Norman England but throughout Europe, the heroic notes of the Anglo Saxon poetry soon faded away. 4. Light spirited diction: The language of the Normans was light, coloured and spirited as compared to the Anglo-Saxons' which was grim, heavy, melancholy and humourless. 5. Use of borrowed words: Anglo Norman poetry made use of borrowed words.

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words were mainly borrowed from Latin and French (Latin being the parent tongue of French) After going through the characteristics of Norman literature, let us now take a look at some of the important Anglo Norman writers and trace their contribution in shaping the English literature. 1.7.2 Some Important Anglo Norman Works By and large, the medieval works were religious and didactic. Among the most famous is the allegorical poem, Le Chasteau d' Amore by Robert Grosseteste who was the Bishop of Lincoln. The poem is a euloize of the Virgin and many aspects of Christian theology. This is done through an elaborate allegory of a castle and its defenders. The lively and metrically interesting Voyage of St. Brendan, with its rich collection of marvellous adventures, is another Anglo French poem which is of literary interest even today. Other important writings include Ormulum, a translation of some of the Gospels read at Mass by the Augustine monk Orm. Ormulum consists of around 19,000 unrhymed but metrically rigid couplets which consist of homilies. Homilies are commentaries following the reading of scriptures. Orm gave the title Ormulum meaning "made by Orm" to his work. Orm also developed an idiosyncratic spelling system to guide his readers in the pronunciation of the vowels as well. He used a strict poetic meter to ensure that the reader knows which syllable needs to be stressed. Cursor Mundi is an enormous poem of about thirty thousand lines written in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. It deals with important incidents from both the Old and the New Testament. Ancrene Riwle,is a sophisticated work of great charm and accomplished style. It is a work about monastic rule given by a priest to three religious sisters who lived in a little house near a church. It was probably written by an Augustinian priest of Wigmore Abbey in North-West Herefordshire, Handlyng Synne, by Robert Mannyng, Pricke of Conscience by Richard Rolle, The Owl and the Nightingale, Pearl, Sir Gawayn and the Green Knight of anonymous authorship are some other works of this period. Another important work is a book of travel writing by a supposed fictitious writer, Sir John Mandeville. This book, which is abundant in French expressions, is appealing in many ways and seems to be a popular one. William Langland is another important writer of merit in the Old English technique. His The Vision of Piers Plowman not only attacked the abuses of the Christian Church in England but also calls upon the ordinary people to go on a relentless quest for the 'Holy Truth.' Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is one of the finest Arthurian romances of the late 14th century. It also contains three religious poems Pearl, Patience and Purity. All these are considered to be the works of the same poet. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight tells of the exploits of Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table. It is mainly about the duels between Sir Gawain and a supernatural knight, the "Green Knight." In this poem Gawain demonstrates the qualities of chivalry and loyalty but his honour is called into question by a test crafted by the lady of the castle in which most of the story takes place. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight belongs to the so called Alliterative Revival which saw the revival of the alliterative verse pattern in Old English poetry. Alliteration had been replaced by the end rhyme in Anglo Norman poetry. Sir Gawin symbolizes the first blossoming of Arthurian chivalry. 1.7.3 Some Famous Anglo Norman Writers ➢ Geoffrey of Manmouth: Geoffrey of Manmouth was probably born between 1100 to 1110 in Wales as in his Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Kings of Britain),he calls himself Galfridus Monumetensis, "Geoffreye of Manmouth", which shows his connection with Manmouth, Wales. However, much of his life was spent outside Wales, especially in Oxford, where he was a secular canon of St. George's College and wrote his Historia Regum Britanniae.The history was later translated into French by Wace and thereafter into English by Layamon. Layamon's work is in verse and it is called Brut after Brutus, the legendary grandson of Aeneas, and the mythical founder of Britain. Geoffrey began his history with a British foundation myth modeled upon Virgil's Aeneid. Geoffrey of Manmouth dedicates a considerable portion of his history to King Arthur, the legendary British leader of the late 5th and the early 6th centuries. Who according to the medieval histories and romances led the defense of Britain against the Saxon invaders. Geoffrey gives an excellent account of the victories won by Arthur both at home and abroad. ➢ Walter Map: William Map was of Welsh origin and is mainly credited with lively Latin lyrics of the Goliardic tradition. Gallards were wondering scholars , a group of clergy who wrote satirical Latin poetry. The Goliards mainly hailed from different universities of France, Germany, Spain, Italy and England and protested the growing contradictions within the church. They expressed their feelings through song, poetry and performances. Map's work, written in this tradition, is a collection of satirical poetry and known as Apocalypse of Goli. Another of his surviving work is De Nugis Curialium (Trifles of Courtiers) which is a collection of anecdotes and trivia. ➢ Wace: He was a Norman poet who was born in Jersey and brought up in mainland Normandy. He is known for his Roman de Brut, a verse history of Britain, based on Historia Regnum Britannia by Geoffrey of Manmouth, which in turn became the basis of Layamon's Brut. ➢ Layamon or Laghamon: He was

a poet

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and priest of Worcestershire in the early 13th century. He was the author of Brut, which, as mentioned above, is an English translation of Wace's Roman de Brut. It discusses the legends of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. His poem provides an inspiration for numerous later writers, including Sir Thomas Malory and Jorge Luis Borges, and had an impact on the development of Arthurian literature and medieval history writing in England. ➢ Marie de France: (Mary of France) was a poetess of the late 12th century who was of French origin but during her adult life lived largely in England as she mainly wrote in the Anglo Norman dialect. She is chiefly known for Lais of Marie de France. Her lais were a collection of twelve narrative poems, mostly of a few hundred lines each. Her Lais focused on glorifying the concept of courtly love through the adventures of the main character and are dedicated to the "noble king" Henry. Mary's Lais were quite popular in aristocratic circles. Besides her Lais, she also translated Aesop's Fables from Middle English into Anglo Norman French. Her fables are dedicated to "Count William" who might have been William of Mandeville or William Marshall. She also wrote Espurgatorie seint Partiz (Legend of the Purgatoty of St. Patrik, based upon a Latin text. ➢ Chretien de Troyes: He was a 12th century French poet who served at the court of Henry II. He along with Marie de France was the inventor of medieval "romances". His work on Arthurian subjects is regarded as one of the best of medieval romance in chivalry. His use of structure, particularly in Yvain, the Knight of the Lion, is considered to be a prototype of modern novel. In the words of Karl Uitti, "the inventor of modern novel", "With [Chretien's work] a new era opens in the history of European story-telling...this poem reinvents the genre we call narrative romance; in some important respects it also initiates the vernacular novel." Chretien's works were written in vernacular Old French and many of the surviving copies of his romances have been adapted into other languages. Chretien was the first writer to talk about the love affair between Queen Guinevere and Lancelot. With this we come to the end of the first phase in the history of English literature. In this unit you saw how both the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman literatures played a formative role in the nurturing of the first body of English literature. In the next unit you will read about Chaucer, who was the first important milestone in history of English literature. 1.7

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LET US SUM UP In this unit you saw how the various Germanic tribes came to the British Isles and made it their home. Once these Germanic tribes had settled well, they started working on the development of their art, literature and culture and thus the first English literature blossomed in the English soil. This literature was mostly a verse literature, which mostly comprised of anonymous poetry. However, there were some brilliant prose works too. With the coming of the Normans, we saw how a change in language came about and how Anglo Saxon was gradually replaced by Anglo Norman. This unit further took up the characteristic features of Anglo Norman literature and discussed the major Anglo Norman writers and their works at length. 1.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1. Who were the native inhabitants of Britain? 2. Name the major extant works of the Anglo Saxon period. 3. Who is the author of The Legend of Sain Juliana? 4. What does the world Norman mean? 5. Who is the author of Historia Regum Britannia? 6. Who is considered to be the inventor of modern novel? 1.9

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ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS A1. Brythons A2. Janius Manuscript Exeter Book Vercelli Book Nowell Codex A3. Cynewulf A4. Northman A5. Geoffrey of Manmouth A6. Chretein de Troyes 1.10

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Unit 2- Geofery Chaucer: Prologue to Canterbury Tales- I 2.1 Introduction 2.2 Chaucer's World 2.3 Summary of the Prologue to The Canterbury Tales 2.4 Extracts from The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales 2.5 Explanations 2.5.1 Explanations Lines (43–78) 2.5.2 Explanations Lines (79 – 100) 2.5.3 Explanations Lines (165-187) 2.5.4 Explanations Lines (285-308) 2.5.5 Explanations Lines (331-360) 2.5.6 Explanations Lines (379-387) 2.5.7 Explanations Lines (445-476) 2.5.8 Explanations Lines (623-636) 2.5.9 Explanations Lines (669-679) 2.5.10 Explanations Lines (751-768) 2.6 Textual Analysis 2.7 Critical Approaches 2.8 Bibliography 2.1 Introduction

The age of Chaucer covers the period from 1340 to 1400. Chaucer is the true representative of his age as Pope is of the eighteenth century and Tennyson is of the Victorian era. His works breathe the political, social, economic and religious tendencies of his time. The middle of the fourteenth century was the transitional period in which Chaucer was born. The elements of Renaissance were breeding. "He stands on the threshold of the new age, but still hedged in a backward gazing world." The fourteenth century in England was the most important of the mediaeval centuries. It covered the period of the Black Death and the Peasant's Revolt, the Hundred Years War with France and the great economic and social changes which we associate with the decay of villeinage. During its years, two kings were deposed and murdered, and dynasties began to rise and fall. The antagonism to the church and the demand for the freedom of thought, which was to culminate in the Renaissance and the Reformation were beginning to be manifested in this pregnant century. It was of supreme importance for the understanding of English history that we should have a dramatic, piquant and all embracing picture of real mediaeval life before the great changes should arrive and Chaucer has given us this picture in his Canterbury Tales. During the English Period, Chaucer appears to us as a great original poet. He had learnt almost to perfection the arts of description, narrativisation and characterization.

Chaucer is known for his technique of versification like that of a fine craftsman and a supreme writer because of his humour and personal talk. This period includes his remarkable work, The Canterbury Tales. In this poem he truly represented the comedy of life in its all forms. The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales gives us the background of the actions and movements of the pilgrims who make up the company of the members of the troop who undertook this pilgrimage. All these pilgrims represent the whole of "English society" of the fourteenth century. The pilgrims are persons of all ranks and classes of society; and in the inimitable description of their manners, dresses, person, horses etc, with which the poet has introduced them, we behold a vast and minute portrait gallery of the social state of England in the fourteenth century. They are – a knight, a squire, a yeoman or military retainer of the class of the three peasants, who in the quality of the archer was bound to accompany his feudal lord to war, a prioress, a lady of monk, superior of a nunnery, a nun and three priests in attendance upon this lady; a Monk, a person represented as handsomely dressed and equipped and passionately fond of hunting and good cheer; a friar, or monk, a merchant, a clerk or student of the University of Oxford; a sergeant of the law; a franklin or rich country–gentlemen, five wealthy burgesses or trademen, described in general but vig- orous and characteristic terms; they are Haberdasher or dealer in silk and cloth, a carpenter, a weaver, a dyer and a tappisser or maker of carpets and hangings, a cook or rather what in old French is called Rotisseur i.e. the keeper of a cook's shop; a shipman, the master of a trading vessel; a doctor of Physic; a wife of Bath, a rich cloth manufacturer, a Parson, or Secular Parish priest; a ploughman, the brother of the preceding personage; a miller; a manciple or steward of a lawyer's hostel or inn of court; a Reeve, bailiff or interdant of the estates of some wealthy landowner; a summoner, an officer in the then formidable ecclesiastical courts, whose duty was to summon or cite before the spiritual tribunal those who had offended against the cannon laws; a Pardoner, or vendor of the Indulgences from Rome. To these thirty persons must be added Chaucer himself and the Host of the Tabard, making in all thirty-two. The Canterbury Pilgrims are described so realistically and graphically that one gets a great enjoyment in reading The Prologue.

Chaucer was regarded as the greatest writer of his age, (the fourteenth century), for he was widely read, imitated, and quoted; even some of his success in the material world was probably a reward for his skill with his pen. Three qualities are outstanding in his writings;

a humor
which is sometimes gentle, sometimes sly, often satiric, but never vicious quite frequently he is the butt of his own jokes; an understanding of human beings which is warm and compassionate but never sentimental; and an acuteness of observation which is unfailing in its ability to discern the most significant detail. Chaucer's fame, unlike that of many writers, was great in his own lifetime and has remained consistently so for over 550 years. The general prologue to The Canterbury Tales, in some respects the most remarkable product of Chaucer's genius, is an extended "dramatis personae" for the collection of tales. In it, Chaucer presents his characters, one by one, in a series of vivid, detailed, and lifelike portraits, and also sets forth his plan: to have each of his characters
tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two more on the
way back, to while away the time. The result is a continuous drama, for the tales give rise to altercations and other byplays and also further characterize their tellers. Chaucer did not live to
complete
his ambitious project. The Prologue, however, shows how fully he grasped it in his own mind. It would be a mistake to consider the Prologue as merely an introduction. It is a mature and highly finished work in its own right – the liveliest, most convincing picture of life in the middle Ages which has come down to us. The language used by Chaucer comes from the Middle English rather different from the modern English we know. 2.1
Chaucer's World Chaucer's public experience of life was as a government servant and diplomat: not a courtier but a king's man. His friends were knights and London merchants. England passed through profound changes during his lifetime. In his childhood, England had great prestige, having beaten the Scots and the French in the victories of Grecy (1346) and Poitiers (1356). In 1360 French ceded much territory to England. In 1349 Edward III had founded the Order of the Garter, the first Order of Western chivalry. But the Black Death of 1349 had killed a third of the people of England, and it returned in the 1360s. The resultant labour shortage disrupted the feudal economy. Edward III's costly war policy began to fail, and in old age the king became unpopular. Richard II came to the throne as a child in 1377 in a time of social unrest which in 1381 broke out in the Peasants' Revolt, in which John of Gaunt's palace was sacked and Archbishop Sudbury murdered in the street.
There was also religious controversy: the Popes had been in captivity at Avignon since 1309, and in 1378 the Great Schism began, between rival claimants to the Papacy. The Oxford reformer, Wyclif, attacked Church abuses in the 1370s, and criticised Church dogma. Next to nothing of this gets into Chaucer's work. He shows us the greed of the new bourgeoisie and abuses in the Church, but his religious and social values seem those usual in his day. He was certainly discreet, as befits a diplomat and a royal servant. He flourished quietly at Richard II's court, and Henry IV, John of Gaunt's son, did not reject his father's old follower when he took the throne from Richard in 1399. The history plays of Shakespeare show Richard, murdered in 1400, as the last medieval king. Medieval society was vertically organised like a pyramid, with King and Pope at the heads of State and Church. The social hierarchy was in theory quite clear, and its ranks had legal force. People of a lower rank could be punished
for wearing
the dress of a higher rank. But the old feudal system, where social standing was determined by the amount of land a man held from the king, was giving way to a more open and mercantile economic pattern, especially in London, where Chaucer came from the merchant class. He was not a man of the people, but his origins were equally remote from the nobility; there are no barons among his pilgrims. His career gave him a wide experience of English life, and especially the life of London, many of whose 30000 inhabitants he must have known. Medieval society, in spite or because of its vertical distinctions, was communal: each of Chaucer's Pilgrims, however individual, is conceived of a typical of his craft or profession, and as having a rank and a role in society. The Christian Church was never far away from anything in Chaucer's England. A theological understanding of life had since the thirteenth century governed the interpretation put upon every physical and moral event, however material or secular its nature - whether meteorological, psychological or personal. Christian Europe was a Catholic community whose language was Latin. The Church was the same in every country, offering the same Christian social and spiritual ideal - however incompletely realised and with whatever local differences. Despite the strains which showed in the fourteenth century, with the failure of the Crusades, a weakened papacy, the Black Dearth, and the beginnings of less collective and more personal attitudes, there was no alternative, secular vision of life. The culture of Christendom had long offered an integration of social and religious ideals. It was a culture which gave an underlying unity, simplicity and breadth to the work of this sophisticated, adventurous and expert-mental writer.

Religious Life: Two aspects of Catholicism may need a word of introduction: 1. Category are either secular clergy, like the Parson, who live in the world (either in major orders-bishop, priest, deacon - or 'clerks' in minor orders) or regular clergy. Regulars-monks, nuns and friars - bound themselves by a Rule and lived as a community. A regular can also be a priest - like Chaucer's Friar and perhaps his Monk. Friars, though regulars in a community, went out into the world to preach. The Summoner is not a cleric but a lay employee. The Pardoner may not have the clerical status he claims. The Knight may have been a member of a religious military order, such as the Templars or Hospitallers, or the Teutonic Knights. 2. Penance. In the New Testament, Christ says to St. Peter and the apostles: 'Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven.' The Church claims that priests, as successors to the apostles, have this power to offer God's forgiveness to the siner who truly repents and performs the penance imposed. Repentance or penitence is one aim of the pilgrimage. The Pardoner has no power to absolve the guilt of sin. He deals only in certificates of r emission of penance or punishment, a crucial distinction. Middle English Historians divide English into Old, Middle and Modern English. Old English came to an end with the Norman Conquest of Anglo - Saxon England in 1066. The rulers of England then spoke Norman French, and scholars wrote in Latin. English was spoken by most people, and gradually became a public and literary medium in the fourteenth century. Middle English was, however, an unstable mixture of dialects, infused with thousands of words from French. It was not standardised by central usage, nor by print, and changed continuously until a more stable stage was reached about 1500, when the early Modern stage of English is taken to begin. Chaucer wrote in the London dialect, from a later version of which Modern English desends. There is no room here for an introduction to Middle English, but here are some hints: 1. Read aloud to ascertain metre and rhyme. This also helps with meaning and with tone. 2. Pronounce all consonants fully: for example the K and h in Knight. 3. Consult glossaries and grammatical introductions when in doubt as to sense or grammatical function.

4. Do not assume that a word means what it means today. Appearances can deceive. The verry parfit gentil Knight is 'true, complete and noble', not 'very perfect and soft- hearted'; the Person of a Toun is a village parson, not an urban individual. Other examples are lustful zestful; coy quiet; lewed ignorant: girl young of either sex; catel property; small slender, wife woman; wood mad. Some words are loyal old friends, but others are faux amis, treacherous friends who have changed their meanings. Words such as charity, truth, chivalry also had complex and far-reaching senses in the Middle Ages. 5.

Note common words which are used in more than one sense, such as worthy or gentil, and decide on the exact sense in each instance. 6. Write your own accurate prose translation of parts of the Prologue (see Textual Analysis, Text 3 above). Chaucer's Own English The best advice that can be given to a student is to make sure that he or she understands as accurately as possible exactly what Chaucer's words mean. Without an informed response to sense, there can be no sensitivity to qualities of language, nor to the poet's tone of voice. Chaucer's fresh, apt and elegant English made him a model of style. Attention to his tone of voice also gives a clue to his sense of humour. The Prologue was composed to be read aloud, and an attempt should be made to read it aloud in an approximation tot the pronunciation, which can be imitated from one of the several modern recordings that have been made. 2.3 Summary of "

The Prologue To The Canterbury Tales" Going through The Prologue To The Canterbury Tales is like visiting a portrait-gallery. In a

portrait-

gallery we see portraits of a large number of persons on display. These portraits impress us by a variety of dresses, and they impress us also with their vividness. Each

portrait

creates an impression that a real human being sits or stands before us. This precisely is the impression that the Prologue produces on us. We are greatly struck by the large variety for which the Prologue is remarkable. A large number of human beings, who are both types and individuals, have been delineated by Chaucer, and these human beings possess certain universal qualities also. At the same time, these characters are by no means puppets; they are not wooden figures. On the contrary, they appear before us as living and believable characters. The vitality and the realistic qualities of the various characters are undeniable. Their apparel too is, in most cases, described and that lends additional realism to the portraits.

There are, first of all, the Knight, the Squire, and the Yeoman, all of whom conform to certain known types of human beings in the fourteenth century but all of whom also have certain distinctive features. The Knight represents the code of behavior prevailing in those days among members of this class of society. As for his individual characteristics, he is depicted as modest like a maiden

and
wearing a doublet of coarse cloth. The Squire has distinguished himself in battles as
he was expected to,
but he can also compose songs and he can dance and
draw
and write well. The Yeoman is described as a true forester, but he also wears the medal of Christopher. From these characters who are associated with the medieval code of chivalry, we pass to the Prioress whom, however, we shall consider along, with the Wife of Bath. The next character is "the
hunting Monk" who, ignoring the rules of monastic discipline, neither labours with his hands nor pours over a book in the cloister, and who "loves a fat swan the best of any roast".
Such, indeed, were a
large majority of the monks of the priod. The Monk is individualized too. He wears an intricate pin of wrought gold in the shape of a love-knot. He is fat and has a bald head which shines like glass. His eyes
are
sharp and roll in his head. We do certainly get the feeling that we are standing face to face with this man, so vividly is he represented to us by Chaucer. The Monk's sleeves are trimmed with the finest gray fur. The
portrait of the Friar is no less realistic or vivid. This Friar misuses his authority to hear confessions and
he sells absolutions. Like most friars of the time, he carries ornamental knives and pins to be given to pretty women. He associates only with the rich people, keeping the beggars and the
lepers at arm's length. He is capable of extracting some money, however little, even from a destitute widow, and
he settles disputes of a worldly nature on love-days, obtaining
substantial fees for his pains. The Friar wears a half-cape of double worsted. After a perusal of this description, we begin to feel that we have really met this man such is Chaucer's skill in characterization.
Going through
the character-sketches of the Lawyer and the Doctor, we find it possible to identify them with certain professional men of our own acquaintance. We have all dealt with lawyers and doctors, and we find Chaucer's characteristisation of these two men to be most realistic and
life- like.
This Lawyer has enriched himself with fraudulent transactions in land, and he always tries to pretend to be busier than he really is. The Doctor allows the apothecaries to send him sub-standard drugs and medicines, so that both he and they
can

make profits out of the sales. The Doctor specially loves gold, and he has not missed the opportunity to make money during the pestilence. Indeed, these features of the Lawyer and the Doctor are universal and have been valid through the centuries. As for their clothes the Lawyer wears a motley coat belted with a girdle of silk with small stripes, while the Doctor is clad in blood-red and blue-gray-lined with taffeta and fine silk. The Miller, the Manciple, and the Reeve may be considered next. The Miller is described as a man of a robust physique, as a ribald joker, as stealing his customer's corn and over-charging them, as having a thumb of gold, as having a wart on the tip of his nose, and so on. He too is a mixture of typical and individual characteristics, and a perfectly convincing person. The Manciple is shrewd enough to be able to outwit fifty law-students, while the Reeve goes one step further in the direction of fraud. The Reeve is a very skilful manipulator of accounts and no auditor can find fault with him. He gives and lends to his lord the lord's own goods in such a way as to make the lord believe that the Reeve had done him a favour. The Reeve has accumulated sufficient private wealth and has built himself a house in a fair part of the countryside. Physically he offers a contrast to the Miller, as his legs are very long and lean while the Miller is a stout fellow. We can easily visualize all these three characters, but the Miller and the Reeve are more vividly drawn than the Manciple. The Summoner are the Pardoner and memorable figures. The treatment of the Summoner begins with a visual description, but there is more to it than simple visualization. His physical disorders are described in such a way as to suggest inner or spiritual corruption. He has incurable pimples on his face. He is fond of garlic, onions, and strong wine; when drunk, he makes a show of his meager knowledge of Latin; for a quart of wine, he will allow a fellow to keep a mistress for twelve months; he teaches people not to stand in awe of arch-deacon's curse because the curse can be rendered ineffectual by paying money; he knows the secrets of the young people of his district; and so on. The Summoner indeed vibrates with life and vitality. The Pardoner is a fitting companion for him. They both join in singing a love-song. The Pardoner has thin hair, and shining eyes like a hare's. He carries fake pardons and bogus relics in order to make money. But he is able to read out a passage from the Bible or the life- story of a saint eloquently, thus creating an impression of piety in the church. He too is fully alive. Both the Summoner and the Pardoner represent certain well-known types of the Middle Ages, and clearly convey to us the abuses that were prevalent in the church in those days. But both of them have their individual characteristics to mark them off from the others. The
Summoner has, besides the pimples, scabby black brows and a shaggy beard, while the Pardoner has a voice tiny as a goat's and a face without a beard. There are women too among Chaucer's pilgrims. The Wife of Bath is an unforgettable char- acter.
Like many other members of this band, she is both a type and an individual. She is skilful at
cloth- making; she
is quite aggressive in claiming her right to go to the collection box before anybody else; she wears scarlet stockings and carries a heavy weight of kerchiefs on her head on a Sunday. But she is somewhat deaf; she has visited many shrines in the past; she has had lovers in her youth, and has married five husbands; she is gap-toothed and has large hips. And she can laugh and joke in company, besides having completed knowledge of "the remedies of love". It is true that
the

character of the Wife of Bath is developed further later in The Canterbury Tales, but even the brief sketch of her in the Prologue conveys to us an impression of an energetic, full blooded, highly sociable, and self-assertive woman. The Prioress is easily distinguished from her. In the case of the Prioress, her feminity and womanly charm are emphasized more. The Prioress has sweet features, knows aristocratic manners, is fashionable in her dressd, gets, sentimental over her pet dogs and so on. But alive though she is, she is a shadow beside the Wife of Bath. The wives of the Guildsmen are merely mentioned in the Prologue, but a universal trait of all women is indicated when we are told of these wives' desire to the socially recognized and respected. There is a Merchant in this company. He speaks mainly of the increase in his profits and is worried about the sea route beings kept open to ensure the flow of trade on which business depends. He is in debt, but he takes care not to set this secret leak out. The Franklin is a recognizable type also. His chief interest in life is exquisite food and drink and by virtue of this interest, he may be regarded as "Epicurus's own son". He is very hospitable and may therefore be called "the Saint Julian of his country" : his bread and his ale are always uniformly good, and a man with a better wine-cellar does not exist. Surely have known such persons in the course of our lives though their number has greatly dwindled and is further dwindling on account of inflation. Nor should we ignore the Cook who has an ulcer on his shin, or the Shipman, the master of the Madelaine, who is certainly. "a good fellow", being well- experienced in stealing his clients' wine. The parson and the Ploughman represent, like the Knight and the Squire, some of the finest aspects of human nature. The Parson is benign, patient, and helpful to his parishioners. He sets a noble example to his "flock". He actually practices what he preaches. He is not in the
least mercenary and does not hire out his benefice in order to become a chantry priest in London. Chaucer says about him: "A better preest I trowe ther nowher noon ys". The Plowman, sketched in a much briefer compass, lives in peace and charity loving God and then his neighbour exactly as himself. These are idealized portraits, but approximations to these ideals to exist in this world. Thus, the variety and range of Chaucer's
characterization
is amazing. The poet has selected characters from various classes of contemporary society and given them an eternal life. We
are given
the impression that we have actually met and known them. We get the feeling that we have called on them and talked to them. We carry both pleasant and unpleasant memories of them. The mention of any one of them stirs certain responsive chords in us. Here is God's plenty, indeed. And Chaucer takes us to a marvelous portrait-
gallery without doubt. 2.4 Extracts from "The Prologue To
The
Canterbury Tales" Lines (43–78)
A KNYGHT ther
was and that a worthy
man, That fro the tyme that he first bigan To ridden out, he loved chivalrie, Trouthe and honour, freedom and curteisie. Ful worthy was he in his lordes were, And therto hadde heriden, no man
ferre As wel in cristendom as in helhenesse, And ever honoured for his worthynesse. At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne;
Ful
ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,- No christen man so ofte of his degree. In Gernade
at the seege eek
hadde
he be Of Algezir, and ridden in Belmarye, At Lyeys was he, and at Satalye, Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See At many a noble armee hadde he be. At mortal batailles hadde he been fifteen, And foughten for oure faith at Tramyssene In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo
This ilke worthy knight hadde been also Somtyme with the lord of Palatye Agayn another hethen in Turkye And evermore he hadde a sovereyn pry
And
of his port as meeke as is a mayde
He never yet no vileynye ne sayde, In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.

He was a verray parfit, gentil knight, But for to tellen you of his array, His hors was goode, but he ne was nat gay; Of futian he wered a gypon Al bismotered with his habergeon For he was late y-come from his viage, And wente for to doon his pilgrimage. 2.5.1

Explanations Lines (43–78) There was a Knight among them, and he was a worthy (or brave) man. From the time that he first began to ride out to take part in military campaigns, he loved chivalry, truth, honour, generosity, and courtesy. He proved his bravery in war in the service of his feudal superior (King Edward III). In order to fight he had ridden very far (in fact, no man had travelled further than he) in both Christian and non-Christian countries, and he had been always honoured for his bravery. He fought at Alexandria when it was captured (by King Peter of Cyprus in 1365). Many times he had taken the head of the table in Prussia as the most honoured person among those of all nations.

He had fought in Lithuania and Russia, more than any other Christian of his rank. In Grenada also he had been at the siege of Algezir (near Gibraltar), and had ridden in

Benmarin. He had been at Ayas (in Armenia) and at Adalia (in Asia Minor) when these were captured (by Peter of Cyprus). He had been with many noble expeditions on the Great Sea (that is, the eastern

portion

of the Mediterranean). He had fought in fifteen deadly battles, and he had also fought for the Christian faith at Tramyssene (in Alegeria) three times in the tournaments, and had each time killed his adversary. This same brave Knight had also once been with the ruler of Palatia to fight against another heathen in Turkey, and he had since then always enjoyed a noble reputation. And even though he was brave, he was wise; and in his behaviour

he was as modest as a maiden. He had never

uttered any foul words in all his life to any kind of person. He was truly a perfect, gentle Knight. But to tell you of his clothes and equipment, he had fine horses, though he did not wear showy garments. He wore a doublet of coarse cloth which was

all soiled by his coat of mail, for he had recently returned from his voyage and

was now going

to make his pilgrimage (to Canterbury). Lines (79 – 100)

With hym ther was his sone, a yong SQUIER, A lovyere and a

lusty bachelor, With lokkes cruller s they were leyd in presse.

Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse,

Of his stature he was of evene lengthe, And wonderly delyvere and greet of strengthe, And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie,

In Flaundres, in Artoys and Pycardie; And born

hym weel, as of

so litel space, In hope to stonden in his lady grace

Embrounded

was he, as it were a meede, Al ful of fresshe floures white and reede; Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day;

He was as fresh as is the monthe of May, Short was

his gowne, with sleves longe and wyde; Wel koude he sitte on horse and faire ryde; He

koude songes made

and well endite, Juste and eek daunce and weel purtreye and write.

So hoote he

lovede that by nyghterale He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale. Curteis he was, lowely and sevysable, And carf biforn his fader at the table. 2.5.2

Explanations

Lines (79 – 100) With him was his son, a young Squire, who was a lover and a strong aspirant for attaining knighthood. He had curly hair which seemed to have been pressed in a curling iron. I think that he was

about twenty years old. In stature, he was a man of average height. He was wonderfully agile and possessed great strength. And he had once been in the cavalry in Flanders, in Artois, and in Picardy where he had given a good account of himself, considering the fact that he had been in the army for only a short period yet. (Because of his good record of fighting in the wars) he hoped

to win his lady's favour. His garments were embroidered like a meadow

all full of fresh flowers, white and red. He would sing or flute all day.

He was as fresh as is the month of May.
He
wore a short gown with long and wide sleeves. He could sit on his horse well and could ride fairly. He could compose songs and compose them well. He could engage in combat,
and also dance,
draw,
and write well. He loved so hotly that
at night-time he slept as little as does a nightingale. He was courteous, humble and useful, and he carved before his father at the table. Lines (165-187)
A
Monk
ther was, a fair for the maistrie. An
outridere, that lovede venerie;
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he is
stable; And whan he rood men myghte his brydel heere Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als cleere, And eek as loude, as dooth the chapel belle Ther as this lord was kepere of the celle. The reule of seint Maure or of seint Beneit By-cause that it was old and
some-
del
streit, This ilke Monk leet olde thynges pace, And heeld after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled hen That seith that hunters beth nat hooly men, Ne that a Monk whan he is cloysterles Is linked til a fissh that is waterles; This is to seyn, a Monk out of his cloystre. But thilke text heeld he nat worth an oystre;
And I seyde his opinioun
was good. What sholde he studie and make hymselven wood,
Upon
a book in cloystre alwey to poure, Or swynken with his handes and laboure,
As Austyn bit ? how shal the world be served? 2.5.3
Explanations
Lines(165-187) There was a Monk, a dominating kind of man, an outrider (whose duty it was to supervise the monastery's estates), one who loved hunting. the monk had manly qualities, and was competent to be the head of an abbey. He had quite a large number of valuable horses in his stable,
and when he rode, people could hear his bridle jingling in a whistling wind as clearly and also as loudly as
they could hear the ringing of the chapel bell. There, at the place where this lordly Monk was head of the cell, he disregarded such old things as the rules of monastic discipline established by St. Maurus and St. Benedict because these rules were (in his opinion) out of date and somewhat strict. And he followed the practices introduced by the new order of things. He did not give a plucked hen for that text which tells us that hunters are not holy men or for the text according to which, a monk, when he disobeys the regulations, is like a fish without water, or that such a monk is a monk without a cloister. But such a text he held to be worthless. And I said that this Monk's opinions were commendable.
Why should he study and drive himself mad by always poring over a book in the
cloister? Or,
why should he work with his hands and toil, as St. Augustine bids? How shall the world be served (
either by hard study or by hard labour)? Lines (285-308)
A CLERK
ther was of Oxenford also, That unto logyk hadde longe y-go.
As leene
was his hors as is a rake, And he nas nat right fat, I undertake, But looked holwe, and
ther-to

96% **MATCHING BLOCK 13/50** W

sobrely, Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy, For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice, Ne was so wordly for to have office; For hym was levere have at his beddes heed, Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed, Of Aristotle and his philosophie, Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie, But al be that he was a philosopher, Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre, But al that he myghte of his freendes hente On bookes and

his

95% **MATCHING BLOCK 14/50** W

lernynge he it spente, And bisily gan for the soules prey Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye, Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede, Noght o word spak he moore than was neede, And that was seyd in forme and reverence And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche. 2.5.4

Explanations
Lines(285-308)
There was also a Clerk of Oxford, who had studied logic for a long time. He had a horse which was thin like a rake and, I might add, he himself could not be called fat because he always looked hollow-cheeked, and was in addition self-restrained (or sober). His outer cloak was absolutely worn- out, because he had not yet been able to obtain the rectorship of any parish church, and because he was not worldly enough to seek a job.
He would rather have at his bed's head twenty books, bound in black and red, of Aristotle and his philosophy than acquire rich garments, or a fiddle, or a gay harp. But, although he was a
philosopher, he had hardly any gold in his possession. On the contrary, he spent on books and learning all the money that he might get from his friends, and he devotedly prayed for the welfare of the souls of those who provided him with the resources for his studies. He was most careful and most diligent in the pursuit of his studies. He did not speak even a word more than was necessary, and what little he spoke was spoken in a most appropriate and modest manner. He spoke briefly and animatedly. What he spoke was pregnant with noble thought. His speech was eloquent with moral virtue, and he took plreasure in both learning and teaching.
Lines (331-360)

86% **MATCHING BLOCK 15/50** W

A FRANKELEYN was in his compaignye, Whit was his berd as is a dayesye, Of his complexioun he was sanywyn, Wel loved he by the morwe a scope in wyn. To liven in delit ws ever his wone, For he was Epicurus owene sone, That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit Was verraily felicitee parfit An householdere, and that a greet, was he: Seint Julian was he in his contree; His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon, A better envyned man was nowher noon. Withoute bake mete was never his hous, Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteuous, It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke, Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke. After the sundry sesons of the yeer, So changed he his mete and his soper Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe, And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe. Wo was his cook but if his sauce were Poynaunt and sharpe, and redy al his geere. His table dormant in his halle always, Stood redy covered al the longe day. At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire; Ful ofte tyme was

he

44% **MATCHING BLOCK 16/50** W

lord and sire; Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire, An anlaas, and a gypser al of sild, Heeng at his girdle, whit as morne milk. A shirreve hadde he been, and a

countour; Was nowher such a worthy vavasour 2.5.5
Explanations
Lines(331-360)
There was a Franklin in his company.
The Franklin's beard was white like a daisy, and he had a ruddy complexion. He was very fond of taking a sop of wine in the morning. It was always his practice to live a life of pleasure, because he was a great follower of the philosophy of Epicurus who used to recommend a life of luxury and who held the theory that complete pleasure was truly the source of perfect happiness. He was a house-holder, and he kept a grand house. He was as hospitable as Saint Julian himself. The bread and the ale in his house were always uniformly good. A man with a better wine-cellar did not exist. His house was never without meat-pie. There was such a plenty of fish and meat in his house that one would think that food and drink and all conceivable delicious eatables rained there. He varied his meat and his meals according to the changing seasons of the year. He had a large number of fat
partridges in the basket in his house, and he cultivated plenty of fish of different kinds in his pond. His cook would have come to grief if he could not make available sauces, pungnent and sharp, and if he did not keep cups and plates ready for the table. The diner-table in his house was fixed to the floor of the hall and was thus always ready for use throughout the day. At court sessions he was a lord and a benefactor, and often he was the representative of his county in Parliament. A dagger and a silk bag hung at his girdle which was white in colour like morning milk.
He had been a sheriff and an auditor. There was nowhere such a worthy
servant of the King. Lines (379-387)
A COOK
they hadde with hem for the nones, To biolle the chiknes with the marybones
And poudre-marchant tart and galingale, Wel koude he knowe a draughte of Londoun ale; He
koude rooste and seethe and boille and frye,
Maken mostreux and wel bake a pye. But greet harm was it, as it thoughte
me,
That on his shyne a mormal hadde he. For
blankmanager, that made he with the beste. 2.5.6
Explanations
Lines(379-387) They had a Cook with them for the occassion (that is, to accompany them on the journey) in order to boil the chickens with the marrow bones, and to prepare sharp-tasting spices and flavours. This Cook could well appreciate a drink of the famous

78% **MATCHING BLOCK 17/50** **W**

London ale. He could roast and boil and broil and fry, and make a stew, and properly bake a pie. But it was

a great pity, as
I thought, that on the lower part of his leg he had an ulcer. As for spiced chicken, he was such an expert in preparing it that he could equal the performance of the best of cooks.
Lines (445-476)
A GOODE WIFE
was ther of biside BATHE,
But she was som-del deef, and that was scathe. Of clooth-makyng she hadde swich an haunt
One
passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt. In al the parisshe wif ne was ther noon
That to the offrynge before hire sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn so wroth was she, That she was out of alle
charitee,
Hir coverchiefs ful fine weren of ground,- I dorste
swere they weyeden ten pound,- That on a Sonday weren upon hir heed. Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet, reed, Ful streite y-teyd, and shoes ful moyste and newe. Bcold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe She was a worthy woman al

hir lyve, Housbonders at chirche dore she hadde
five, Withouten oother compaignye in youthe,-
And thries hadde she been at Jerusalem; She hadde passed many a straunge strem At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne, In Galice at Seint Jame, and at Coloigne. She koude muchel of wandrynge by the weye, Gat-tothed ws she, smoothly for to seys Upon an amblere esily she sat, Y-wympled
wel, and on hir heed an hat As brood as is a bokler or a targe; A foot mantel aboute
hir hipes large, And on hire feet a paire of spores sharpe. In felaweshipe wel koude she laughe and carpe; Of remedies of love she knew per chaunce, For she koude of that art the olde daunce. 2.5.7
Explanations
Lines(445-476) There was a god house-wife who came from a place close to Bath. But it was a pity that she was somewhat deaf. She was such an expert in weaving cloth that she excelled the workmen of the Flemish town of Ypres and Gaunt. In the whole parish, there was no woman who dared to go to the collection-box in the church before this Wife of Bath. And if any woman preceded the Wife of Bath on such an occasion, she certainly became so angry that she lost all pity or consideration. Her kerchiefs were finely woven. I am absolutely certain, and I can therefore affirm on oath, that the kerchiefs she wore on her head on a Sunday must have been ten pounds in weight. The colour of her stockings was a fine scarlet red, and they were tightly tied.
Her
shoes were very soft and new. Her face was bold and fair, red in complexion.
She was a worthy woman throughout her life. She had married five husbands at the church door,
besides other lovers
she had in her youth: but there is no need to discuss that now. And thrice she had been to Jerusalem. She had crossed many oceans to go to foreign lands. She had been to Rome, to Boulogne, to the shrine of St. James in Galicia, to Cologne. She had a lot of experience of travelling. She was gap-toothed, to tell the truth. She sat upon an ambling horse with ease, neatly veiled. On her head she had a hat which was
as wide as a buckler or a shield. About her large hips she wore an outer skirt, and on her feet,
she wore a pair of sharp spurs. In company she could laugh and joke a good deal. Undoubtedly, she knew the remedies of love, because she had learnt this art as it existed in olden times.
Lines (623-636)
A Somonour was ther
with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubynnes face, For sawcefleem he was, with even narwe. As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe, With scaled browes blake and piled berd, -
Of his visage children were aferd.

97% **MATCHING BLOCK 21/50** **W**

Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon, Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre non, Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte, That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white, Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes. Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes, And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood; Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he were wood. 2.5.8

Explanations

98% **MATCHING BLOCK 22/50** W

Lines (623-636) There was a Summoner with us in that place. His face was red like fire, as an angel's face is, and he had pimples all over his face. He had narrow eyes, and he was a passionate fellow, constantly desiring sexual indulgence like a sparrow. He had black brows, which were infected with mange (or itch), and he had a shaggy beard. Children felt afraid on seeing his face. There was no quicksilver, lead oxide, brimstone, borax, white lead, cream of tartar, or any cleaning and disinfectant ointment that could cure him of his white pimples or of the lumps of flesh in his cheeks. He was very fond of garlic, onions, and also leeks. He loved to drink strong wine, red coloured like blood. After drinking he would talk and shout as if he had gone mad. Lines (669-679) With

hym ther rood a g entil

98% **MATCHING BLOCK 18/50** W

Pardoner Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer, That streight was comen fro the court of Rome. Ful loude he soong Com hider, love, to me! This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun, Was never trompe of half so greet a soun. This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex, But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex; By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde, And therwith he his shuldres overspradde; But thynne it lay, by colpons, oon and oon; 2.5.9

Explanations
Lines(669-679)
With him there rode a gentle Pardoner (that is, a trafficker in papal) pardons or indulgences). The Pardoner, who was the Summoner's friend and comrade, belonged to Rouncival (a convent near Charing Cross in London). He had come, according to his own version, directly from the Pope's court at Rome. In a very loud voice he sang the song: "Come hither, Love, to me! The Summoner joined him in singing this song with his strong, deep-sounding voice. Never was there a trumpet, the sound of which was even half as loud as the singing of the Summoner. The
Pardoner had hair as yellow as wax, but it hung smooth as does a coil of flax.
The few locks he had, hung down thinly and covered his shoulders.
But his locks were very thin and lay on his shoulders, in small bunches, here and there. Lines (751-768)

95% **MATCHING BLOCK 19/50** W

A Semely man Oure Hooste was with-alle For to han been a marchal in an halle. A large man he was, with eyen stepe, A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe; Boold of his speche, and wys and well y-taught, And of manhod hym lakkede right naught. Eek therto he was right a myrie man, And after soper pleyen he bigan, And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges, Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges; And seyde thus: Now, lordynges, trewely, Ye been to me right welcome, hertely; For by my trouthe, if that I shall nat lye,

I ne

98% **MATCHING BLOCK 20/50** W

saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye At ones in this herberwe as is now Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how; And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght, To doon yow ese, and it shal coste

night 2.5.10 Explanations
Lines(751-768)

Our Host was a man altogether fit to perform the duties of a marshal in a dining-hal. He was a large man, with bright eyes. There was no finger citizen in Cheapside than our Host. He was bold of speech, and sensible, and well-educated. And he was not wanting in any quality of real manhood. In addition to all this, he had a jovial temper, and after supper he began to indulge in jokes and he talked, among other subjects, of the pleasures of life. After we had settled our bils, he spoke to us in the following manner: "Now, gentlemen, I say truly that you are heartily welcome here for I swear that, if I am to speak the truth, I have not seen this year such a merry company assembled in this inn at any one time as you on this occasion. I would like to provide entertainment for you if I knew how. And a pastime has just occurred to me to entertain you, which will cost nothing." 2.6

Textual Analysis Text-1: The Opening Sentence (A rough rule for the pronunciation of final -e is to pronounce it only when it is required by the rhyme or metre. It is not pronounced when the next word begins with a vowel. Pronounce 'e' when italicised.)

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote The droghte of March hath perced to the roote, And bathed every veryne in swich licour

Of which vertu engendred is the flour, Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth

Inspired hath in very holt and heeth The tendre croppes, and the younge sonne Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne, A smale foweles

maken melodye, That slepen al the nyght with open ye (So priketh hem nature in hir corages), Thanne longen folke to goon on pilgrimages, And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,

To feme halwes, kowthe in sondry

londes; And specially from every shires ende Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende, The hooly blisful martir for to seke, That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke. (

lines 1-18) The Prologue has a fresh and joyful beginning: the spring urges the natural world into growth, birds into song and human beings to go on pilgrimage. These signs of spring are conveyed in a sentence of four clauses. The clauses are concerned with time (Whan in lines 1 and 5, Thanne in line 12), and then with place: And specially in line 15. The clauses address in turn the meteorological, vegetable, animal and human. This rhetorical device is called a chronographia, a literary setting in time and place; Chaucer had read such elevated opening to many of the antos of Dante's Divine Comedy, and he is imitating them. This sentence is far more formal than the rest of the Prologue, not only in its length and complex structure and phrasing (in swich licour / Of which vertu engendred is....), but also in its initial vocabulary which is scientific, mythological and astronomical. The references are explained in the Detailed Commentaries. The sentence opens slowly and grandly, becomes lively with the tendre croppes, the yonge sonne and the smale foweles that cannot sleep, and finally comes home to human beings, and to Chaucer's home country of Kent. It is Nature that makes people long to go on pilgrimages, a natural instinct directed to a supernatural end: gratitude for the saint's intercession in heaven for those who have been sick but are now whole and healthy. Text-2 :

The Prioress

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE, That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;

Hire gretteste ooth was

but by Seinte Loy; And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.

Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne, Entuned in hir nose ful semely; And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly, After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe, For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe.

At mete wel ytaught

was

she with alle, She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle, Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe, Wel koude she carie a morsel and we kepe

That no drope ne fille upon

hire brest. In curteisie was set ful muchel hir

lest. Hir

over-lippe wyped she so clene That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte. Ful semely after hir mete she raughte. And sikerly she was of greet desport, And ful plesaunt,

and amyable of port, And peyned hire to countrefete cheere Of court, and

to

been

estatlich of manere, And to ben holden digne of reverence. But for to speken of hire conscience,
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous Kaught
in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde. Of smale
houndes hadde she that she feede with rosted flessh, or milk and wastel-breed. But soore wepte she
if oon of hem were deed, Or if men smoot if with a yerde smerte, And al was conscience and tendre herte. Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was,
Hir
nose tretys, hir
eyen greye as glas, Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed. But sikerly
she
hadde a fair forheed;
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe, For, hardily,
she
was not undergrowe. Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene,
And
theron heng
a brooch of gold ful sheene, On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after Amor vincit omnia. (
Lines 118-62) This portrait is selected as a sample of Chaucer's art and of the problems of interpretation and tone set by his habit of praise. It is hard to assess the degree of criticism in the portrait, an assessment complicated by changes in the meaning of words and by modern unfamiliarity with the ideals and historical realities of the life of nuns. Such factors - ironical praise, changes in sense, and historical ignorance - play a part in interpreting almost all the portraits. Deficiency of knowledge may be remedied more easily than prejudice. Religious orders were suppressed at the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, and many people of today, even among Christians, may have little understanding or experience of the ideal of the celibate single life dedicated to Christ. Since Prioresses often came from aristocratic families or gentry, ladylike bearing and courtly table manners are no surprise. Most gentil families had members in relgious orders; Chaucer has a sister or a daughter who was a nun.) Madame Eglentyne's name, nose, eyes, mouth and forehead are well bred. Little dogs and gold brooches were not in the Benedictine Rule; yet the Rule had been modified over the centuries; the Prioress's little weaknesses do not in themselves indicate personal laxity. Key words which have changed sense are coy, which means 'quiet' not 'archly inviting'; countrefete means 'imitate' not 'fake'. These considerations make the portriat less broadly satiric and more ironic. But ambiguity is systematic. We have to recognise the ambiguities rather than hope to resolve them all. The motto on the brooch could be either religious or secular (see Detailed Commentaries). We are to smile at the nun's French accent, too-perfect manner and pity for very small animals, but whether her nasal singing, her height and her large forehead deserve a smile is not so clear (large foreheads, for example, were fashionably beautiful in the late fourteenth century). The question is complicated by the recurrent use in the portraits of hyperbole and the superlative. Chaucer's work often shows amusement at human vanity generally, not just feminine vanity. But how gentle is this satire, and how serve? Madame Eglentyne is certainly too concerned with manner, and seems to care more for mice than for men. The society lady's devotion to pets is an enduring comic stereotype. Older critical reaction is summed up in a phrase of the critic John Livingstone Lowes: 'the engagingly imperfect submergence of the f eminine in the ecclesiastical'. Recent views of this portrait have been affected by outrage at the antisemitism of the Tale the Prioress later tells. But to

see this nun and everything about her as ridiculous or worse would be a serious mistake. Chaucer is judgemental only in extreme cases. He does not here repudiate the celibate ideal, nor does he condemn the nun's softness. He carefully leaves plenty of room for interpretation. We too have to listen carefully - and we do not have to make up our minds. 2.7 Critical Approaches Literary Genes and Modes Literary General Prologue draws on several different genres or kinds of writing. It is a prologue in which the author speaks to his audience, introducing a larger work. A medieval prologue aimed to capture the good will of its auditors and readers, to lay out what is to follow, and to apologise for any inadequacies. This prologue consists of a formal opening (lines 1-18); the introduction of the pilgrimage and of the narrator (lines 19-41); a catalogue of portraits of his companions (lines 42-714); the apology (lines 725-46); the setting-up of the tale-telling game (lines 747-821); the riding out, and the drawing of lots for who shall tell the first tale (lines 822-58). The catalogue of portraits takes up almost four-fifths of the Prologue. Detailed description can become static, and catalogues can become repetitious. But Chaucer varies his approach and is unpredictable. His prologue is also a narrative: each pilgrim is described not only in terms of how they strike their fellow-pilgrim, Chaucer. He half dramatises many of them, conveying the impression that they have spoken to him and that he is passing on what they say. This relationship between the narrator and his creations keeps the descriptions alive. The narrative quicknes in the final section as the Host chivvies and persuades the pilgrims, leads them out of Southwark, and arranges the cut so that the Knight should tell the first tale. As well as prologue, description and narrative, the General Prologue also draws on the mate- rials of satire. Satire is the holding up to ridicule of folly and vice, and medieval satire attacked its victims harshly. Satire of the three estates of medieval society caricatured the typical faults of the members of the military, clerican and lay estates, as in Piers Plowman, which has a hunting monk, a flattering friar and some venal laymen who also appear in Chaucer. But Chaucer uses a different approach, partly drawn fromthe thirteenth-century French Roman de la Rose, an encyclopaedic anrrative work, the beginning of which he had translated as The Romaunt of Rose. The French poem is a dreamvision, in which a dreamer meets and describes various personages, who talk and interact with him. The Roman does not attack the targets of its satire but allows them to speak. Chaucer does likewise, and he develops a technique of ironical praise, examined below. Thus the Prologue uses a number of genres, modes and approaches. It is not a work of naive realism or of straightforward social observation, although it contains elements which allow modern readers accustomed to realism to read much of it in that way. Something must be said of the work which the Prologue introduces. The Canterbury Tales is very varied miscellany of tales such as might be told by a mixed group of pilgrims on the road to Canterbury. The work is united by the framework of the tale-telling competition, and though the pilgrims do not even reach Canterbury, the pattern is clear. At its simplest it is a complication of various stories set inside two framestories, the pilgrimage and the tale-telling game. The Prologue sets up the game, and it also sets up the human skittles at the beginning of its own game. The Host's game nearly comes to a halt as soon as the Knight finishes the first tale. The Host's authority is flouted by the drunken Miller, who insults him and the Kinght and the Reeve. Pilgrims quarrel and fall out of charity. The Knight later stops the Host attacking the Pardoner. Chaucer's talk a lot, notably the Wife of Bath. Tales are interrupted or stopped by the Host or other pilgrims. A runaway servant rides up and joins the pilgrimage. Finally the Cook falls off his horse, and the Parson tell the last tale. The frame-story is social comedy, not without a hint of the more serious purpose of a pilgrimage. Some tales are very serious indeed. The General Prologue is an expository introduction and overture to the Tales, hinting at some of the themes as well as introducing the tellers of the tales. Because it is varied and self- contained, and as vivid as medieval manuscript illuminations, it is often read on its own. Thus detached, it becomes a picture of the society of the time, especially as the gallery of portraits of the pilgrims is a cross-section of those who were free to go on a pilgrimage. It is also written in a lively and realistic style, so that we can imagine thathaucer did meet actual people resembling his fellow-pilgrims. Chaucer's story-telling art allows us to combine with the interest of understanding something of medieval society the pleasure of becoming involved with a 'real' set of people. The Prologue was, however, intended as a prologue, somehting 'spoken before'. Chaucer probably read it aloud to friends and at court, and wrote is so that we should imagine him doing so. Audiences who knew Chaucer would have enjoyed the idea of his accidentally falling in with a ready- made group of pilgrims and of their fictional adventures. They would have certainly been amused at the figure Chauce cuts later on in the Tales. The Host addresses

him as a fat little man, too shy to tell a story. When pressed, the pilgrim Chaucer begins on a feeble romance, a parody of bad popular romance: it rhymes so wretchedly that the Host cannot endure it and rudely prevents his own author from continuing. Like the original audience, we know that this supposedly autobiographical story is not ture. Chaucer may have gone on such a pilgrimage, but it is not likely that its members spoke in verse, nor that their tales would have been audible from horseback. The appearance of verisimilitude is brilliant and at times intense, but it is a deliberate illusion. Chaucer often dispendses with this verisimili- tude: many of the tales ar fantastic, whether adventurous, miraculous, indecent or farcical. Some tales are doctrinal; the Parson's is not a story but a treatise on penance. The verisimilitude of the Prologue is only one of his literary modes. Chaucer has an eye for social realities, but it would not have occurred to him to write social history or a naturalistic novel. The pilgrims were deramed up because the tales which are to follow had to have tellers to tell them. On examination, each of the portraits proves to be formal and self-contained, as they are not in novels. Also each pilgrim belongs to a different profession, except for the Second Num and five Guildsmen. This suggests that Chaucer meant to show a representative cross-section of society, as in estates satire, in which the faults to the three estates were held up for correction. He includes only those who were likely to go on such a pilgrimage. Pilgrimages would not include serfs or poor peasants not free to travel. A nobleman would travel with his own retinue. Thus the base and apex of the feudal pyramid are not here. There are twenty-six men and three women: women would normally stay at home unless, like the Prioress and her opposite number the Wife of Bath, they were independent. Chaucer could not guess that readers six centuries later would think of him and his pilgrims as typically medieval. His purposes differed from those of, for example, George Eliot, who certainly meant the characters of her novel Middlemarch (published in 1872) to represent the historical life of a Midlands town in the ealry nineteenth centry. So long as we bear this difference in mind, there is no harm in seeing the pilgrims as English men and women of the later Middle Ages. They are presented as typical human beings, and have social and economic as well as moral and spiritual dimensions. Many of them are types who would have been familiar to lettered and unlettered people in the audience: the hunting monk, the venal friar, the dedicated knight, the gay young squire, the ladylike prioress, the good parson. All these were figures known to popular as well as literary tradition, as caricatures or as ideals. The
central figure of the slightly earlier poem Piers Plowman is an idealised ploughman, like Chaucer's ploughman. The portraits belong in the Prologue as part of a developing fictional action. To use a theatrical analogy, it is as if The Canterbury Tales were a play which opened with the cast assembled on the stage at the beginning instead of at the end. A true historical sense involves us in seeing these characters as living: when we see the Merchant, we see a pompous businessman, not just a typical representative of an emerging class in the City of London in the late fourteenth century. Later on he turns out to be unhappily married, and becomes a typical human being as well
as a typical merchant. 2.8
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Unit 3-
Geofery Chaucer: Prologue to Canterbury Tales- II 3.1 Introduction 3.2 Critical Essays 3.2.1 In addressing "
The General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales" 3.2.2 A Note on the Term Middle Ages 3.2.3 Medieval Christianity 3.2.4 The Renaissance 3.2.5 The Narrator 3.3 Some Thematic considerations 3.3.1 The Opening Sentence 3.4 The General Prologue as an Epic Poem 3.5 Chaucer's Irony 3.5.1 Interpreting Irony 3.6 Satire 3.7 More Considerations 3.7.1
The Pervasiveness of Courtly Love 3.7.2 The Importance of Company 3.7.3 The Corruption of the Church 3.7.4 Motifs 3.8 Symbols 3.9
Bibliography 3.1
Introduction The General Prologue makes it clear that the overall plan for the work called for four stories from each character, two on the way there and two on the way back. That intention was clearly not met. The manuscripts contain work on twenty-four tales, with two of these unfinished. Putting these tales together into what seems to be the most coherent form is a major editorial challenge. The basic structure of the work, as established in the General Prologue, is simple enough and relatively conventional. A group of travelers are thrown together and, to pass the time, they determine to tell each other stories (in a manner common to all sorts of narratives like the

Thousand all one Nights, The Decameron of Boccaccio, and so on.) Chaucer chooses one of the oldest narrative devices, a journey, in this case a pilgrimage which includes a wide variety of social types. On this familiar narrative framework, he then hangs a series of tales in which includes a wide variety of social display a number of different literary forms (fairy stories, prose sermons, romance narratives, bawdy tales, animal fables, and so on). In this way, he has ready-made recipe for a wide variety of personalities and stories. And one of the greatest achievements of The Canterbury Tales is the richness of it characters and its literary styles. 3.2
Critical Essays 3.2.1 In addressing "The General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales" We are dealing with what has long been recognized as one of the greatest masterpieces of English literature, certainly the finest and most influential work of fiction to emerge in England from that period we call the Middle Ages. For most literary historians, English literature begins well before Chaucer's greatest poem, but this particular work marks the start of the trading which is still readily accessible in the original language even though Chaucer's Middle English requires the constant help of a glossary. Let us discuss some important interpretative feature of "The General Prologue,' largely with a view to raisin some points which will not only help us to understand Chaucer's poem a little better but also to hone our literary critical skills. Chaucer's' poem is a particularly useful place to carry out the latter task, because, if we take the time to get familiar enough with his language to read the poem with some case, it raises interesting critical problems for those learning about literary criticism of ancient works. Before turning directly to the text of the poem however let us consider the historical term commonly associated with this poem, the Middle Ages. By common agreement, this work is the finest poem to emerge in English during the Middle Ages, in part because it provides us such a vivid unforgettable look at a wide social canvas from that time. But what does that term mean? 3.2.2 A Note on the Term Middle Ages One might well begin by asking "Why the Middle Ages?" Clearly people at the time did not think of themselves as living between two different time periods (they thought of themselves, as every age does, as the most recent arrivals), so where does the term come from? Well, the term Middle Ages was applied by later Renaissance writers and historians to refer to the period falling very roughly between the fall of the Roman Empire in 410 AD (when Alaric
sacked Rome) and the Renaissance. The arrival of the latter has no clear date and tends to be dated earlier in southern Europe than in the north. A convenient (but somewhat misleadingly precise) date for the arrival of the Renaissance in England might be 1485, the date of the battle of Bosworth Field, when Richard III, the last of the Plantagenet kings, was defeated and killed by Henry Tudor, thus initiating the reign of the Tudors, which lasted in England until the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603. The term Middle Ages, like so many historical terms applied to an earlier period, was deliberately pejorative. There had been the great Classical Period of Greece and Rome, and now there was the wonderful revival of classical learning, the Renaissance. In between was a period viewed by many Renaissance thinkers as a time of relatively little achievement (with some exceptions here and there), a time of ignorance, an absence of the invaluable classical inheritance, feudal oppression, and the widespread power of the church. With deliberate contempt, some writers applied the term The Dark Ages to the earlier part of this period (up to about the eleventh century.) In fact, the Middle Ages was a time of extraordinary vitality. In the first five hundred years of this period, Christianity established itself throughout Europe, developed a
complex
institutionalized religion capable of governing society at all levels, ministering to the sick, and dealing with judicial disputes; the Church hammered out compromises with secular rules, an aristocracy derived from the Germanic tribal customs, and placed Europe's economy on a firm agricultural foundation (the work of the monasteries in clearing the land is one of the greatest successes of western world). During this period there were many fierce disputes about Christian doctrine, about the relative distribution of power between Church and State, and about the relationship between the Church's immense economic power and its ministry to the poor. Nevertheless, for much of the Middle Ages, life was calm, orderly, stable, and relatively prosperous. If we tend to remember the excesses, like the Black Death and the persecution of heretics and witches (which is more a Renaissance phenomenon), we should not therefore forget that this period established the basis from which were to develop the institutions, customs, and power which fuelled the amazing expansion of Europe in the Renaissance and afterwards. 3.2.3 Medieval Christianity It is particularly important for modern readers of medieval works not to make the common but fatal error of thinking about the Middle Ages, especially about the Christian Church in

the Middle Ages, as something monolithic, homogenous, and backward. Within the Church, as within the ranks of modern liberal capitalism, there were all sorts of tensions between traditional authoritarian conservatives, radical free thinkers, communitarians insisting on limiting individual freedom, individualists insisting on more individual freedom, reformers wanting a better deal for the poor and less money for the top bureaucrats, and so on. The major work of the Church was to maintain, in the midst of all these tensions, a workable social community in the thousands of very small agricultural communities throughout Europe, and in this attempt, it was for a long time astonishingly successful. If many of the popes and bishops, like the imperial Caesars, left behind scandalous records of personal misconduct, nevertheless many were efficient and caring administrators, and the bureaucracy of the Church could often work extremely well with corruption at the top, because it was staffed by educated and diligent human beings at lower levels. 3.2.4
The Renaissance The terms Renaissance is applied to the period of intellectual and cultural history which succeeded the Middle Ages. Literally the term refers to the rebirth of classical learning which swept across Italy in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, as old classical manuscripts were rediscovered, edited, translated,
a
distributed throughout southern Europe, moving slowly northward throughout the fifteenth century. The immediate impetus which launched this revival was the serious threat posed to Eastern Europe by the Turkish Muslim forces moving up towards Constantinople and Vienna throughout the early part of this period (Constantinople was captured by the Turks in 1453). The flight of Greek scholars with the manuscripts towards the West brought into the West, and especially into Italy, what had been lost long ago. Greek language and literature. The diffusion of such learning accelerated rapidly after the invention of printing in the 1450's. But there was more to the Renaissance than just this scholarly revival. There was a renewed emphasis on classical humanism, on the view that the good life did not have to be lived under the constant supervision of the Church within the often limited restrictions of the rising interest in speculating about the nature of the earth and the heavens (often supported by ambitious central monarchs growing in power) all put pressure on the static, traditional, communal model which had been the social reality of Europe for eight centuries.
Chaucer's poem was written late in the fourteenth century, in the late Middle Ages or early Renaissance, depending on how one wishes to consider the time. And a few things about the social conditions of the period are clear from the picture of society he gives us there. First, the Church is still clearly a major part of society. About of the pilgrims going to Canter- bury are church officials, and the entire group is celebrating spring by taking part in a traditional Christina ritual, the pilgrimage to an important holy shrine. In doing so they are giving public testimony to things that are valued in their society and their lives, just as we would reveal a great deal about our social and personal values, if we were to write this poem today. Secondly, while none of the pilgrims comes from the tope classes of society, the aristocracy, many of them are quite rich and sophisticated. In examining them, we are, for the most part, looking at members of the middle-class (although the concept of class did not exist at the time). Some of them have money, a few have travelled extensively. They know about clothes and books and food. Some ordinary folk have horses. What we would call the trading and service industries are well represented by people who would not be
out
be out of place in a Nanaimo mall. And yet we are reminded, too, that traditional roles of the Middle Ages have not yet disappeared. Finally, there is a sense of rising individualism, among them. While the ideals of the dedication to a traditional Christian communal society are still clearly there, it is equally evident that for many of these pilgrims, including the Church officials, the sense of a communal duty is being eroded by a personal desire for money and the fine things money can buy. In fact, there is a strong sense throughout The Canterbury Tales that this money is somehow a threat to something older and more valuable. All of these details suggest a society in transition. We are not here dealing with the vision of the Middle Ages of a few hundred years before, a time when books were very scarce, traveling much more difficult, and money (and the good things it purchases) in much shorter supply. Chaucer, incidentally, lived before the invention of printing and the widespread diffusion of classical literature into Northern Europe. Thus, although he was well read in French and Italian literature and drew heavily upon certain Continental works and traditions, he did not have access to Greek literature. When he wrote about Troilus and Cressida and the Trojan
Wars he was drawing on medieval traditions of this famous story, without direct knowledge about Greek versions in Homer or the tragedians. The
age of Chaucer covers the period from 1340 to 1400. Chaucer is the true representative of his age as Pope is of the eighteenth century and
Tennyson

is of the Victorian era. His works breathe the political, social, economic and religious tendencies of his time. The middle of the fourteenth century was the transitional period in which Chaucer was born. The elements of Renaissance were breeding. “He stands on the threshold of the new age, but still hedged in a backward gazing world.” The fourteenth century in England was the most important of the mediaeval centuries. It covered the period of the Black Death and the Peasant’s Revolt, the Hundred Years War with France and the great economic and social changes which we associate with the decay of villeinage. During its years, two kings were deposed and murdered, and dynasties began to rise and fall. The antagonism to the church and the demand for the freedom of thought, which was to culminate in the Renaissance and the Reformation were beginning to be manifested in this pregnant century. It was of supreme importance for the understanding of English history that we should have a dramatic, piquant and all embracing picture of real mediaeval life before the great changes should arrive and Chaucer has given us this picture in his Canterbury Tales. During the English Period, Chaucer appears to us as a great original poet. He had learnt almost to perfection the arts of description, narrative and
characterization.
Chaucer is known for his technique of versification like that of a fine craftsman and a supreme writer because of his humour and personal talk. This period includes his remarkable work, The Canterbury Tales. In this poem he truly represented the comedy of life in its all forms. The Prologue to The Canterbury Tales gives us the background of the actions and movements of the pilgrims who make up the company of the members of the troop who undertook this pilgrimage. All these pilgrims represent the whole of “English society” of the fourteenth century. The pilgrims are persons of all ranks and classes of society; and in the inimitable description of their manners, dresses, person, horses etc, with which the poet has introduced them, we behold a vast and minute
portrait
gallery of the social state of England in the fourteenth century. They are – a knight, a squire, a yeoman or military retainer of the class of the three peasants, who in the quality of the archer was bound to accompany his feudal lord to war, a prioress, a lady of monk, superior of a nunnery, a nun and three priests in attendance upon this lady; a Monk, a person represented as handsomely dressed and equipped and passionately
fond of hunting and good cheer; a friar, or monk, a merchant, a clerk or student of the University of Oxford; a sergeant of the law; a franklin or rich country–gentlemen, five wealthy burgesses or trademen, described in general but vigorous and characteristic terms; they are Haberdasher or dealer in silk and cloth, a carpenter, a weaver, a dyer and a tappisser or maker of carpets and hangings, a cook or rather what in old French is called Rotisseur i.e. the keeper of a cook’s shop; a shipman, the master of a trading vessel; a doctor of Physic; a wife of Bath, a rich cloth manufacturer, a Parson, or Secular Parish priest; a ploughman, the brother of the preceding personage; a miller; a manciple or steward of a lawyer’s hostel or inn of court; a Reeve, bailiff or interdant of the estates of some wealthy landowner; a summoner, an officer in the then formidable ecclesiastical courts, whose duty was to summon or cite before the spiritual tribunal those who had offended against the cannon laws; a Pardoner, or vendor of the Indulgences from Rome. To
these
thirty persons must be added Chaucer himself and the Host of the Tabard, making in all thirty two. The Canterbury Pilgrims are described so realistically and graphically that one gets
a
great enjoyment in reading The Prologue. Chaucer was regarded as the greatest writer of his age, (the fourteenth century), for he was widely read, imitated, and quoted; even some of his success in the material world was probably a reward for his skill with his pen. Three qualities are outstanding in his writings;
a humor
which is sometimes gentle, sometimes sly, often satiric, but never vicious (quite frequently he is the butt of his own jokes), an understanding of human beings which is warm and compassionate but never sentimental; and an acuteness of observation which is unfailing in its ability to discern the most significant detail. Chaucer’s fame, unlike that of many writers was great in his own lifetime and has remained consistently so for over 550 years. The general prologue to The Canterbury Tales, in some respects the most remarkable product of Chaucer’s genius, is an extended “dramatis personae” for the collection of tales. In it, Chaucer presents his characters, one by one, in a series of vivid, detailed, and lifelike portraits, and also sets forth his plan: to have each of his characters
tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two more on the

way back, to while away the time. The result is a continuous drama, for the tales give rise to altercations and other byplays and also further characterize their tellers. Chaucer did not live to complete his ambitious project. The Prologue, however, shows how fully he grasped it in his own mind. It would be a mistake to consider the Prologue as merely an introduction. It is a mature and highly finished work in its own right – the liveliest, most convincing picture of life in the middle Ages which has come
down to us. The language used by Chaucer comes from the Middle English rather different from the modern English we know. 3.2.5 The Narrator Linking the episodic nature of the gallery of characters and their stories is the engaging presence of the narrator, who is a major presence in the poem. Chaucer presents the narrator as one of the pilgrims, a fellow Christian traveling to Canterbury and meeting the various characters and hearing their stories. This gives his descriptions the immediacy of a personal narration based upon intimate conversations and direct witnessing of the dramatic events which take place upon the way (like the different quarrels among some of the pilgrims.) At the same time, however, it is quite clear that many of the details we learn (especially in the General Prologue) are obviously based upon a perspective that cannot be simply derived from a personal encounter. The details we learn about all the Knight's achievements, for example, or the details of the Wife of Bath's behavour back home in her own church, these are not things that a pilgrim narrator could learn in such vivid detail. Hence, we are dealing with, in effect, two narrators. The shifts, between them are unannounced, but not many readers enjoying the poem are at all disturbed by questions about how a pilgrim-narrator could possibly know so much about people he has just met. This, in itself, is a good reminder that what matters in reading a poem is not the total absence of logical difficulties of this sort but rather the skill with which the winter avoids drawing attention to any such inconsistencies. The dual point of view has the great advantage, of detail of the sort available only to an omniscient narrator where this is a useful supplement to a
portrait
or a narrative. 3.3 Some Thematic Considerations When we first start reading the General Prologue, we are likely to be drawn first to the richness and variety of the gallery of characters. This is, indeed, one of the wonderful things about this poem; as Dryden observe, "Here is God's plenty." To approach a work thematically is to consider what ideas of leitmotivs co-ordinate its details, how these ideas are presented, modified, challenged, and resolved by the end of the work. Thematic criticism will tend to see
characterization
as primarily important for what it contributes to the complication or presentation of such co-ordinating ideas.
It's important to stress for all those interested in thematic criticism that works of fiction are not philosophical works. They do not present rational arguments (although such arguments may exist in them at times). Thus, thematic criticism is not simply a matter of reducing a work to some simple "moral" or prose summary. What matters in thematic criticism is following the way in which a particular idea or theme is qualified, complicated, challenged, deepened, resolved, reinforced as one proceeds through the fiction. In some fictions, the thematic dimension will be very clear indeed (e.g., in allegories); in others, it may not exist at all (the point of the fiction may well be to disqualify and thematic approach to experience- which, when one thinks about it, is a theme in its own right). 3.3.1 The Opening Sentence So,
a
thematic approach to the General Prologue might begin by focusing attention on the famous opening sentence. The first point to notice about that opening sentence is that if falls into two equal parts, the first focusing on the spring and the second on the holy duty of the pilgrimage. The first half really stresses the erotic energies of spring, with words like "engendred", "Inspired," "priketh," "Ram," and so on. These words often denote penetration and fertilization, and the movement of the lines and the short vowels in some of the words help to create a sense of erotic energy of a time when nature is so charged with sexual vitality that even the birds sleep with one eyes open. The second half of the sentence focuses on something entirely different, the desire of people to give thanks to God for having survived another winter, having with the help of God and his special saint overcome illnesses and threats of death. The sounds and movements of this part of the sentence is much softer and gentler. Now this sentence holds in perfect balance the two primary motives of life-the erotic drives which come to us from spring push up forward into newly renewed life, and the desire : for a common religious experience to thank God for our life together, something which pulls us to worship. On
the basis of

these two motions, the irrational push of Eros and the spiritual pull of Thanatos (to use Freudian terms) we can approach the study of society which Chaucer then depicts for us. The opening sentence announces a powerful theme which runs throughout the General Prologue: that there are two essential forces of life and that what matters is that they be held in a balance (as they are grammatically in the opening sentence). This theme, you might think,
is not nearly so explicit as I am suggesting in the opening sentence. But portraits (of the Knight and Squire, father and son), a pairing which unties the highest virtues of active Christianity displayed in the lifetime of service of the Knight with the exuberant vitality of the son, an erotic love of life which yet remains in check, so that he knows his duties towards his father (as the last detail of the
portrait
makes clear). If we look closely at the first pair of portraits in the light of the theme suggested by the opening sentence, then we encounter a standard of human conduct against which we will inevitably compare the later portraits. What is clear about the Knight is that he has led
a
active life fighting on behalf of Christianity, especially against the threat of Turkish invasion. He has displayed fortitude, courage, truth, honour, and earned a high reputation. Yet he remains humble and does not flaunt his rank in an expensive exterior or display any sense of superiority. He has just arrived back in England and immediately joins the procession to give thanks. His son, the Squire, shows all the virtues of youth, full of erotic energy, song, a love of the fine things of spring and a commitment to the ideals of chivalry; he is a creative spirit, able to sing, write lyric poetry, dance, and, in general, celebrate the joy of life. But, as already mentioned, this has not led him to forget the respect he owes his father. Later in the poem, near the end, we meet another pair, the Parson and the Ploughman. They display virtues remarkably similar to those of the Knight and the Squire. They are, above all, charitable and hard working. They have dedicated their lives to the service of their fellow creatures and do not shrink from self-sacrifice or danger to stand up to injustice. What seems clear is that the energies which drive them through life (and into this pilgrimage) are in harmony with the highest ideals by which the narrator measure human conduct. There's an important point to starting the
catalogue
of pilgrims with an ideal standard and to reintroducing it near the end. What this achieves is to enable us to make moral judgments more easily about the other portraits. It is clear what the narrator in this poem most admires; he conveys that in this ideal portrait. In this way, we could claim that a central theme of the General Prologue is an exploration of the full range of the moral qualities of late Medieval Christianity as they manifest
them- selves
in the daily of the people.

3.4 The General Prologue as an Epic Poem If we wish to address the vision of life developed in the General Prologue, we can pay tribute to its epic quality. This literary term is usually reserved for certain narrative fictions which hold up for our exploration something more than just a story. They have a social breadth and a narrative scope which provide a much wide and all-inclusive canvas than an ordinary fiction. In reading them, we are exploring, not simply particular characters in a particular setting, but an entire cultural moment. Epic narratives, from Homer onwards, celebrate civilization in a particular manifestation, and part of their power and interest comes from our sense that an entire way of life is under scrutiny. Parenthetically, what is curious about epic poems is that they tend to appear when the way of life they celebrate is the process of disappearing forever (Homer, for example, is writing about a heroic society a couple of centuries older than him, Paradise Lost appears when the great Protestant experiment under Cromwell is clearly over, many of the novels celebrating the American South come after the Civil War and the defeat of the Confederate cause.) In that sense, the General Prologue invites us to evaluate a particular society. Like all societies this culture is under tension. It has a clear sense of values, what we might call the traditional values of active Christianity, bet summed up in the well known Biblical celebration of faith, hope, and charity (and the greatest of these is charity). The ideal portraits make it clear to us that the narrator of this poem admires such qualities more than any others. Any the remaining portraits acquaint us with the various ways in which these qualities are under threat. Hence, reading the General Prologue is a voyage through the evaluation of an entire society.

Two comments about the moral visions we encounter: First, by the end of the General Prologue we have become well acquitted with the seven cardinal virtues (prudence, fortitude, temperance, justice, faith, hope, and charity) and the seven cardinal sins (pride, envy, covetousness, sloth, anger, lust, and gluttony). And it seems clear importance of this traditional value scheme. Second, and related to the above point, is the emphasis on the social basis for virtue. What makes people good or bad Christians, in the world of this poem, is how they treat each other. Virtue is not an abstract matter of doctrine, a purification ritual carried out in contemplative isolation, or a challenge to the individual will. It is thoroughly social, a matter of one's obligations to help others and to refrain from mistreating them. That list of virtues and vices is primarily social and cannot be under- stood outside of a rich social context.

• Comparative Critical Details In this respect, you should notice how certain words and details appear from one portrait
to the next. For example, we are often told about a
character'
s attitude to or use of money. And it's worth paying attention to what each
character
values enough to spend money on. The Knight's price is his reputation, and he has paid for horse. The Parson's gold is his sense of Christian duty ("if gold rust, what shal iren do?"), the Clerk (student) spends money on books. The Ploughman dutifully gives money to the Church. Other pilgrims spend money on a wide variety of consumer goods: clothes, food, fine living. How do these people get their money? How do they use their money? In following just this one point, we can see how that necessary balance between one's erotic and one's religious feelings can be upset, perhaps is some places corrupted. Here it is important to notice how many of the portraits are of Church officials, for whom this question is of particular importance. By looking closely at what the Monk purchases with his money or the tactics used by the Fair and the Pardoner to get money we see immediately where their particular sense of priorities drive them. Similarly, we should pay attention to clothes. Sometimes these are quite appropriate to the social function a
character
occupies (e.g., the Knight and perhaps the Prioress). At other times, we might wonder. The narrator clearly likes a fine appearance and has a keen eye for good clothes, just as he values books and his ability to read and write, as well good manners (courtesy). But his highest praise is reserved, for those details which enable us to see someone as charitable, that is, as loving his neighbours more than himself. So when the words charity or charitable appear we need to be particularly alert to assessing just what the words mean in this context. This business of love is essential. What does each
character
love? Is this love a
corruption of the spirit? In the Prioress we are not sure. The brooch might very well refer to love of God (for the slogan is a common religious statement). In the Monk, his love of God has become a lust for hunting and eating; the Friar's love directs him to al the common pleasures. The finest thing about the Parson is the perfect balance between his love of God and for this world. In the Pardoner, by contrast, the love of God's justice (of which he is the agent) and for humanity has become hopelessly corrupted.

We have to be careful about assessing the importance of each detail. The task asks us to evaluate, not what we thing of the character
n question, but what the narrator thinks. How do the details he presents about each
character
shape our understanding of how he feels about them? What emotional pressures is the language putting on us to understand a particular
character
in one way rather than another? The narrator rarely, if ever, offers an explicit judgment that is not tinged with some irony. But the list of specific details develop a latent judgment in a very delicate manner that the reader needs to attend to and respect. 3.5 Chaucer's Irony This sort of assessment is particularly challenging in the General Prologue because of the ironic tone which pervades so many of the portraits. In fact, there could hardly be a better introduction to the importance of evaluating irony than this famous poem. So it is appropriate here to say a few words about this all-important critical term. Irony, considered very generally, refers to the quality of language to have different levels of meaning, to be ambiguous, so that we are not entirely certain how to
interpret

a particular phrase or descriptive detail or action. The presence of irony complicates our response because it reveals that what is being described is not a simple literal fact for all to see, it is more
complex
and layered than that. Irony in language is, as one might expect, not welcome in certain forms of writing, especially in scientific and legal writing, where the unambiguous clarity of clearly defined words is the essence of the prose. In poetry and fiction generally, irony is a writer's stock in trade because it is the surest way to remain the reader that the subject matter of this text is not something simple and literal, but inherently ambiguous. How does irony work? We don't have to read very far in the General Prologue to see Chaucer's standard technique. He is always setting morally loaded language against actions which do not live up to that high praise, thus inviting us to see a discrepancy, an
ambiguity
between the moral language and the action. Here is a famous example from the
portrait
of the Wife of Bath: She was worthy woman al hir live Husbondes at chirche dore she hadd five. The word worthy in the first line sets up a very approving moral value judgment; the detail in the second line undercuts it. Note that that detail doesn't necessarily cancel the approval, but it redirects our attention. We have to wonder about just what the precise nature of the
Wife's worthiness consists of. The narrator is not telling us directly how to clarify the nature of the Wife, but he complicates it, inviting us to see her in a more
complex
way. Similarly, the narrator tells us that the Prioress is charitable (very high praise indeed, given the importance of this term established in the earlier [
portrait
of the Knight) and then, to establish that point, tells us that she weeps if she sees an animal in pain. The details add a distinct note of irony to the work charitable. We know the literal meaning of the word, but the style is asking us to qualify our literal understanding with something more ambiguous. Similarly, the Friar is the best beggar in his order. What does that mean? Obviously, he is a good beggar in the sense that he obtains a great deal of money, but the details of how he gets his money really qualify the moral content of the potential moral approval in that world best. Some of the portraits are clearly not ironic; we are invited to take them as literal portraits of an ideal, the Knight and the Squire and the Parson and the Ploughman are such ideals. Perhaps the Clerk is as well. But almost all the rest are ironic portraits of human characters whose qualities are inherently ambiguous. 3.5.1
Interpreting Irony For the literary interpreter the presence of irony is an important challenge, largely because an interpretation must explore that irony and seek to
assess
its effects, without being too ham fisted, that is, without resolving the irony too simplistically. If the effect of an ironic
portrait
is often thoroughly ambiguous, then one must acknowledge that and not close off the ironies too quickly. For example, the
portrait
of the Prioress has invited some people either to claim that there is no irony in the
portrait
whatsoever (and thus she is as fine and elegant a person as one might wish for), while others have dismissed her as a thoroughgoing hypocrite. Both of these reactions, in my view, deal with the portrait
by destroying its most obvious and interesting quality, its elusiveness. Yes, there are contradictory tendencies in the details, but (and this is a crucial point) human characters often
consist
of contradictory qualities bound up in a single personality, and one of the functions of poetry is to explore and illuminate such emotional contradictions, not to destroy them. Hence, in reading the General Prologue, one has to take care to shape one's response to each
character

carefully, seeking to define as precisely as possible our sense of how the ironical details finally add up, what sort of critical weight we might give to the presence of irony. One of the obvious ways to do this (something the poem invites us to do) is to compare the
characters with each other. We might sense, for example, that the Prioress is clearly not up to the standard of the Knight, but she does seem less corrupt than the Friar, who, in turn, is obviously not as scandalously hypocritical as the pardoner. Once we start comparing the characters with the theme of corruption of an ideal in mind, we will learn a great deal about the importance of making our responses to irony as precise as possible. In this connection, it might be useful to remember and apply the concepts of sins of omission and sins of commission. The former stem from a failure to do what one's duty requires one to do; the latter stem from active deed injuring others directly. And we might want to differentiate between sins of commission which are more serious than others. For example, the Flair commits many sins of commission, but he brings a certain amount of pleasure and fun with him, and his sexual conquests of women, although a disgrace to his order, are, we are led to believe, often well received. The Summoner and the Pardoner, by contrast, actively extort money through systematic lies, threats, and a corruption of church doctrine in their sermons. One final comment about irony in a style. Often, the most important debates between interpreters of a particular work hinge on whether or not they both see irony in the style of, if they do, just what weight to give it. Since irony inevitably undercuts the literal meaning of particular words and phrases, its presence or absence can make a huge difference. My favourite example of this is Machivaelli's The Prince.
My sense is
that this was intended as a thoroughly ironic, even satiric work, but so many people failed to see the irony, that the book has been hailed or condemned as a celebration of the political life totally divorced from morality. Debates over the ending of
Odyssey,
or Shakespear's Twelfth Night or Henry V, or Paradise Lost, some the most interesting and vital critical debates, hinge precisely on this question of detecting the presence of irony and evaluating it. 3.6 Satire When does irony become satire? What is the difference between a thoroughly ironic
portrait
and a satirically ironic style? One way to sort out the difference is to remember that the purpose of satire is to hold someone up to ridicule as an example to others. Satire always has something aggressive about it, a desire to point a finger and say, in effect, "Look now ridiculous this person is." Making readers laugh at the foolishness of others is the essence of the satire. And irony is the key stylistic technique used to achieve it. All satire emerges from the ironic discrepancy between what people think they are or would like to be and what they,
in fact, are. The challenge to the satirist is to make this discrepancy "witty," so that people laugh at the hypocrisy. But there is an enormous range to satire, and we are not really saying much about a style just by labeling it satiric. We need to evaluate as best we can, on the basis of the language, the precise nature of the satire. There's huge difference, after all, between a very good natured, even affectionate joke at someone's expense and a savagely harsh indictment of the sinful duplicity of a total hypocrite. To make fun of people's foolishness and to hold them up as satiric targets requires the satirist to put a certain amount of distance between the target and the reader and to simplify the potential complexity of the personality under attack. It's clear that the narrator in the Canterbury Tales is inviting us to laugh at the foolishness of some of the portraits. In that sense, we can usefully talk about a satiric presence throughout the General Prologue. But as soon as we have acknowledged that, we would have to concede that much of this satire is extremely gentle. The narrator seems genuinely to like these people on the journey. He brings use quite close to them and indicates that he, for the most part, enjoys their company. So the potential of the satire is enormously muted, to the point where sometimes one can concede that satiric possibility disappears completely. For example, the
portrait
of the Prioress is clearly ironic. We are invited to sense ambiguities in her
character,
to wonder about what earthily passions might exist beneath the proper attire and the religious icons. But the narrator is clearly much taken with her fine appearance and seems to like her clothing and the way she conducts the divine service. There is an affection, even an admiration, for the woman. Hence, the irony develops little-to-no-satiric energy. We do no, I think, respond to this
portrait

with the sense that the narrator is inviting us to mock the woman as a hypocrite. In other portraits where the irony is considerably stronger and more overt, the attitude of the narrator is always muting the satiric potential. The Friar is obviously a sinner, derelict in his duties, as is the Monk. But the narrator conveys a liking for these characters and an admiration for some of their qualities. This collapses the distance between the target and the readers and makes the satire. If it is there at all, much gentler than it might otherwise be. As Paul Baum has remarked, if this is satire, it is satire without indignation.

This mildly affectionate satiric tone in the General Prologue gives to the style of this poem its unique quality. There's firm moral vision at work here, and the narrator is not afraid to let us know what he believes in. At the same time, he has such a genuine liking for people and their various silly ways that he is not going to let a censorious judgment come between them. The adds a distinct note of compassion, humour, and sociability to the narrator himself who, in some ways, emerges by the end of the General Prologue as the most interesting person on the trip. 3.6 More Considerations 3.7.1 The Pervasiveness of Courtly Love The phrase "courtly love" refers to a set of ideas about love that was enormously on the literature and culture of the Middle Ages Beginning with the Troubadour poets of southern France in the eleventh century, poets throughout Europe promoted the notions that true love only exists outside of marriage; that true love may be idealized and spiritual, and may exist without ever being physically consummated; and that a man becomes the servant of the lady he loves. Together with these basic premises, courtly love encompassed a number of minor motifs. One of these is the idea that love is a torment or a disease, and that when a man is in love he cannot sleep or eat, and therefore he undergoes physical changes, sometimes to the point of becoming unrecognizable. Although very few people's lives resembled the courtly love ideal in any way, these themes and motifs were extremely popular and widespread in medieval and Renaissance literature and culture. They were particularly popular in the literature and culture that were part of royal and noble courts. Courtly love motifs first appear in The Canterbury Tales with the description of the Squire in the General Prologue. The Squire's role in society is exactly that of his father the Knight, except for his lower status, but the Squire is very different from his father in that he incorporates the ideals of courtly love into his interpretation of his own role. Indeed, the Squire is practically a parody of the traditional courtly lover. The description of the Squire establishes a pattern that urns throughout the General Prologue, and The Canterbury Tales: characters whose roles are defined by their religious or economic functions integrate the cultural ideals of courtly love into their dress, their behaviour, and the tales they tell, in order to give a slightly different twist to their roles. Another such character

is the Prioress, a nun who sports a "Love Conquers All" brooch.

3.7.2 The Importance of Company Many of Chaucer's characters end their stories by wishing the rest of the "campaignye," or company, well. The Knight ends with "God save all this faire compaignye" (3108), and the Reeve with "God, that sitteth heighe in magestee, / Save all this compaignye, grete and smale!" (4322-4323). Company literally signifies the entire group of people, like the Middle deliberate choice of this word over other words for describing masses of people, like the Middle English words for party, mixture, or group, points us to another major theme that runs throughout The Canterbury Tales. Company derives from two Latin words, com, or "with," and pane, or "bread." Quite literally, a company is a group of people with whom one eats, or breaks bread. The word for good friend, or "companion," also comes from these words. But, in a more abstract sense, company had an economic connotation.

It was the term designated to connote a group of people engaged in a particular business, as it is used today. The functioning and well-being of medieval communities, not to mention their overall happiness, depended upon groups of socially bonded workers in towns and guilds, known informally as companies. If works in a guild or on a feudal minor were not getting along well, they would not produce good work, and the economy would suffer. They would be unable to bargain, as a modern union does, for better working conditions and life benefits. Eating together was a way for guild members to cement friendships, creating a support structure for their working community. Guilds had their own special dining halls, where social groups got together to bond, be merry, and form supportive alliances. When the peasants revolted against their feudal lords in 1381, they were able to organize themselves so well precisely because they had formed these strong social ties through their companies. Company was a levelling concept-an idea created by the working classes that gave them more power and took away some of the nobility's power and tyranny. The company of pilgrims on the way to Canterbury is not a typical example of a tightly networked company, although the five Guildsmen do

represent this kind of fraternal union. The pilgrims come from different parts of society-the court, the Church, villages, the feudal manor system. To prevent discord, the pilgrims crease in informal company, united by their jobs and storytellers, and by the food and drink the host provides. As far as class distinctions are concerned, they do form a company in the sense that none of them belongs to the nobility and most have working profession, whether that work be sewing and marriage (the Wife of bath), entertaining visitors with gourmet food (the Franklin), or tilling the earth (the Plowman).

3.7.3 The Corruption of the Church By the late fourteenth century, the Catholic Church, which governed England, Ireland, and the entire continent of Europe, had become extremely wealthy. The cathedrals that grew up around shrines to saints' relics were incredibly expensive to build, and the amount of gold that went into decorating them and equipping them with candlesticks and reliquaries (boxes to hold relics that were more jewel- encrusted than king's crowns) surpassed the riches in the nobles' coffers. In a century of disease, plague, famine, and the Church's preaching against greed suddenly seemed hypocritical, considering its great displays of material wealth. Distaste for the excesses of the Church triggered stories and

anec- dotes about

greedy, irreligious churchmen who accepted bribes others, and indulged themselves sensually and gastronomically, while ignoring the poor famished peasant begging at their doors. The religious figures Chaucer represents in The Canterbury Tales all deviate in one ways or another from what was traditionally expected of them, Generally, their conduct corresponds to common medieval stereotypes, but it is difficult to make any overall statement about Chaucer's position because his narrator is so clearly biased toward some characters-the Monk, for example-and so clearly biased against others, such as the Pardoner. Additionally, the characters are not simply satirical versions of their role; they are individuals and cannot simply be taken as typical of their professions. The Monk, Prioress, and Friar were all members of the clerical estate. The Monk and the Prioress live in a monastery and a convent, respectively. Both are characterized as figures who seem to prefer the aristocratic to the devotional life. The Prioress's bejewelled rosary seems more like a love token than sometimes expressing her devotion to Christ, and her dainty mannerisms echo the advice given by Gullanume de Loris in the French romance Roman de la Rose, about how women could make themselves attractive to men. The Monk enjoys hunting, a pastime of the nobility, while he disdains study and confinement. The Friar was a member of an order of mendicants, who made their living by travelling around and begging, and accepting money to hear confession. Friars were often seen as threatening and had the reputation of being lecherous, as the Wife of Bath describes in the opening of her tale. The Summoner and the Friar are at each others' throats so frequently in The Canterbury Tales because they were in fierce competition in Chaucer's time-summoners, too, extorted money from people.

Overall, the narrator seems to harbor much more hostility for the ecclesiastical officials (the Summoner and the Pardoner) than he doe for the clerics. For example, the Monk and the pardoner possess several traits in common, but the narrator presents them in very different ways. The narrator remembers the shiny baldness of the Monk's head, which suggests that the Monk may have ridden without a hood, but the narrator uses the fact that the Pardoner rides without a hood as proof of his shallow

character.

The Monk and the Pardoner both give their own opinions of themselves to the narrator-the narrator affirms the Monk's words by repeating them, and his own response, but the narrator mocks the Pardoner for his pinion of himself. 3.7.4 Motifs Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes. ➢

Romance The romance, a tale about knights and ladies incorporating courtly love themes, was a popular literary genre in fourteenth-century ligature. The genre included tales of knights rescuing maidens, embarking on quests, and forming bond with other knights and rules (kings and queens). In particular, the romances about King Arthur, his queen, Guinevers, and his society of "

knight's Tale incorporates romantic elements in an ancient classical setting, which is a somewhat unusual time and place to set a romance. The Wife of Bath's Tale is framed by Arthurian romance, with an unnamed knight of the round table as its unlikely hero, but the tale itself becomes a proto-feminist's moral instruction for domestic behaviour. The Miller's Tale ridicules the traditional elements of romance by transforming the love between a young wooer and a willing maiden into a boisterous and violent romp. ➢ Fabliaux Fabliaux were comical and often grotesque stories in which the characters most often succeeded by means of their sharp wits. Such stories were popular in France and Italy in the fourteenth century. Frequently, the plot turns or climaxes around the most grotesque feature in the story, usually a bodily noise or function. The Miller's Tale is a prime experiment with this motif: Nicholas cleverly tricked the carpenter into spending the night in his barn so that Nicholas can sleep with the carpenter's wife; the final occurs when Nicholas farts in Absolon's face, only to be burned with a hot poker on his rear end. In the Summoner's Tale, a wealthy man bequeaths a corrupt friar an enormous fart, which the friar divides twelve ways among
his brethren. This demonstrates another invention around this motif- that of wittily expanding a grotesque image in an unconventional way. In the case of the Summoner's Tale, the image is of flatulence, but the tale excels in discussing the division of the fart in a highly intellectual (and quite hilarious) manner. 3.8
Symbols
Symbols are objects, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas concepts. ➢
Springtime The Canterbury Tales opens in April, the height of spring. The birds are chirping, the flowers blossoming, and people long in their hearts to go on pilgrimages, which combine travel, vacation, and spiritual renewal. The springtime symbolizes rebirth and fresh beginning, and is thus appropriate for the beginning of Chaucer's text. Springtime also evokes erotic love, as evidenced by the moment when Palamon first sees Emelye gathering fresh flowers to make garlands in honor of May. The Squire, too participates in this symbolism. He is compared to the freshness of the month of May, in
his devotion to courtly love. ➢
Clothing In the General Prologue, the description of garments, in addition to the narrator's own shaky recollections, helps to define each
character.
In a sense, the clothes symbolize what lies beneath the surface of each personality. The Physician' love of wealth reveals itself most clearly to us in the rich silk
and fur of his gown. The Squire's youthful vanity is symbolized by the excessive floral brocade on his tunic. The Merchant' forked beard could symbolize his duplicity, at which Chaucer only hints. ➢ Physiognomy Physiognomy was a science that judged a person's temperament and
character
based on his or her anatomy. Physiognomy plays a large role in Chaucer's descriptions of the pilgrims in the General Prologue. The most exaggerated facial features are those of the peasants. The Miller represents the stereotypical peasant physiognomy most clearly: round and ruddy, with a wart on his nose, the Miller appears rough and therefore suited to rough, simple work. The Pardoner's glaring eyes and limp hair illustrate his fraudulence. 3.9
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Unit 4- Edmund Spencer: The Faerie
Queen 4.1. Introduction 4.2. Objectives 4.3. Edmund Spenser 4.3.1. Life and Works 4.3.2. Poetic Style 4.4. Spenser's contribution in the Field of English Poetry 4.4.1. Spenserian Stanza 4.4.2. Spenserian Sonnet 4.5. What is an allegory? 4.6. The Faerie Queene asan allegory 4.7. The Faerie Queene as an epic 4.8. Let Us Sum Up 4.9. Answers to Check Your Progress 4.10. References 4.11. Suggested Reading 4.12. Terminal and Model Questions 4.1

Introduction This unit shall briefly discuss the life of Edmund Spenser. It will also trace the development of Spenser as a poet, focusing on his major works. You will also read about Spenser's contribution in the field of literature like Spenserian sonnet and Spenserian stanza. You will also be introduced to Spenser's opus The Faerie Queene in this unit. 4.2 Objectives In this unit you will be · Acquainted with the life and major works of Edmund Spenser • Get a glimpse of his poetic style • Trace Spenser's contribution in English poetry • Understand The Faerie Queene as an allegory 4.3 Edmund Spenser 4.3.1 Life and Works Spenser's birth date is undocumented, but a pair of autobiographical sonnets in the "Amoretti" sequence suggest the year was 1554. His family was originally from Burnley, Lancashire, but we know from Prothalamion that London was his birthplace. Spenser's origins were humble. His father was a cloth maker. Spenser received his early education at Merchant Taylor's grammar school where he acquired rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and music. After matriculating from Merchant Taylor's, Spenser joined Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1569 as a 'sizar' or a poor scholar. Spenser had to undertake many odd jobs at college in return for the education. In Cambridge, Spenser picked up languages such as French, Italians and English and also read Greek and Latin classics, pagan mythologies, divinities, ancient and contemporary philosophies at length. During Spenser's first year at Cambridge, his earliest poems were published. Three years after leaving Cambridge, in 1579, Spenser issued his first volume of poetry, the Shepheardes Calendar. In the book Spenser deliberately used archaic language, partly to pay homage to Chaucer and partly to achieve a rustic effect. With the publication of The Shepheardes Calenderit was felt at once that the poet for whom the age had been waiting had come. The Shepheardes Calendar was published at Gabriel Harvey's instance, and was dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, a good friend of Spenser. It was around that time that he married his first wife, Maccabaeus Chylde, who was the mother of his two children. Spenser was appointed secretary to the lord-deputy of Ireland in 1580, thereafter he spent most of his life in Ireland, acquiring Kilcoman Castle, an Irish estate, where he did much of his writing. Sir Walter Raleigh, a fellow colonist often visited Spenser at Kilcoman Castle. He was very much impressed seeing Spenser's The Faerie Queen and convinced him to take the first three books to Queen Elizabeth. The queen was highly impressed seeing the book and he was awarded a handsome pension of fifty pounds a year for life. The Faerie Queen, which is an unfinished epic poem in twelve books, established Spenser's reputation as a writer. Like the Shepheardes Calender, The Faerie Queen also makes use of archaic language and combines two literary forms, the romance and the epic, into an allegory about "the twelve moral virtues." Spenser was a prolific experimenter of the verse form. His Shepheardes Calender makes use of thirteen different meters. He also adapted the Italian canzone forms for Epithalamion and Prothalamion. In The Faerie Queene he makes use of the nine-line stanza which is named the Spenserian stanza after him. Spenser can be called the pioneer of English versification and many later English poets learned the art of versification from him. It is for this reason Charles Lamb called Spenser the "poet's poet." Spenser's influence may be seen in Shelley's Revolt of Isalm, Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Keat's Eve of St. Agnes and Tennyson'

s The

Lotus Eaters. Besides his well-known works Shepheardes Calender and The Faerie Queene, Spenser published a volume of poems called Complaints, which was published in 1591. It is a miscellaneous collection of poems written at different periods. The volume contained The Ruins of Time; The Tears of the Muses; Virgil's Gnat; Mother Hubbard's Tale; The Ruins of Rome; Muiopotmos; Visions of the World's Vanity; Bellay's Visions; Petrarch's Visions; a pastoral called Colin Clout Comes Home Againe; his sonnet cycle, Amoretti; two wedding poems Epithalamion and Prothalamion. Epithalamion is one of the most admired poems in the English language. It was written by Spenser for his wedding to his young bride, Elizabeth Boyle, whom he courted and married after his first wife's death in 1594. The 24 stanzas of the poem correspond to the diurnal and sidereal hours. The song begins before dawn and progresses through the wedding ceremony and into the consummation night of the newlywed couple. Throughout Epithalamion, the speaker marks time by referencing the physical movements of the wedding party, the positions of the sun and other celestial bodies, and the light and darkness that fill the day. Although firmly within the classical tradition, Epithalamion takes its setting and several of its images from Ireland, where Edmund Spenser's wedding to Elizabeth Boyle actually took place and his sonnet cycle, Amoretti which also traces the courtship of the poet and his beloved. A View of the Present State of Ireland is Spenser's anonymously published apology for the repressive English regime. Another well-known work of Spenser is Astrophel, which is a pastoral lament that he wrote for Philip Sidney. In 1598 there was an uprising in Munster, Ireland where Spencer lived. The rebels burned down the house in which Spenser lived. The poet had to flee his house along with his wife but unfortunately their new-born baby is said to have died in the flames. Finally, Spenser had to return to London. He died on January 13, 1599, and is buried in what is now known as the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. 4.3.2 Poetic Style of Edmund Spenser Edmund Spenser is often remembered as the 'Poet's Poet'. In fact, Spenser's gravestone in Westminster Abbey has a quote rightly labelling him as 'The Prince of Poets of All Time...'. In Spenser's poems, we find a fine balance of rhythm and rhyme. Spenser was a connoisseur of art and a lover and physical beauty and celebrated it in his works. Thus, he captured the beauty in nature, art and human beings in his works brilliantly. His works were an embodiment of love and purity. Spenser was a prominent Renaissance poet and his poetry reflected a Renaissance spirit with Platonic idealism. Spenser was a poet of sensuous images. However, he was an iconoclast too, who was "deeply suspicious of the power of images (material and verbal) to turn into idols." His works are also filled with archaic words and for that reason he is often referred to as a backward -looking poet. However, as mentioned earlier, Spenser used archaic words in order to pay homage to Chaucer, of whom he was a great admirer. Spenser's poems reflect the classical epic forms. Like the classical epics they begin with an invocation of the Muses and have an epic hero. For example, in the beginning of The Faerie Queene Book 1, Spenser invokes the Muses. It also has a hero, The Redcrosse Knight, who is the knight of Holiness. Spenser makes extensive use figures of speech, especially similes and extended metaphor in his works. One also finds various allusions of classical epics like Homer's Illiad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid, Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered and Aristo's Orlando Furioso. There is symmetry in form e.g., parallels between characters such as Arthur & Lucifer, Una & Duessa, etc., and between settings- the House of Pride & the House of Holiness. In the words of David in The Norton Anthology, Spenser was "an idealist, drawn to courtesy, gentleness, and exquisite moral refinement, yet also a celebrant of English nationalism, empire, and material power...as a British epic poet and poet-prophet, he points forward to the poetry of the Romantics and especially Milton-n who himself paid homage to the "sage and serious" Senser as "a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas." 4.4 Spenser's Contribution in the Field of English Poetry Spenser's contribution to the field of English poetry is immense. He had a lifelong interest in theories of poetry and he is recognized as one of the great inventors in the English verse form. His Spenserian stanza and Spenserian sonnet are especially notable. Let us now examine both these forms briefly. 4.4.1 Spenserian Stanza Edmund Spenser invented the Spenserian stanza and used it in his The Faerie Queene. The stanza consists of eight lines of iambic pentameter followed by a single alexandrine, a twelve- syllable iambic line. The final line typically has a caesura, or break, after the first three feet. The rhyme scheme of these lines is "ababbcbcc." A perfect example of the form is found the first stanza of Book I of The Faerie Queene: A gentle knight was pricking on the plaine, Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde, Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine, The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde; Yet armes till that time did he never wield: His angry steede did chide his foaming bitt, As much disdayning to the curbe to yield: Full jolly knight he seemed, and faire did sitt, As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fitt. Critics note several earlier stanza forms as the basis for the Spenserian stanza. One widely cited source is the ottava rima. This is an Italian form that originated in thirteenth-

century religious and minstrel poetry and consists of eight lines of iambic pentameter with the rhyme scheme "abababcc." A relatively modern use of the ottava rima can be found in Byron's Don Juan. Another possible source for Spenser's stanza is the "rhyme royal," a stanza of seven lines of iambic pentameter that rhymes "ababbcc." Chaucer invented this in his "Complaint unto Pity" and Shakespeare later used it in The Rape of Lucrece. But regardless of its sources, the Spenserian stanza is regarded as "one of the most remarkably original metric innovations in the history of English verse" (Preminger 807). The Spenserian stanza fell into a period of disuse in the seventeenth century, but it saw a revival with Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes," and Shelley's "The Revolt of Islam" and "Adonais." Shelley is perhaps the greatest exponent of the Spenserian stanza after Spenser himself. His grasp of the form is quite notable in this, the third stanza from "Adonais": Oh weep for Adonais-he is dead! Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep! Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep, Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep; For he is gone where all things wise and fair Descend. Oh dream not that the amorous deep Will yet restore him to the vital air; Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair . Following this revival in the period of English Romanticism, the Spenserian stanza petered out again in the mid-nineteenth century. A twentieth-century example of the Spenserian stanza is in the "Dieper Levensinkijk" by Dutch poet Willem Kloos; this is a rare example of the form written in a language other than English. 4.4.2 Spenserian Sonnet As the name suggests, the Spenserian Sonnet is named after Edmund Spenser .

The Spenserian Sonnet inherited the tradition of the declamatory couplet of Wyatt/Surrey. However, Spenser makes use of the Sicilian quatrains to develop a metaphor, conflict, idea or question logically, with the declamatory couplet resolving it. There are three types of sonnets namely: ➢ Petrarchan or Italian sonnet ➢ Shakespearean or English sonnet ➢ Spenserian sonnet Sonnets of all types share the following characteristics: ➢ number of lines: 14 ➢ basic meter: iambic pentameter ➢ rhyme scheme: follows one of several set patterns ➢ traditional subject: love However, the different types of sonnets are set apart by the rhyme scheme. The Petrarchan or Italian sonnet form was perfected by the Italian poet Petrarch in the 14th century. It has the following characteristics: ➢ First 8 lines (octave) rhyming abbaabba ➢ Last 6 lines (sestet)with rhyming as: ❖ cd cd cd ❖ cde cde ❖ cddc ee Octave presents a problem, and sestet offers a solution. The Shakespearean or English sonnet form was perfected by Shakespeare in the 1590s. It has the following characteristics: ➢ Three quatrains (groups of four lines) rhyming abab cdcd efef ➢ One couplet (pair of lines) rhyming gg ➢ Main shift in content (meaning), as in rhyme scheme (form, structure), usually comes right after line 12. The Spenserian sonnet form was created by Edmund Spenser in the 1590s for Amoretti and used by few other poets, is a variation on the Shakespearean sonnet. The Spenserian sonnet has the following characteristics: ➢ Three quatrains (groups of four lines) rhyming ababbcbc cdcd (interlocking rhymes) ➢ One couplet (pair of lines) rhyming ee ➢ Main shift in content (meaning), as in rhyme scheme (form, structure), usually comes right after line 12. In addition to the general features of sonnets, the Spenserian Sonnet is also marked with the following characteristics: ➢ a quatrain made up of 3 Sicilian quatrains (4 lines alternating rhyme) and ending in a rhyming couplet ➢ metric, primarily iambic pentameter. ➢ rhymed, rhyme scheme ababbcbccdcdee. ➢ composed with a volta (a non physical gap) or pivot (a shifting or tilting of the main line of thought) sometime after the 2nd quatrain. The epiphany is arrived at logically. ➢ written with each quatrain developing a metaphor, conflict, idea or question, and the end declamatory couplet providing the resolution. After reading about the biography, poetic style and the contribution of Spenser in the field of English literature, let us now move on to his most ambitious book The Faerie Queene. Book 1 of the The Faerie Queene is prescribed in your syllabus but before proceeding on with the book let us take a look at allegory which is an important device used by literary writers to tell their stories. 4.5 What is an Allegory? Allegory is a literary device, which is Greek in origin and means 'speaking in other terms'. It is a way of representing thought and experience through images, by means of which complex ideas may be simplified or abstract, spiritual or mysterious ideas and experiences may be made tangible. Allegory conveys a message to the readers by means of symbolic figures. Plato's "the Cave Allegory" has had a considerable influence on western philosophy for in the book Plato has used allegory to illustrate a very complex philosophical idea. Allegories are also found in the Hebrew Bible, in the morality play Everyman, in Chaucer's The Romance of the Rose. In the Renaissance, Spenser's The Faerie Queen employs religious, political and Platonic allegories to convey the writer's deeply felt concerns. John Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress is one of the finest allegories of English Literature. Jonathan Swift's A Tale of Tub and Gulliver's Travells are also well known allegories of early eighteenth century. Charles Dickens was another writer who made brilliant use of allegory. His A Christmas Carol makes brilliant use of allegory. Allegory has continued into modern times. 4.6 The Faerie Queen as an Allegory In his "A Letter of the Authors", Spenser states that the entire Faerie Queen is "cloudily enwrapped in allegorical devices" and that the aim of publishing The Faerie Queen was to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." It is an allegory that can be interpreted (as Spenser presumably intended) on several levels of allegory, including as praise of Queen Elizabeth 1. In a completely allegorical context, the poem follows several knights in an examination of several virtues. Spenser invites the readers to interpret the characters and adventures in the book in terms of the particular virtues and vices they come to embody. The Redcrosse knight in Book 1 is the knight of Holiness, and also saint George, the patron saint of England. Similarly, Sir Guyon in Book 2 is the knight of Temperance. In Book 3, the female knight Britomart and the knight Chastity represent chaste love leading to marriage. The protagonists of Books 4,5 and 6 represent Friendship, Justice and Courtesy. Senser's use of allegory in The Faerie Queene is not a simple one as it has various moral, historical, religious and religious tones. In the book both the Faerie Queene and Britomart are personifications of Queen Elizabeth. There is also an allusion to various events and important persons in both England and Ireland like Queen Elizabeth, her rival Mary, Queen of Scots, the Spanish Armada, the English Reformation, the religious controversies and the bitter colonial struggles against Irish rebellion. Spenser also makes use of conventional symbols and characteristic to put forward his point. For example, throughout his life, Spenser was very acrimonious towards the Roman Catholic Church and in his early days was strongly

influenced by Puritanism and remained a Protestant throughout his life. He expresses his resentment towards the Roman Catholic Church by portraying it as “a woman who wears a miter and scarlet clothes and who dwells near the river Tiber.” The book also is a spiritual allegory as it presents the Christian (the Redcrosse Knight) struggling heroically against evil forces and temptations like doctrinal error, hypocricy, Seven Deadly Sins and despair, to some of which he bows down at times, but finally emerges victorious. Thus, The Faerie Queene is a fascinating story with layers of meanings to it which convey Spenser’s deeply felt ideas as a poet and a nationalist. 4.7 The Faerie Queene as an Epic The Faerie Queene is a brilliant epic poem. As mentioned earlier, itis modeled on Virgil’s Aeneid and like it each book is divided into twelve cantos. Book 1 of The Faerie Queene can be called complete in itself and has been called a miniature epic. The book revolves around the exploits of the protagonist Redcrosse and how he emerges victorious in the end. As mentioned earlier, The Faerie Queene begins the invocation of a muse. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a muse as the inspiring goddess of a particular poet (1136). In order to gain inspiration for the writing of his epic work, Spenser calls upon the classic authors, Virgil and Homer as his muses. Lo I the man, whose Muse whilome did maske, As time her taught, in lowly Shepheards weeds, Am now enforst a far vnfitter taske, For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds, And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds; Whose prayses hauing slept in silence long, Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds To blazon broad emongst her learned throng: Fierce warres and faithfull loves shall moralize my song. (Spenser, I.i.1) In addition to calling upon these fellow epic authors, Spenser again exemplifies the convention by inviting the muse of epic poetry, Calliope, to assist him with his task. Now O thou sacred Muse, most learned Dame, Faire ympe of Phoebus, and his aged bride, The Nourse of time, and everlasting fame, That warlike hands ennoblest with immortall name; O gently come into my feeble brest, Come gently, but not with that mighty rage, (Spenser, 1.11.5,6) After the invocation of the Muse, Spenser prepares for the journey which is an essential component of epic. Examples of this digression can be found in Virgil's The Aeneid. And likewise, Spenser continues the classic tradition in Book I with Duessa's decent to hell with hopes to bring the recently deceased Sansjoy back to life with the help of Night. Thence turning backe in silence soft they stole, And brought the heauie corse with easie pace To yawning gulfe of deepe Auernus hole. By that same hole an entrance darke and bace With smoake and sulphure hiding all the place, Descends to hell: there creature neuer past, That backe returned without heauenly grace; But dreadfull Furies, which their chaines haue brast, And damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast. (Spenser, I.v.31) The final component to be discussed will be the epic catalogue, “whose distinctive flavour can be just as discernible as other conventions found within The Faerie Queene.” However, it does not necessarily shape the storyline of any epic work, Spenser places at least seven of these encyclopaedic-type lists in the book. The first of the epic catalogues can be found in Book 1 and reminds one of specific passages in The Parliament of Fowls by Chaucer, but additionally was also similar to passages from works by Ovid, Lucan, Statius, Boccaccio and Tasso. And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led, Ioying to heare the birdes sweete harmony, Which therein shrouded from the tempest dred, Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky. Much can they prayse the trees so straight and hy, The sayling Pine, the Cedar proud and tall, The vine-prop Elme, the Poplar neuer dry, The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all, The Aspine good for staues, the Cypresse funerall. The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours And Poets sage, the Firre that weepeth still, The Willow worne of forlorne Paramours, The Eugh obedient to the benders will, The Birch for shaftes, the Sallow for the mill, The Mirrhe sweete bleeding in the bitter wound, The warlike Beech, the Ash for nothing ill, The fruitfull Oliue, and the Platane round, The caruer Holme, the Maple seeldom inward sound. (Spenser, I.i.8,9) To conclude, one must understand that Spenser was aware of all the other necessary components that are required to compose an epic poem and incorporated them in his work. David, in the Norton Anthology says, “If The Faerie Queene is thus an epic celebration of human heroism, Queen Elizabeth, the Protestant faith, and the English nation, it is also a chivalric romance, full of joustling knights and damsels in dertress, dragons, witches, enchanted trees, wicked magicians, giants, dark caves, shining castles...As a romance, Spenser’s poem is designed to produce wonder, to enthrall its readers with spawling plots, marvelous adventures, heroic characters, ravishing descriptions, and esoteric mysteries.” 4.8. LET US SUM UP In this unit we discussed the life and poetic style of Edmund Spenser. We also glanced at the poetic style of Spenser and saw why he is called the “poet’s poet.” We also took a look at Spenser’s contribution in the field of English poetry with a special mention of the Spenserian stanza and the Spenserian sonnet. You were also introduced to The Faerie Queene as an allegory and an epic poem which is important to the understanding of the poem. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS Q1. Who suggested Spenser to show the first three books of The Faerie Queen to Queen Elizabeth? Q2. Name the poem that Spenser wrote on the death of Sir Philip Sidney. Q3. Where is Spenser buried? Q4. What is the rhyme scheme used in Spenserian stanza? Q5. What is the rhyme scheme of Spenserian

sonnet? Q6. Why does Spenser make use of archaic language in The Shepheardes Calender? Q7. What is the poem "epithalamion" about? Q8. Write short notes on the following: i. poetic style of Spenser ii. The Faerie Queene as an epic iii. Allegory 4.9. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS A1. Sir Walter Raleigh A2. "Astrophel" A3. Poet's Corner Westminster Abbey A4. ababbcbc A5. abab bcbc cdcd ee Note: To know the answers of Q6, Q7 and Q8, please refer to the relevant sections of the write-up. 4.10. REFERENCES • Greenblatt, Stephen. Ed. Abrahms, M.H., The Norton Anthology. London: W.W. Norton & Company Ltd., 2000. Print. • Daiches, David. Ed. A Critical History of English Literature Volume 1. New Delhi: Supernova Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd. 2010. Print. • Griffeth, Tim. Ed. The Faerie Queene Edmund Spenser. Kent. Wodsworth Editions Limited. 1999.Print. • en.wikipedia.org/wiki /Edmund_Spenser • www.tnellen.com/cybereng/lit_terms-_allegory.html/ • www.bartley.com<...< The Poetry of Edmund Spenser

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Unit 5- SPENSER: THE FAERIE QUEENE BOOK1 (PART 2) 5.1. Introduction 5.2. Objectives 5.3. Summary and Critical commentary of The Faerie Queene Book 1 5.3.1. Book 1, Cantos I& II 5.3.2. Book 1, Cantos III, IV & V 5.3.3. Book 1, Cantos VI, VII & VIII 5.3.4. Book 1, Cantos IX & X 5.3.5. Book 1, Cantos XI & XII 5.4. Major characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1 5.5. Let Us Sum Up 5.6. Answers to Check Your Progress 5.7. References 5.8. Suggested Reading 5.1

Introduction

This unit will discuss in detail Book 1 of his most celebrated incomplete epic poem The Faerie Queen, the first half of which was published in 1590, and the second in 1596. Spenser describes The Fareie Queen as an allegory and encourages the readers to "interpret the characters and adventures in the several books in terms of the particular virtues and vices they enact or come to embody." 5.2. Objectives After going through this unit, you will be able to understand the following: • Summary and commentary on the various cantos of Book 1 • Brief sketch of the major characters of Book 1 5.3 Summary and Critical Commentary of The Faerie Queene: Book I 5.3.1 BOOK I, CANTOS I & II The Faerie Queen Book 1 tells the story of the Knight of Holiness, the Redcrosse Knight, who gets his name from the blood-red cross emblazoned on his shield, whom Gloriana, the Queen of the Faerie Land, appoints on a mission to accompany Una, on a journey to her kingdom to destroy a dragon who is destroying the land and holding Una's parents captive. Redcrosse undertakes the journey along with Una and a dwarf servant. On the way, all of a sudden, it starts raining heavily as a result of which they take refuge in a cave in the woods. Una recognizes the cave as the Den of Error and warns Redcrosse. However, Redcrosse ignores her warning and enters the cave where he is attacked by a monster that Redcrosse defeats eventually. Continuing their journey further, they meet Archimago (the "arch-magician"), who had disguised himself as an old man. He invites Red Cross and Una to spend the night in his home. In the night, Archimago conjurers up two spirits to trouble Redcrosse. One of the spirits obtains a false dream from Morpheus, the god of sleep and the other takes the shape of Una. Archimago sends the spirit impersonating Una to Redcrosse making sexual advances towards him and, when this is unsuccessful, Archimago shows Redcrosse the spirit impersonator of Una having sexual intercourse with another man. Seeing this vision, Red crosse is distressed and leaves alone the next morning. On his way he meets the old witch Duessa in the garb of Fidessa, a young and beautiful girl. Duessa is accompanied by Sansfoy, whom Redcrosse kills in a fierce battle. After slaying Sansfoy, Duessa and Redcrosse take rest under two trees. While resting, Redcrosse breaks the branch of one of the trees and is shocked when blood drips forth from it and a voice begins to cry out in pain. The tree then gives the account of its life. It tells Redcrosse that he was once a valiant knight called Fradubio who was travelling with his love Fraelissa and while they were crossing the forest how he came across a beautiful maiden and was attracted towards her. For the sake of the fair maiden, he forsook his beloved Fraelissa. However, when the "beautiful maiden" was bathing, he realized that she was a witch who had turned Fraelissa into a tree to end Fradubio's love for her. Later when Fradubio discovered who she was, she also turned him into a tree. By telling his own life's story, Fradubio indirectly was trying to warn Redcrosse of Duessa, who in reality was the witch who was disguised as a fair maiden but Redcrosse failed to see it and continued with Duessa on his journey. Commentary Redcrosse is the hero of Book I, and in the beginning of Canto I, he is called the knight of Holiness. He undergoes many ordeals and fights fierce monsters throughout the course of the story. However, the more important purpose of The Faerie Queen is its allegory, ie the meaning behind its characters and events. The fanciful "faerie land" is in reality Spenser's homeland, England and the Faerie Queen is Queen Elizabeth. Redcrosse represents the individual Christian on the search for Holiness, who is armed with faith in Christ, with the blood Red Cross emblazoned on his shield. His companion is Una, whose name means "truth". For a Christian to be holy, he must have faith and so the plot of Book 1 mostly concerns the attempts of evildoers to separate Redcrosse from Una. Most of these villains are meant by Spenser to represent one thing in common: the Roman Catholic Church. Spenser was of the view that with the coming of the English Reformation, people embraced "true religion" (Protestantism/ Anglicanism) thus defeating the corruption that had existed in Roman Catholicism. Spenser takes up the character of Redcrosse whose task is to defeat villains who imitate the falsehood of the Roman Catholic Church. The first of these villains is Error. When Redcrosse throttles him, Spenser writes, "Her vomit full of books and papers was (I.i.20)." These papers represent Roman Catholic propaganda that was used against Queen Elizabeth and Anglicanism. Next comes Archimago, whose name means "arch-image". His name stands for extensive images used by Catholocs in their acts of worshipping. Archimago, the sorcerer, through acts of deception tries to separate Redcrosse who stood for Holiness from Una who stood for Truth many times. Once separated from Una (Truth), Redcrosse (Holiness) falls prey to falsehood. Although he is able to defeat Sansfoy (literally "without faith") but he becomes a helpless victim to the wiles of Duessa who represents the Roman Catholic Church and all its malpractices. Much of Spenser's imagery comes from a passage in the Book of Revelation, which describes the "whore of Babylon." Many Protestant readers took this Biblical passage to indicate the Catholic Church. Besides Biblical references, the Faerie Queen has other references too.Spenser's works are loaded with references from ancient epics such as Homer's Illiad

and Odyssey and Virgil's Aenied. In the tradition of the great Greek and Latin epics, Spenser opens Book I of Faerie Queen by invoking the Muses to guide his poetry. The episode of the bleeding "human tree" reminds us of a similar incident in Aeneid. However, while these ancient poets wrote to tell stories, Spenser has another purpose in mind. In the letter that introduces the Faerie Queen, he says that he followed poets like Homer, Virgil, Aristo and Tasso because they all have "ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man." Thus, Spenser intends to expand on this example by defining the qualities of a good, virtuous, Christian man. 5.3.2 BOOK1, CANTOS III, IV & V Meanwhile, Una, left alone in the forest, goes wondering in search of Redcrosse and comes across a lion who is about to attack her. However, seeing her innocent beauty decides to be her companion and protector. There, in the middle of the forest, they see a girl carrying a pot of water. The girl, deaf and dumb, gets terrified on seeing the lion and runs back home to her mother. Una and the lion too follow her as they were looking for a place to halt at night. The deaf and dumb girl was called Abessa and her mother Corceca who is blind. At first they are unwilling to let them in but the lion forces his way into their house. Later at night, Kirkrapine, a church robber and also Abessa's lover, enters the house but is killed by the lion. The next morning the lion and Una leave the house, only to be approached by Archimago in the guise of Redcrosse. Una thinks Archimago to be Redcrosse and goes with him. On the way they meet Sansloy, who seeing the red cross on Archimago's chest, mistakenly takes him for Redcrosse and challenges him to a duel to avenge the death of his brother Sansfoy, whom Red Cross had killed earlier. Sansloy injures Archimago and then removes his helmet only to discover that he is not Redcrosse. Seeing that the injured man is not Redcrosse, he spares his life and takes Una as his prize, killing the lion who tries to save her. After killing the lion, Sansloy forcefully drags Una onto his horse, riding off into the forest. The scene then shifts to Redcrosse who he is being led by Duessa into the House of Pride. On seeing the palatial house, Redcrosse is spell bound. There they are welcomed bu Lucifera, the Queen of the Palace. Lucifera shows off for the knight by calling her coach which is pulled by six beasts upon which ride her six counselors. They are: Idleness, Gluttony, Lechery, Avarice, Envy and Wrath. The six beasts along with their Queen, Queen of Pride, represent the Seven Deadly Sins. Soon this procession of the Seven Deadly Sins is interrupted by Sansjoy, who comes to avenge the death of his brother Sansfoy. Sansjoy challenges Redcrosse to a duel. Lucifera arranges a duel between the two for the next day. Both men suffer great injuries in the duel. Just as Redcrosse is about to kill Sansjoy, a dark cloud covers Sansjoy and he suddenly disappears in it. Duessa mourns the loss of Sansjoy and goes to awaken Night. Together they recover the body of Sansjoy and she descends into hell. There they find Aesculapius, the Greek physician, who has the power to bring men back to life, a power that Jove (Jupiter) did not want mortals to enjoy. Duessa and Night persuade him to try and restore Sansjoy's life. Mean while, Redcrosse is carried back to the House of Pride where he is treated for his wounds. Meanwhile, the Dwarf makes a horrible discovery of bodies of victims of Pride and other Deadly Sins in the dungeon. He warns Redcrosse of it. On being warned by the Dwarf, Redcrosse makes an escape from there. When Duessa returns from hell, she finds that Red Cross had departed from there. Commentary The lion in the story represents natural law, which may be violent at times but is sympathetic to Christian truth. According to Christian theology, natural is a part of God's divine law and so the Christian is not an opponent of nature but acts in harmony with it. Thus the lion naturally aids Una. The two women who benefit from the booty of Kirkrapine (church robber) represent monasticism; Abessa's name suggests connection with "Abbess", the head of an abbey. Monasticism is a feature of the Catholic Church, and in Spenser's time, monasteries were accused of forcing donations from the poor for themselves. The deafness and dumbness of Abessa and Corceca's blindness show Spenser's belief that the monks, nuns, friars are ignorant of the needs of the world works as as they live in seclusion. The next character, Sansloy (literally meaning "without the law of god") functions outside the realm of divine law and kills the lion who is an embodiment of natural law. The ancient and medieval thought about sin and evil come together in the House of Pride. Lucifera, the Queen of the House of Pride, stands for Lucifer (Satan) and like Satan is full of pride. In Christian theology, Pride is the greatest of sins, and all other vices are born out of it. Pride was the cause of Satan's downfall. Like Satan, the Queen of Pride is conceited and stands in contrast with the true Queen to whom the poem is dedicated: Queen Elizabeth, who was a just queen, devoted to her country and people and who represented True Religion. Spenser uses a variety of sources in constructing his imagery. Spenser writes that the House of Pride, although lavishly built, sits on a weak foundation. This evokes the Gospel of Matthew in which Jesus preaches to his disciples that those who do not follow His words will be likened to a foolish man who builds his house on sand. (Matthew 7.26) The architectural details of the castle, such as the surrounding walls covered by gold foil (outward beauty hiding inner weakness) are borrowed from Orlando Furioso by the Italian poet Aristo, whom Spenser admired. Besides The New Testament and Orlando Furioso, Spenser also borrows the scene in which Duessa and Night descend into hell from

Virgil's Aeneid in which he describes Aeneas' travel through Hell to meet his father. 5.3.3 BOOK 1, CANTOS VI, VII & VIII Meanwhile, Sansloy attempts to seduce and rape Una in the woods, but he is scared off by a group of fauns and satyrs, (wood gods which are half human and half animals) who come to Una's aid when she cries. Seeing these weird creatures, Sansloy gets terrified and flees off. After Sansloy leaves, these creatures enamoured of Una's beauty, take her to their leader, Sylvanus, to be worshipped as goddess. Soon a knight, Satyrane, whose is born out of a satyr father and a human mother, comes by and on seeing Una comes to her rescue and helps her to escape from there. When the two are trying to get out of the woods, they come across a pilgrim who claims that he has witnessed the death of Redcrosse at the hands of a pagan knight and that he knows about the whereabouts of that knight. He leads the two to him who is Sansloy. As already mentioned above, Sanslot did not in fact kill Redcrossse but had defeated Archimago who was disguised as Redcrosse. On seeing Sansloy, Satyrane challenges him. Una recognizes Sansloy and runs away from the scene. She is followed by the pilgrim who in reality is Archimago, in another of his many disguises. Meanwhile, Duessa begins searching for Red Cross and discovers him next to a magic fountain whose waters, once drunk, results in a loss of strength. Duessa and Redcrosse are reconciled, and, after drinking the water of the magic fountain, Redcrosse loses his powers. Redcrosse is busy courting Duessa until he hears Orgoglio, a hideous giant, approaching. As Redcrosse, owing to the water of the magic fountain, had lost his powers, Orgoglio easily overpowers him, but Duessa asks him to spare the life of Redcrosse and in return agrees to become the mistress of the giant. Redcrosse survives but is thrown into Orgoglio's dungeon. Luckily, the Dwarf witnessed the fight scene between the two and sets out to help the defeated Redcross. While on his way to help Redcrosse, he sees Una who is fleeing from Sansloy. The Dwarf relates the story of Redcrosse to Una and the two then head towards Orgoglio's castle. On the way they meet a brightly dressed knight, whose armour has a diamond shield which can turn men to stones and overthrow monsters. The shield is so powerful that it forever remains covered with a piece of cloth. Una tells the story of her life to the knight who promises to help her. The knight, though unnamed, is Prince Arthur. Arthur, along with his squire, Una and the Dwarf, approaches the castle, and the squire blows a horn whose sound is so powerful that it bursts open the castle door. Orgoglio comes running out along with Duessa who is riding a seven-headed beast, a gift received from Orgoglio. Arthur and his squire confront Orgoglio and the seven-headed beast in a fight. In the middle of the fight, the piece of cloth that had covered the shield drops from it and its dazzling surface got exposed. The glare of the shield was too strong for the eyes of Orgoglio and the seven- headed beast, allowing Arthur to kill both the monsters. Duessa attempts to escape but is held back by the squire. After the fight, Arthur goes inside the castle in search of Redcrosse, but he just finds an old servant called Ignaro who walks with his head facing backwards and who cannot answer any of Arthur's questions. Arthur takes the keys of the castle from Ignaro and starts searching for the Redcrosse knight in the rooms there. He comes across a beautifully decorated room where the altar is stained with the blood of martyrs. Then he opens another door and falls into a dungeon where he sees Redcrosse, hungry and distressed after months of imprisonment. With great difficulty they manage to come out of the dungeon and Arthur presents Redcrosse Knight to Una, and the two finally reunite. Duessa is made to strip in front of everyone so that Redcrosse can see that she is a witch. Commentary The wood gods, in spite of being good creatures who dwell in sylvan surroundings and help Una are not representatives of "pure" nature like the lion was as they are idolater of Greek and Roman mythology. When they see Una they start worshipping her, not realizing that she stands in stark contrast with idolatry. As Spenser was opposed to idolatry and the complexities of the Roman Catholic Church, so he rejects them. Satyrane, on the other hand is only a part wood god, still has the goodness of nature and helps Una. However, he does not stand for anything Christian so he cannot defeat Sansloy. Through this allegory, Spenser chooses Redcrosse to prove his loyalty to the Queen. However, as Redcrosse, who stands for holiness is separated from Una, who is an embodiment of truth, he cannot accomplish the task assigned to him. He becomes a prey to evil forces. He does not recognize the falseness of Duessa and eventually he gets caught in the jaws of death in the dungeon. The giant represents godless pride, which can overcome the weak Christian, still separated from Truth. Finally, Arthur comes as a Christ like figure as he helps to elevate Redcrosse to a higher pedestal. However the allegory sees a change, when Redcrosse is himself transformed into a Christ like figure. The role of Arthur in the Faerie Queenis very diverse as he stands for many other things within Faerie Queen. On the first level, he is the hero of the whole poem; Spenser intends to have him appear briefly in each book, usually when things reach a nadir. The character of Arthur has deep significance for the sixteenth century audience. The Arthurian legend was well developed by Spenser's time and had turned a semi-historical fifth century king into a timeless hero. Through the figure of Arthur , Spenser makes it possible for the sixteenth century English audience to return to the extraordinary age of Arthur. In the Faerie Queen,the Catholic Church is shown to be the main

enemy of the true Christian spirit. This is evident again in the battle outside Orgoglio's castle. Outside the castle, Duessa is shown riding a very strange beast, which is parallel to the scene from the Book of Revelation in which the whore of Babylon, "sits on a scarlet-coloured beast...having seven heads and ten horns." (Rev. 17.3-4) The Protestants traditionally associate the whore to the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, Duessa stands for the Roman Catholic Church and all the beasts that Redcrosse and Una confront are the evil forces within the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants felt the need of cleansing Christianity of the malpractices of the Roman Catholic Church. The conflict between the various malicious beasts and the knights is in reality the confrontation between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestantism. 5.3.4 BOOK I, CANTOS IX & X Still unaware of the brave knight's identity, Una and Redcrosse question him about his life and lineage. Arthur tells them that he does not know the identity of his parents as he grew up in Wales where he was raised by Timon, an old knight, and educated by a magician Merlin, who told him that Arthur's father was a king and that Arthur would discover his identity sometime later in future. Una then asks the knight the reason for his coming to the Faerie Land to which he replies that he was visited by the Queen of Faeries in his dream, he was captivated by her beauty, he had been searching for her in Faerie Land for the last nine months. Redcrosse and Una sympathize with him. He then leaves Una and Redcrosse to resume his search. Una and Redcrosse, likewise, resume their long-delayed journey but are soon interrupted by Sir Trevisan, a knight running along the roadside with a rope around his neck. Trevisan tells them how he was fleeing a terrible man Despair who had persuaded his companion, Sir Terwin to end his live by committing suicide. As a result of Despair's persuasion, Terwin, sick of his life, stabbed himself, but Trevisan did not get trapped and ran away from there. On hearing Yrevisan's account, Redcrosse vows to challenge Despair. He is led by Trevisan into a dark cave where an old, gloomy man was sitting on a corner. This man was Despair. On seeing him, Redcrosse asks him to give up his persuasions. However, Despair convinces Redcrosse that his mission was noble and that he has been instrumental in liberating many people from the miseries of human existence as death ended a life full of sins. The arguments relating death that Despare gave was so convincing that Redcrosse raises his dagger to end his own life but Una intervenes at the right time and stops Redcrosse from committing this cowardly act. She tells him that it would be foolish on his part to end his own life and reminded him of Heavenly Mercy. Convinced by Una, Redcrosse escapes from the cave of Dispair. Seeing that Redcrosse was in a disturbed state of mind, Una leads him to the House of Holiness, so that he could recover well. The House of Holiness is ruled by Caelia along with her three daughters Fidelia, Sperenza and Charissa. Here Charissa gives Redcrosse lessons on good behaviour, love and righteousness. Thereafter, he is taken to a hospital where seven charitable characters like Patience, Penance, Remorse and Repentance tend to his physical ailments. All these characters provide the best of services to Redcrosse as a result of which his condition begins to improve. Charity, one of the characters residing in the House of Holiness, instructs Redcrosse on practising love instead of hatred and Mercy gives him lessons on charity. Once fully recovered, Contemplation, a wise old hermit leads him to the top of a high mountain and informs him that one day he will enter New Jerusalem as Saint George, the patron saint of England. Amazed on hearing this, Redcrosse descends downhill to continue his journey with Una to her native land. Commentary Spenser glorifies Queen Elizabeth by connecting her with King Arthur's lineage in Canto ix. Arthur tells Redcrosse and Una that he was born in western Wales, which hints his connection with the House of Tudor, Elizabeth's family. Through this Spenser suggests that Elizabeth shares the same secular power and religious authority as Arthur held. In the book, Arthur is likened to Christ. In the exchange of gifts that take place between Arthur and Redcrosse, Arthur gives Redcrosse a "few drops of liquor pure,/ Of wondrous worth and excellent,/ That any wound could heal incontinent" (I.ix.19) The liquor probably represents the Eucharist, which is a symbol of Christ giving his body and blood to the Apostles at the Last Supper and Redcrosse gives him his "Saveours Testament" (I.ix.19)- that is, the New Testament, which tells of Christ's life Christ's life on Earth. This foretells Redcrosse's eventual role as a Christ like figure, and, in fact, a more important one than Arthur. On his journey, Redcrosse has to make yet another confrontation. This time with Despair whom the lion had confronted earlier in the form of Sansjoy. The lion could not conquer despare then and here too in its purest form, it had almost defeated Redcrosse but he had the strong support of Truth in the form of Una and the mercy of Truth is greater than the pang of despair. This is an important lesson which Redcrosse learns in the House of Holiness. The House of Holiness stands in sharp contrast to the House of Pride from Canto iv. In the House of Holiness, we meet Caelia (Heavenly); instead of a parade of vices, there is a multitude of virtues. First we meet the three daughters of Caelia, Faith, Hope and Charity, which according to St. Paul are the greatest virtues. Each one gives lessons to Redcrosse base on her virtue. The seven physicians who take care of Redcrosse are the correspond to the seven bodily vices of the House of Pride whose care rejuvenates Redcrosse as a result of which he

gathers the strength to carry on with his journey. 5.3.5. BOOK 1, CANTOS XI& XII Finally, Redcrosse and Una reach her native place where they are confronted by a huge dragon. The dragon is covered with a flawless coat of scales, has a long tail with razor sharp spikes and powerful wings that can sweep off anything off its feet. Redcrosse and the dragon enter into a fierce fight that lasts for three days. Redcross appears to be no match for the dragon. Every blow given by the dragon proves too much for Redcrosse to handle. Each time the dragon knocks Redcrosse down and finally, when Redcrosse injures the dragon, in retaliation the dragon spews fire on Redcrosse, burning his armour. The heat of the armour burns Redcrosse and he writhes in pain. Then the dragon knocks him backward causing him to fall into the Well of Life which has the power to heal his wounds but the dragon thinks that Redcrosse is dead and sleeps soundly at night. Una prays all night long for the recovery of Redcrosse and in the morning, a rejuvenated Redcrosse, rises from the spring. The next day also fighting continues in which both suffer heavy losses. At last, Redcrosse cuts a deep wound in the dragon's head. Again when the dragon delivers a deathly blow, Redcrosse falls into mire where a sacred tree stands. The tree like the Well of Life had healing powers. The balm of the blessed tree boosts the knight for another day of fighting. When the dragon sees the knight alive, he is furious and vows to kill Redcrosse and finish off the battle. However, it is Redcrosse who eventually kills the dragon by piercing his throat and emerges victorious in the end. At last, the land is set free and the inhabitants celebrate their freedom and honour Redcrosse as their hero. They also start making preparations for the marriage of Una and Redcrosse when a messenger comes with a letter stating that Redcrosse and Una cannot get married as he has already pledged his hand to another woman. Redcrosse clarifies the situation and tells them that the woman was Duessa, a witch, who only got his pledge by deceit and witchcraft. Una seconds all this and also recognizes the messenger, who is Archimago in disguise. Archimago is captured and imprisoned in a dungeon and in the end Redcrosse and Una get married. However, Redcrosse tells them that he cannot stay with Una as he has to proceed further to fulfil his duty for he is obliged to carry out his pledge of six years of service to Gloriana, the Queen of the Faerie Land. Commentary The final battle between Redcrosse and the dragon is the culmination of the allegory. It covers all the different levels of religious and political meanings that Spenser has put into the story. Redcrosse's victory represents three distinct events: Christ's victory over death and the devil in the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the victory of the individual Christian over the temptation of sin and the defeat of the Roman Catholic Church at the hands of the Protestantism and the Church of England. Redcrosse stands for both as an individual Christian as well as a champion of Protestants against Catholics. Here, in Canto xi, he is also represented as a Christ like figure because just like Christ's resurrection took place after three days, Redcrosse too defeats the dragon after struggling for three days with him. During Redcrosse's fight with the dragon, he is saved twice. Once by the Well of Life, into which he fell accidentally, and got baptized. The Tree of Life is the Eucharist, the symbol of Christ's body and blood. Both the well and the tree represent the grace that God bestowed on mankind. Through the story of Redcrosse and Una, Spenser wants to drive home the point that no matter how well a man is prepared, he is no match for sin and death without the Grace of God. Therefore, we can say that Redcrosse's victory was possible only as a result of God's grace. Finally, Redcrosse is again established as the hero of Protestantism against Catholicism in the last Canto. Even though he has conquered the dragon, his marriage to Una must be delayed; his work is not yet finished. The knight must "Backe to return to that great Faerie Queene / And her to serve six yeares in warlike wize, / Gainst that proud Paynim king (I.xii.18)." This brings the allegory back from the general to the specific and back from the purely religious to the political. We know that the Faerie Queene represents Queen Elizabeth; thus, the "proud Paynim king" whom she is fighting must be either the Pope or a Catholic king; either way, the enemy is the Roman Church. Spenser is bringing us back to his own time where, although England now is Protestant, the Catholic Church is still powerful. Redcrosse will be united with Una only when the battle against false religion is over--we see that Duessa is still working her evil ways in defeat. And the battle, of course, will not end until the end of the world, when Christ will reveal which religion is false and which is true. 5.4 Major Characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1 ➢ Arthur: The central hero of the poem, although he does not play the most significant role in the action of the book. Arthur is in search of the Faerie Queen, whom he saw in a vision. The "real" Arthur was a king of the Britons in the 5th or 6th century A.D but the little historical information we have about him is overwhelmed by his legend. ➢ Faerie Queen (also known as Gloriana): Though she never appears in the poem, she is the focus of the poem; the castle is the ultimate goal or destination of many of the poem's characters. She represents Queen Elizabeth, among others, as discussed in the Commentary. ➢ Redcrosse: The Redcrosse Knight is the hero of Book 1; he stands for the virtues of Holiness. His real name is discovered to be George, and he ends up becoming St. George, the patron saint of England. On another level, though he is the individual Christian fighting against evil or the Protestant fighting the Catholic Church. ➢ Una: The beautiful

future wife of Redcrosse, and the other major protagonist of Book 1. She is meek and humble but strong when it is necessary. She represents truth, which Redcrosse must find in order to be a true Christian. ➢ Duessa: Duessa is the opposite of Una. She represents falsehood and nearly succeeds in getting Redcrosse to leave Una. She appears beautiful but in reality is a witch. 5.5. LET US SUM UP In this unit you read the summary and critical commentary of the various cantos of Book 1. You saw how Redcrosse knight, the patron saint of Holiness is appointed by Gloriana, Queene of Faerie Land to accompany Una on a journey to her kingdom to destroy a dragon that is destroying the land and holding Una's parents captive. One their way to the kingdom of Una's parents both Redcrosse and Una undergo various hardships, a detailed account of which has been given above. In the eighth canto of of the book comes a brilliantly arrayed knight, whose armor includes a magic diamond shield with such great powers that it can turn men to stone and overthrow monsters; The knight, though unnamed, is the great Prince Arthur. He helps Redcrosse and Una in overcoming their final ordeals and plays a great role in the unification of the two. In the end with the dragon killed, the land is freed from its captivity and Redcrosse emerges as their hero. Ceremonies for the betrothal of Redcrosse and Una are celebrated, until a messenger arrives with a letter stating that Redcrosse is engaged to Fidessa. However the messenger is recognized to be Archimago in yet another disguise. He is finally captured and thrown into a dungeon, and the betrothal of Redcrosse and Una takes place. Red Cross, however, cannot remain with Una as he has to continue with his journey as he has to fulfill his pledge of six years of service to Gloriana, the Queen of Faerie Land. Check Your Progress Q1. What does the Redcrosse knight stand for? Q2. Who is Fidessa in reality? Q3. Who is the hero of the first book of The Faerie Queene ? Q4. What does Una stand for in the book? Q5. Who is the knight who proposes to help Una ? Q6. How does the Redcrosse knight get his name? Q7. Who was Archimago? Q8. Describe the House of pride. Q9. Describe the fight scene between Orgoglio and the Redcrosse knight. Q10. How are Redcrosse and Una re-united in the end of Book 1? 5.6. Answers to Check Your Progress A1. Holiness A2. Duessa, the witch A3. Redcrosse knight A4. Truth A5. Arthur Note: To know the answers of Q6 TO Q10, please refer to the relevant sections of the write- up. 5.7. REFERENCES ➢ Griffeth, Tim. Ed. The Faerie Queene Edmund Spenser. Kent. Wordsworth Editions Limited. 1999.Print. ➢ www.sparknotes.com.<...< PoetryStudyGuides<FFQ

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Unit 6- SHAKESPEARE'S : SONNETS 18, 29,34 55, 65 6.1 Introduction 6.2 Objectives 6.3 Shakespeare as a Poet 6.4 The Shakespearean Sonnet 6.5 Themes and Concerns of the Sonnets 6.6 Sonnet 18 6.6.1 Summary Sonnet 18 6.7 Sonnet 29 6.7.1 Summary Sonnet 29 6.8 Sonnet 34 6.8.1 Summary Sonnet 34 6.9 Sonnet 55 6.9.1 Summary Sonnet 55 6.10 Sonnet 65 6.10.1 Summary Sonnet 65 6.11 Let Us Sum Up 6.12 Questions 6.13 Suggested Readings 6.1

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Introduction Sonnets were a popular mode of literary expression in Renaissance Europe. In England particularly, the form came into vogue through the sonnets of Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey in the early 16thcentury. The tradition was followed by Philip Sydney and Edmund Spenser. In the 1590s the private sonnet form and the public drama came of age. The former had an elitist edge while the latter thrived on mass acceptance. Shakespeare belonged to the group of middle-class writers who always wrote keeping in mind the ground realties. It is for this reason that he sought to write realistic works that consciously engaged with common feelings of the people. Even his sonnets create some space for realism. Certainly, Shakespeare was well aware of both the Italian sonnet form and the English one. As he borrowed elements from them, Shakespeare constantly experimented with them and evolved his own style in terms of structure and theme. He wasn't exactly keen on adding flow and lyricism to his sonnet and wished to add depth to an emotion or an aspect of nature. He went into the nature of the life's issues explored the hidden layers of the phenomenon. If it was summer that caught his attention (as in sonnet 18), he would devote an entire sonnet to its features and aspects. Shakespeare's collection of 154 sonnets was published in 1609 by Thomas Thorpe. The first edition of his collection bore a dedication to a certain W. H. that became the subject of much speculation. The dedication was provided not by Shakespeare but by the publisher, Thorpe. Till the eighteenth century it was believed that the sonnets were addressed to a woman who was Shakespeare's mistress. However, by the close of the century, in 1780 to be precise, a group of scholars claimed that more than a hundred sonnets had been addressed to a man. The word 'love' in Shakespeare's time was quite inclusive. It was used to address a mistress, friend or a patron. For instance, Shakespeare's Rape of Lucrece began with the author's dedication where he projected "love" for his patron that denoted regard for him. It is believed that sonnets 1 to 17 were addressed to a young man of high station. With respect to the dedication of the sonnets many conjectures have been made. According to one theory, "Mr. W.H." stood for William Herbert who became the earl of Pembroke in 1601 and was Shakespeare's patron as well. It is to him that the first folio edition of Shakespeare's works was dedicated. However, another theory is that this mysterious man was Earl of Southampton (whose initials were H.W.) to whom Shakespeare had earlier dedicated his two long poems. A third view (and the one accepted by many critics) suggests that the sonnets were

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the first folio edition of Shakespeare's works was dedicated. However, another theory is that this mysterious man was Earl of Southampton (whose initials were H.W.) to whom Shakespeare had earlier dedicated his two long poems. A third view (and the one accepted by many critics) suggests that the sonnets were dedicated to William Harvey who was Southampton's step father. These schools of thought have continued to establish one or other fact but nothing has been established with certainty. Another aspect of the sonnets relates to the reference of the mysterious woman often alluded as the "Dark Lady" in Shakespeare's life. Not much clarity is available on this subject but subsequent scholarship on the subject has rendered some help. For instance, A.L. Rowse in 1984 indentified the "Dark Lady" as Emilia Lanier, who was a poet and the orphaned daughter of an Italian court musician. It is sufficient for us to keep in mind that broadly, Shakespeare's sonnets were addressed to a 'fair' young man who held a high social position and a dark lady with whom he enjoyed a love-hate relationship. Despite conjecture around the possible dates, sequence of the sonnets and the addressee, Shakespeare's sonnets have occupied an important position in Shakespeare criticism. The sonnets come across as personal and mature. They are striking, too, as thought-centric compositions. Critics such as Adena Rosman believe that "Shakespeare's sonnets were a Romantic obsession because their generically 'personal' rhetoric made them seem the key to Shakespeare's heart" (Rosmarin, Adena. "Interpreting Shakespeare's Sonnets". Modern Language Association. Vol. 100. No. 5 (October 1985) pp. 810- 812 .811). 6.2

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OBJECTIVES This unit would familiarize you with the tradition of sonnet writing in England and Shakespeare's experimentation with the sonnet form. We would look at the sonnets of Shakespeare specifically and view his poetic sensibility. The idea is to understand the general strains of Shakespeare's sonnets focusing on the themes and issues raised in them. The three sonnets in your course would be at the centre of this unit and we would interpret them for gaining an understanding of the many dimensions they open. 6.3

SHAKESPEARE AS A POET It is believed that poetry brings out the genuine self of a person since it captures feelings and emotions rooted in a person's experience. Can we say that in poems and sonnets we get a glimpse of the real Shakespeare –the living man? Shakespeare's plays often proved difficult for identifying influences in real life. This was because Shakespeare did not leave in his works any hint of an actual situation. In the sonnets, too, we see sincerity as well as artificiality working in tandem. The sonnets appear in turns genuine expression of the poet's feeling as well as stylistic poetry devoted to a patron. There is, thus, a kind of duality in Shakespeare's sonnets where the writer expresses, then hides and covers the emotion skillfully. In any case, the bard appears to be a torn sensibility—dilemma and conflict in him playing a part. He rationalizes the point in one sonnet, (as in sonnet 35), pedestalizes the subject of his sonnets elsewhere, and takes pride in his identity as a poet. This is then followed by an exhibition of his passion which later blends with regret (sonnet 152). In another moment, he becomes self- critical, or indulges in self-deception (sonnet 93). Elsewhere, the speaker in the sonnets wears the mask of madness (as in 147) and yet shows clarity of thought. Such attributes as these make Shakespeare a poet of great variety and depth—he leaves much for interpretation and offers contradictory point of views to cover the vast variety of matters he is dealing with. 6.4 THE SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET Let's look at the stanzaic structure of Shakespeare's sonnet. The Shakespearean stanza form consists of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, with the rhyme scheme--abab cdcd efef gg. The division of lines in a Shakespearean stanza, therefore, consists of three quatrains (twelve lines that rhyme alternately) and a couplet. What you get in a Shakespearean sonnet stanza is an arrangement of unaccented and accented syllables that have end-rhymes. According to the critic Paul Fussell, the English sonnet has a peculiar tendency termed the "balloon-and-pin-prick" pattern. The suggestion is that in the English sonnet there is a development of the problem (a conscious building up much like slowly inflating a balloon) which is carefully elaborated in the twelve lines of the three quatrains. This is followed by the resolution in the last, a couplet which is a witty conclusion or a quick turn-around from the dramatic description of the preceding lines. The last two lines burst the balloon as it were. While Sidney's sonnet style was fixed and full of rhymes, Shakespeare's was experimental. The latter was discovering the potential of the sonnet form capable of attaining depth as well as expansion. Shakespeare did not use the epistolary form popular at the time where the sonnet would be written as a letter of supplication to the beloved. The Italian sonneteer Petrarch had established a particular pattern and the poets of the time strictly adhered to it. The Petrarchan model of sonnet writing was introduced in England by Wyatt but by the time Spenser came to writing, the form had become flexible. In Shakespeare's time, more changes occurred in the form. The number of lines remained fourteen, but changes and variations were introduced within them. Thus, the English sonnet gained a specific identity in the hands of Shakespeare. Russell Fraser has observed: The metrical pattern of the 'English' sonnet (abab cdcd efef gg) is directive. Committing the poet to three coordinate quatrains, it ends with a couplet that ties this series together. If well turned, the couplet approximates the epigram ... Shakespeare blurring the pattern he inherits frequently 'elides' his quatrains, as in the Italian sonnet in which the major turn occurs after line 8. (Fraser, Russel. "Shakespeare at Sonnets".The Sewanee Review. Vol.97. No. 3 (Summer, 1989) pp408- 427. 409). Thus, in Shakespeare's sonnets the shift from the quatrains to the couplet creates a disruption of meaning and alters it. There is a sharp turn in his sonnets. Owing to the brevity of the form, emotions captured in expressions are available as condensed. The sonnet becomes precise but is loaded with suggestion. In a play, the idea may be elaborated upon through dialogues and characterization, but in the sonnet, completion of the intent in fourteen lines is a must. This makes the sonnet complex and coded. 6.5 THEMES AND CONCERNS OF THE SONNETS Shakespeare's early sonnets, particularly sonnets 1-14, are of a uniform nature; they have a shared theme of marriage and familial harmony. They are meant to persuade a young man, for instance, to marry and have children so the beauty of the parents is passed on to the progeny. Some flattery and romance are involved in it. Shakespeare depicts admiration for the subject of these sonnets. The more sustained themes of the sonnets are the themes of love and time which could be observed with poignancy. It is the power that both love and time wield over human life that makes the poet interested in exploring the subject. In the early sonnets, we find different shades of love—youthful love, passionate love, mature love among others. References to love are also representative of many things—one of them could be 'true' love, romance, close friendship, regard and admiration, or transitory fascination. One might see the variations in Sonnets 29, 116 and 30, all revolving around the idea of love. Shakespeare steered clear of the conventional theme of wooing and imploring a lady. At the same time, the idea of love stood examined as also reaffirmed. There is a passionate engagement with the theme of love in Shakespeare—it

makes the poet mad, leaving him open to guilt and revulsion, while the passion takes him towards the joys of being in the company of the beloved. If there is desire, it is accompanied by suffering. In the sonnets, moments are captured and feeling is rationalized. Shakespeare's preoccupation with time and its changing nature that he significantly brought out in his plays is also evident in his sonnet sequences. See the opening quatrain of sonnet 64: When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced The rich proud cost of outworn buried age, When sometime lofty-towers I see down razed, And brass eternal slave to mortal rage The stark changes caused by time leave the poet humbled as also aware of historical movement where individuals appear as mere actors. The critic Victor Kiernan has observed that "everyone with a pen has written about Time, but Shakespeare said far too much about it for there to be any doubt of its poignant meanings for him; and it rarely failed to inspire him. It is a salient theme of fourteen sonnets, three of them in the opening set" (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. (154)). Kiernan further notes that "eternity" is "one of its key-words",an aspect of time that "throw(s) a huge shadow on the sonnets". Another theme of the sonnets is fame. It could be seen in sonnets ranged between sonnet nos. 18 and 83. In the early sonnets, Shakespeare felt unsure about the sonnet form, as it were, and was enamoured of fame achieved by great artists and poets. However, in his heyday he was aware of his popularity. It also was the case that his interest in the idea of fame diminished with time. With respect to the famous court figures and courtly culture in Shakespeare's sonnets, Kiernan has further made an interesting observation: What may be called the official or 'court' culture was as elaborate and showy as a courtier's costume. In his sonnets as in his long poems, Shakespeare was submitting to its artificialities, its conceits and verbal capers and quibbling (e.g. no. 24, 46), devoid of any real meaning...Shakespeare may well have had fits of self-doubt. In No. 55 he is triumphant; in No. 72 he is ashamed of 'that which I bring forth', 'things nothing worth'. (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. 156) Similarly, the theme of remorse resurfaces in several of Shakespeare's sonnets. In the sonnet 152, he alludes to himself as the man breaking vows of matrimony and thus regrets his decision and suffers the pangs of guilt. There are many references to the seasons in Shakespeare's sonnets for describing the weather, the beloved or even a state of mind. He refers to the "stormy gusts of winter's day" (sonnet 13) and "never-resting time leads summer on/ To hideous winter and confounds him there" (sonnet 5) as suggestive of the many phases of life. Seasons accompanied by the natural landscape add freshness and tenderness to the experience projected in the sonnets. Shakespeare often brings in images from nature to prove a point. Natural objects, too, have a life of their own. So far as the poet is concerned, they have power over human effort. This is dwelt upon in the sonnets and the two worlds (human courts as well as cities and natural landscape) stand juxtaposed therein. As we turn attention to the specific sonnets in the course, we notice themes and attitudes of many other kinds as well. 6.6 Sonnet 18 Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate: Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, And summer's lease hath all too short a date: Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, And often is his gold complexion dimm'd; And every fair from fair sometime declines, By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd: But thy eternal summer shall not fade, Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st; Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade, When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st: So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. 6.6.1 Summary Sonnet 18 One of the

best known of Shakespeare's sonnets, Sonnet 18 is memorable for the skillful and varied presentation of subject matter, in which the poet's feelings reach a level of rapture unseen in the previous sonnets. The poet here abandons his quest for the youth to have a child, and instead glories in the youth's beauty. Initially, the poet poses a question — "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" and then reflects on it, remarking that the youth's beauty far surpasses summer's delights. The imagery is the very essence of simplicity: "wind" and "buds." In the fourth line, legal terminology — "summer's lease" — is introduced in contrast to the commonplace images in the first three lines. Note also the poet's use of extremes in the phrases "more lovely," "all too short," and "too hot"; these phrases emphasize the young man's beauty. Although lines 9 through 12 are marked by a more expansive tone and deeper feeling, the poet returns to the simplicity of the opening images. As one expects in Shakespeare's sonnets, the proposition that the poet sets up in the first eight lines — that all nature is subject to imperfection — is now contrasted in these next four lines beginning with "But." Although beauty naturally declines at some point — "And every fair from fair sometime declines" — the youth's beauty will not; his unchanging appearance is atypical of nature's steady progression. Even death is impotent against the youth's beauty. Note the ambiguity in the phrase "eternal lines": Are these "lines" the poet's verses or the youth's hoped-for children? Or are they simply wrinkles meant to represent the process of aging? Whatever the answer,

the poet is jubilant in this sonnet because nothing threatens the young man's beautiful appearance. Then follows the concluding couplet: "

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So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

The poet is describing not what the youth is but what he will be ages hence, as captured in the poet's eternal verse — or again, in a hoped-for child. Whatever one may feel about the sentiment expressed in the sonnet and especially in these last two lines, one cannot help but notice an abrupt change in the poet's own estimate of his poetic writing. Following the poet's disparaging reference to his "pupil pen" and "barren rhyme" in Sonnet 16, it comes as a surprise in Sonnet 18 to find him boasting that his poetry will be eternal. 6.7 Sonnet 29 When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes I all alone beweep my outcast state, And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries, And look upon myself, and curse my fate, Wishing me like to one more rich in hope, Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,

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Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope, With what I most enjoy contented least;

Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising, Haply I think on thee, and then my state, Like to

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the lark at break of day arising From sullen earth,

sings hymns at heaven's gate; For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings That then I scorn to change my state with kings. 6.7.1 Summary

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Sonnet 29 Resenting his bad luck, the poet envies the successful art of others and rattles off an impressive catalogue of the ills and misfortunes of his life. His depression is derived from his being separated from the young man, even more so because he envisions the youth in the company of others while the poet is "all alone." Stylistically, Sonnet 29 is typically Shakespearean in its form. The first eight lines, which begin with "When," establish a conditional argument and show the poet's frustration with his craft. The last six lines, expectedly beginning in line 9 with "Yet" — similar to other sonnets' "But" — and resolving the conditional argument, present a splendid image of a morning lark that "sings hymns at heaven's gate." This image epitomizes the poet's delightful memory of his friendship with the youth and compensates for the misfortunes he has lamented. The uses of "state" unify the sonnet's three different sections: the first eight lines, lines 9 through 12, and the concluding couplet, lines 13 and 14. Additionally, the different meanings of state — as a mood and as a lot in life — contrast the poet's sense of a failed and defeated life to his exhilaration in recalling his friendship with the youth. One state, as represented in lines 2 and 14, is his state of life; the other, in line 10, is his state of mind. Ultimately, although the poet plaintively wails his "outcast state" in line 2, by the end of the sonnet he has completely reversed himself: ". . . I scorn to change my state with kings." Memories of the young man rejuvenate his spirits. 6.8

Sonnet 34 Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day And make me travel forth without my cloak, To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way, Hiding thy brav'ry in their rotten smoke? 'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face, For no man well of such a salve can speak That heals the wound and cures not the disgrace. Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief; Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss. Th' offender's sorrow lends but weak relief To him that bears the strong offense's cross. Ah, but those tears are pearl which thy love sheds, And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds. 6.8.1 Summary Sonnet 34 The poet speaks of a quite different feeling than he did in Sonnet 33. He is puzzled and painfully disappointed by the youth, whose callousness dashes any hope of his enjoying a dependable friendship. The opening complaint, again based on the metaphor of the young man as the sun, shows how much the poet's perceptions have changed. He has been wounded by the youth, and apologies notwithstanding, the scar remains: "For no man well of such a salve can speak / That heals the wound, and cures not the disgrace." The poet might lament the inner hurt that he feels because of the youth's actions, but the sonnet ends with him unable to remain angry. Just as in Sonnet 33's line 13, "Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth," the poet remains steadfast in his devotion to the youth. Although disgraced because of the youth's actions, the poet in the concluding couplet forgives his friend: "Ah, but those tears are pearl which thy love sheeds, / And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds." The young man apparently cries because of his offense against the poet and effectively manipulates the poet's sentiments so that the poet forgives him for jeopardizing their relationship. 6.9

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Sonnet 55 Not marble, nor the gilded monuments Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime; But you shall shine more bright in these contents Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time. When wasteful war shall statues overturn, And broils rot out the work of masonry, Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn The living record of your memory. 'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterity That wear this world out to the ending doom. So, till the judgement that yourself arise, You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes. 6.9.1

Summary Sonnet 55 Sonnet 55, one of Shakespeare's most famous verses, asserts the immortality of the poet's sonnets to withstand the forces of decay over time. The sonnet continues this theme from the previous sonnet, in which the poet likened himself to a distiller of truth.
Although the poet's previous pride in writing verse is missing in this sonnet, he still manages to demonstrate a superbly confident spirit: "

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Not marble, nor the gilded monuments / Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime."

He clearly abandons, at least for the time being, his earlier depressing opinion of his verse as "barren rime," for next he contrasts his verses' immortality to "unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time," meaning that the young man will be remembered longer because of the poet's having written about him than if descriptions of his beauty had been chiseled in stone. The next four lines address the same theme of immortality, but now the poet boasts that not only natural forces but human wars and battles cannot blot out his sonnets, which are a "living record" of the youth. Monuments and statues may be desecrated during war, but not so these rhymes. In the first seventeen sonnets, the poet worried about death's effect on the youth's beauty and questioned the nature of his sonnets' reputation after both he and the young man died. Now, however, in lines 9 through 12, he boldly asserts that death is impotent in the face of his sonnets' immortality: To the youth he says, "

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Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity / Shall you pace forth."

In fact, he asserts that the young man's name will be remembered until the last survivor on earth perishes: ". . .

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your praise shall still find room / Even in the eyes of all posterity / That wear this world out to the ending doom."

Only then, when no one remains alive, will the youth's beauty fade — but through no fault of the youth or the poet. This notion of "the ending doom" is the main point in the concluding couplet. The syntax of line 13 — "So, till the judgment that yourself arise" — is confusing; restated, the line says, "Until the Judgment Day when you arise." The poet assures the youth that his beauty will remain immortal as long as one single person still lives to read these sonnets, which themselves will be immortal. 6.10

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SONNET 65 Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, But sad mortality o'ersway their power How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea, Whose action is no stronger than a flower? O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out Against the wreckful siege of battering days, When rocks impregnable are not so stout, Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays? O fearful meditation! Where, alack, Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid? Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back? Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid? O, none, unless this miracle have might, That in black ink my love may still shine bright. 6.10.1

Summary Sonnet 65 Continuing many of the images from Sonnet 64, the poet concludes that nothing withstands time's ravages. The hardest metals and stones, the vast earth and sea — all submit to time "

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Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, / But sad mortality o'er-sways their power." "

O fearful meditation!" he cries, where can the young man hide that time won't wreak on him the same "siege of batt'ring days"? In contrast to the previous sonnet, the poet once again is reassured that his sonnets will provide the youth immortality — his verse is the only thing that can withstand time's decay. Returning to the power of poetry to bestow eternal life, the poet asserts "

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That in black ink my love may still shine bright."

He believes that his love verse can preserve the youth's beauty. Ironically, this back-and-forth thinking mirrors the movement of the waves to the shore — an image the poet uses in many of the time-themed sonnets in this sequence. For example, in Sonnet 60, the poet says, "Each changing place with that which goes before, / In sequent toil all forwards do contend"; and in Sonnet 64, he notes, "Increasing store with loss and loss with store." Physically and emotionally separated from the young man, the poet's constantly shifting belief in the worth of his verse parallels his constantly shifting faith in the young man. 6.11

LET US SUM UP This unit has outlined the basic form of Shakespearean sonnet and its features. It has brought into discussion Shakespeare's inventive mind and creative genius as a poet. In this unit, a general view of the collection of the sonnets has been provided as also the themes and issues raised therein. Further, a detailed explanation of sonnets 18, 55 and 65 is offered, too. 6.12 QUESTIONS 1. Comment on the nature of time in Shakespeare's sonnets keeping in view the theme of immortality. 2. What for Shakespeare is the larger role of poetry and the poet? Explain. 3. Write a note on the Shakespearean stanza. 4. How is love projected by Shakespeare in his sonnets? 6.13 SUGGESTED READINGS 1. Fraser, Russel. "Shakespeare at Sonnets".The Sewanee Review. Vol.97. No. 3 (Summer, 1989) pp408-427. 2. Fussell, Paul. Poetic Meter and Poetic Form. USA: McGraw Hill, 1979 3. Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. 4. Muir, Kenneth. Shakespeare's Sonnets.1979. Oxon: Routledge, 2005. 5. Rosmarin, Adena. "Interpreting Shakespeare's Sonnets". ModernLanguageAssociation. Vol. 100. No. 5 (October 1985) pp. 810-812. 6. Rowse, A.L. Ed. Shakespeare's Sonnets. London: Macmillan, 1964. 7. Schiffer, James. Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays. New York: Garland, 2000. 8. Shakespeare, William. Shakespeare's Sonnets and Other Poems. San Diego: Word Cloud Classics, 2017. 9. Wells, Stanley and Lena Cowen Orlin. Ed. Shakespeare: An Oxford Guide. New Delhi: OUP, 2003

Unit 7- Philip Sydney's Astrophel and Stella • Introduction about the Author Sir Philip Sydney (1554-1586) The grandson of the Duke of Northumberland and heir presumptive to the earls of Leicester and Warwick, Sir Philip Sidney was not himself a nobleman. Today he is closely associated in the popular imagination with the court of Elizabeth I, though he spent relatively little time at the English court, and until his appointment as governor of Flushing in 1585 received little preferment from Elizabeth. Viewed in his own age as the best hope for the establishment of a Protestant League in Europe, he was nevertheless a godson of Philip II of Spain, spent nearly a year in Italy, and sought out the company of such eminent Catholics as the Jesuit martyr Edmund Campion. Widely regarded, in the words of his late editor William A. Ringler, Jr., as "the model of perfect courtesy," Sidney was in fact hot-tempered and could be surprisingly impetuous. Considered the epitome of the English gentleman-soldier, he saw little military action before a wound in the left thigh, received 23 September 1586 during an ill-conceived and insignificant skirmish in the Netherlands outside Zutphen, led to his death on 17 October, at Arnhem. Even his literary career bears the stamp of paradox: Sidney did not think of himself as primarily a writer, and surprisingly little of his life was devoted to writing. Philip, the first child of Sir Henry Sidney and his wife, Mary, née Dudley, was born in 1554 at Penshurst in Kent, "on Friday the last of November, being St. Andrews day, a quarter before five in the morning." Present at the birth were his royal Spanish godfather and his maternal grandmother, whose husband, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, and son Guildford had been beheaded in 1553 following the failure of the Northumberland plan to place Guildford's wife, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne.

It was an auspicious beginning to an often fatherless childhood. In 1559 Queen Elizabeth appointed Sir Henry lord president of the Marches of Wales, a post that required him to spend months at a time away from home. As painful as his absence from family must have been to Sir Henry, his absence from Penshurst could only have compounded his distress. In the 1590 Arcadia Sidney recalled in the character Kalander's house the warmth, serviceability, and understated grace of the Sidney home: The house itself was built of fair and strong stone, not affecting so much any extraordinary kind of fineness, as an honorable representing of firm stateliness; the lights, doors and stairs, rather directed to the use of the guest than to the eye of the artificer, and yet, as the one chiefly heeded, so the other not neglected; each place handsome without curiosity, and homely without loathsomeness, not so dainty as not to be trod on, nor yet slubbered up with good fellowship—all more lasting than beautiful (but that the consideration of the exceeding lastingness made the eye believe it was exceeding beautiful). The dominance of women in the poet's early life was doubtless formative. Sidney's skill in portraying female characters, from the bewitching, multifarious Stella of Astrophil and Stella (1591) to Philoclea and Pamela, the bold, beautiful, and articulate princesses of the Old Arcadia (written circa 1581) and the New Arcadia (1590; written circa 1583-1584) is, as C. S. Lewis notes in his English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama (1954), without equal before William Shakespeare. The two versions of the Arcadia, Sidney's most ambitious works, were written under the guiding spirit and often in the presence of Mary Sidney Herbert, his "dear Lady and sister, the Countess of Pembroke," herself a great patron of writers, to whom the two versions of the Arcadia are dedicated. Mary went on to serve as Sidney's literary executor after his death. Nor can the benevolent influence of Sidney's mother, Lady Mary, be doubted. Lady-in-waiting to the queen, she contracted the smallpox in October 1562 while caring for Elizabeth during her bout with the sickness. Her face severely disfigured, Lady Mary thereafter avoided appearing at court. According to Ben Jonson in the Conversations with Drummond, when Lady Mary could not avoid appearing in public she wore a mask. Four of Sidney's Certain Sonnets (8-11) that lament the damage done to a beautiful face by disease may owe something to his memory of his mother's ordeal. And his portrait of the long-suffering Parthenia in the New Arcadia, whose lover Argalus, marries her despite her ruined beauty, clearly echoes his mother's plight and his father's continuing devotion.

On 17 October 1564 Sir Henry enrolled the nine-year-old Philip in Shrewsbury School, the same day that Philip's lifelong friend and biographer, Fulke Greville, First Lord Brooke, was enrolled. Although far from Penshurst, Shrewsbury was a logical choice for Sidney's early education. The town was under Sir Henry's jurisdiction and boasted a fine grammar school under the direction of its headmaster, Thomas Ashton. The rigors of Elizabethan education— in winter students were at their studies from six o'clock in the morning until four-thirty in the afternoon—suited Sidney's precocity and his extraordinary self-discipline. The curriculum was almost entirely in Latin, though modern languages seem to have had some place at Shrewsbury. An account of Philip's expenses at school includes an entry "for two quires of paper, for example books, phrases and sentences in Latin and French." Another account records expenditures for a book of Virgil and a catechism of Calvin, testifying to the school's mix of classical and Puritan values. Philip may even have developed his taste and love for drama by acting in the didactic plays that were a staple of many Elizabethan grammar schools, including Shrewsbury. At school he demonstrated a remarkable mastery of academic subjects. Greville reports that, "even his teachers found something in him to observe, and learn, above that which they had usually read, or taught." Greville may have appraised Sidney's accomplishments fairly accurately. The physician Thomas Moffett, a friend of the Sidneys and another early biographer of Philip, notes his mastery of grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, Latin, French, and some Greek. But the remarkable trait of Sidney's mind was that he saw the aim of human life to be, as he said of poetry in The Defence of Poetry (1595), "well-doing, and not of well- knowing only." Though Moffett comments that Sidney neglected games and sports "for the sake of literary studies," he developed into a handsome young man with a natural grace and considerable athletic prowess. His excellent horsemanship would later make him, despite delicate health, a champion in tiltyards and tournaments. Greville's observation that Philip's "very play tend[ed] to enrich his mind" seems close to the mark. A similar desire to make all experience educational distinguishes the childhood of Pyrocles and Musidorus, the precocious hero-princes of the Arcadias. Twice during his school days at Shrewsbury, Sidney traveled to Oxford for ceremonies over which Queen Elizabeth presided. On the first trip, in August 1566, he resided at Lincoln College and must have enjoyed a privileged view of the queen's activities, as he was in the company of his uncle, Robert Dudley, first Earl of Leicester and chancellor of the university.

Sidney's servant, Thomas Marshall, recorded that on the return trip to Shrewsbury, his master gave twelve pence to a blind harper at Chipping Norton--a moment Sidney may have recalled years later in The Defence of Poetry, when he reflected on the pleasures of lyric: "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet is it sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style." The second trip to Oxford came early in 1568, just before he completed his studies at Shrewsbury. On that occasion, according to his horoscope, he "delivered an oration before her most serene Highness that was both eloquent and elegant." Shortly after his 1568 visit, Sidney returned to Oxford as a student at Christ Church, where it seems he studied for three years. He soon established a reputation for excellence in public debate. Richard Carew recalls in his Survey of Cornwall (1602) an incident when "being a scholar in Oxford of fourteen years age, and three years standing, upon a wrong conceived opinion touching my sufficiency I was ... called to dispute ex tempore (impar congressus Achilli) with the matchless Sir Philip Sidney, in presence of the Earls Leicester, Warwick, and other great personages." During his Oxford years a marriage was proposed between Philip and Anne, Cecil, daughter of Sir William Cecil, that would have linked the Sidneys to one of the most powerful families of the realm. But when Sir William's investigations revealed that the Sidneys were relatively poor, his enthusiasm waned, and relations between the two families cooled. Anne later married Edward de Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford. Like most men of his rank Sidney left Oxford without taking a degree. After recovering from the plague in the spring of 1572, he may have spent a term at Cambridge. During this time his family was busy with preparations for his first tour of the Continent. A peace treaty between England and France, concluded in April, provided the opportunity. Late the following month he was given permission to travel to Paris as a member the delegation accompanying Lord High Admiral Edward de Fiennes, Ninth Earl of Lincoln, with a license from Elizabeth for "her trusty and well-beloved Philip Sidney, Esquire, to go out of England into parts beyond the seas" for a period of two years. By her instructions he was to attain knowledge of foreign languages. Leicester commended his nephew to Elizabeth's ambassador in Paris, Sir Francis Walsingham, who would become Sidney's friend, adviser, and father-in- law. Sidney was not yet eighteen years old.

Such trips were rare among Englishmen of Sidney's day. For him it was to be most fateful, contributing deeply to his education and preparing him for a career in the service of the state. Traveling with Griffin Madox, his Welsh servant, and Lodowick Bryskett, a London-born gentleman of Italian parents, Sidney arrived in Paris in early June. There he participated in official ceremonies marking the Treaty of Blois. He and his companions remained in Paris for the summer, where Sidney cultivated the friendship--and earned the admiration--of an extraordinary variety of people, included Walsingham, the rhetorician Peter Ramus, the printer Andrew Wechel, and perhaps even the distinguished Huguenot Hubert Languet, his future mentor, whose friendship he cultivated later in Strasbourg. But Sidney impressed not only Protestant intellectuals. In early August 1572, King Charles IX created him "Baron de Sidenay"--partly in recognition of his unusual personal appeal and partly in an effort to cultivate powerful English Protestants. Because Elizabeth disliked foreign titles, Sidney did not sign himself "Baron Sidney" in England, though his friends on the Continent regularly addressed him by that title. This successful summer ended in horror. The marriage in late August of Charles IX's sister Margaret de Valois to the Huguenot King Henry III of Navarre was designed to end a decade of bloodshed between French Catholics and Protestants. Over the summer soberly dressed Huguenots from the provinces and splendidly attired Catholics of King Charles's family and the French nobility had flocked to Paris for the wedding. Rumor swelled that the Huguenots would attempt a coup d'état after the wedding. On the Catholic side, even before the wedding, Henri I de Lorraine, Duke of Guise (with the assent of Catherine de' Médicis), had been plotting the assassination of Adm. Gaspard de II de Coligny, the most able and powerful of Navarre's advisers. Sidney witnessed many of the events of the week of 17-23 August 1572: secular and religious wedding ceremonies, important state meetings, and lavish evening entertainments. Festivities ended abruptly on Friday morning, when a sniper's bullet wounded Admiral de Coligny in the arm and finger. The Guise plot had been irrevocably launched. After a day of well-coordinated planning, the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre began in earnest just after midnight on Sunday, 23 August. All over Paris, Huguenot men, women, and children were rounded up and killed. The recuperating Coligny was murdered and his body thrown into the street. Peter Ramus was ambushed and butchered, his corpse was hurled from a window, and its entrails were dragged through the city. Languet himself barely escaped a gang of assassins.

News of the violence spread beyond the city, and thousands more Protestants were dispatched in Lyons, Orléans, Bordeaux, and other regions. How much of the slaughter Sidney witnessed in Paris is not known. Perhaps he was among the Englishmen who found refuge with Walsingham at the English embassy outside the city walls. Perhaps he was part of an English group taken to view the mutilated corpse of Coligny. He seems to have been in little danger; there is evidence that influential Catholics were careful to protect their English visitors. Nevertheless, when word of the violence reached England, the queen's council commanded Walsingham to secure Sidney's safe passage back to England. These instructions arrived too late, for Walsingham had already spirited Sidney away toward Germany. He never returned to France. Arriving in Frankfurt via Strasbourg, Sidney had the leisure over the following winter to establish his friendship with the fifty-four-year-old bachelor Hubert Languet, envoy of the elector of Saxony, with whom he was to exchange a voluminous and invaluable correspondence in Latin for more than a decade. The stately and erudite Languet, one of the leading Huguenot figures of Europe, took what now seems a more-than-fatherly interest in Sidney's personal well-being, the development of his scholarship, and the friendships he established on the Continent. He saw in the brilliant young Englishman a potential leader in an effort he himself regarded as essential: to interest England in an alliance for the protection of European Protestants. After visiting Vienna for several months in 1573, Sidney set out in late August or early September on a brief trip into Hungary that extended into a three-month stay. His experience there is fondly remembered in The Defence of Poetry in a passage praising lyric songs: "In Hungary I have seen it the manner at all feasts, and other such meetings, to have the songs of their ancestors' valor, which that right soldierlike nation think one of the chiefest kindlers of brave courage." In his first letter to Sidney, dated September 1573, Languet chided him for not having revealed his plans: "When you left [Vienna] you said that you would not be gone for more than three days. But now, like a little bird that has forced its way through the bars of its cage, your delight makes you restless, flitting hither and yon, perhaps without a thought for your friends." When Sidney announced his intention to visit Italy, Languet, envisioning an even longer and more dangerous separation from his protégé, could win from him only a promise that he would not visit Rome. Some of this anxiety was quite practical: the more tolerant cities of northern Italy were reasonably safe for Protestant travelers, but this was not so farther south, where the Inquisition held sway. But Languet's letters reveal his fear that Sidney's youth and tolerant disposition would make him, despite events of the previous summer, susceptible to the persuasion of Catholics. Because of their reputation for religious and intellectual tolerance, Venice and the university city of Padua were natural destinations for Englishmen who wanted to see Italy. Again traveling with Bryskett and Madox, Sidney reached Venice in early November 1573. He spent most of the following year there and in Padua, with excursions to Genoa and Florence. In letters to Languet from Venice and Padua he recounted meeting his distant cousin Richard Shelley (an ancestor of the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, and a longtime resident of the city), an erudite man who was, in Sidney's phrase, "sadly addicted to Popery." In Venice he also met a variety of important Europeans. Sidney immersed himself in Italian culture--so much so that in one letter Languet addressed him as "you Italians," and Walsingham began to be concerned that the young man was wavering in his faith. The philosopher Giordano Bruno, who later traveled to Oxford under Sidney's auspices and dedicated verses to him, recorded that Sidney enjoyed an excellent reputation during this visit. Yet one of Languet's replies to a now-missing letter suggests that Sidney was not overly smitten with Venice's fabled charms, and in a 1578 letter to his brother Robert, Sidney roundly criticized the "tyrannous oppression" and "counterfeit learning" he observed in Italy, though he admitted to admiring Italian arms and horsemanship. By February 1574 Sidney was sufficiently prominent in Venice to sit for a portrait (now lost) by the Venetian master Paolo Veronese. Languet seems to have found it indifferently pleasing. There are now extant only two primary likenesses of Sidney, neither painted ad vivum: the youthful Longleat portrait, dated 1578; and the Penshurst portrait executed for his brother, Robert, probably in the 1590s. The renowned university at Padua, to which Sidney repaired in January 1574, provided a focus for his voluminous reading and improved his mastery of languages, particularly Latin. At Languet's suggestion he translated "Cicero into French, then from French into English, and then back into Latin again by an uninterrupted process." But he demurred at Languet's

recommendation that he study German: "Of the German language I quite despair, for it has a certain harshness about it." He complained that at his age he had no hope of mastering it, "even so as to understand it." He seems also to have studied astronomy and geometry--the latter because he had "always had the impression that it is closely related to military science." His reading included a vast range of subjects. According to John Buxton, he read works on Venetian government (considered the model of European nations), world history, a book on the Council of Trent, and collections of letters by Paolo Manzio, Bernardo Tasso, Pietro Bembo, and Lorenzo de' Medici--as well as several books on impresa, the emblematic devices that he would put to great creative use in his life and writings. Sidney also read widely in Italian poetry and criticism, which he chose not to mention to Languet. Like many of his contemporaries he held Italian literature in high esteem, and his work was significantly shaped by Italian influences. His reference in The Defence of Poetry to Dante's Beatrice (in the Paradiso rather than the Vita nuova) is the first by an Englishman. Jacopo Sannazaro, twice mentioned as an authority in The Defence of Poetry , through his Arcadia (1504) contributed to Sidney's understanding of pastoral romance. The valiant hero of Ludovico Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, (1532), also twice mentioned in the Defence, helped shape the characters of Pyrocles and Musidorus in the Arcadia . Though he resists the influence of Petrarch and his followers in Astrophil and Stella, Sidney's awareness of Petrarchism is everywhere apparent. In August 1574, after ten months in Italy, Sidney left Venice for Languet's house in Vienna, where he fell seriously ill. Nursed back to health by Languet, he spent the winter of 1574- 1575 enjoying the friendship of that city's important men. His most intimate friend at the time was Edward Wotton, whom Walsingham had appointed to a post in Vienna. The friendship would last until Sidney's death. At the beginning of The Defence of Poetry he recalls how during his stay in Vienna he and "the right virtuous Edward Wotton" studied horsemanship under the famed John Pietro Pugliano, the Italian maestro of the Emperor Maximilian II's stables: according to the fertileness of the Italian wit, [Pugliano] did not only afford us the demonstration of his practice, but sought to enrich our minds with the contemplations therein, which he thought most precious.... Nay, to so unbelieved a point he proceeded as that no earthly thing bred such wonder to a prince as to be a good horseman--skill of government was but a pedanteria in comparison. Then would he add certain praises, by telling what a peerless beast the horse was ... that if I had not been a piece of a
logician before I came to him, I think he would have persuaded me to have wished myself a horse. Beneath the levity of this passage--part of the fun is that in its original Greek the name Philip (phil-hippos) denotes love of horses--is a tribute to an art that Sidney, like Wotton, practiced to excellence. That he chose to discourse upon the exercise of the "peerless beast" as an introduction to his work about the "peerless poet" may seem peculiar unless we reader realize how highly he regarded horsemanship as an art of "well-doing" and not of "well-knowing" only. In sonnet 41 of Astrophil and Stella Sidney recalls the satisfaction of "Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance / Guided so well that I obtained the prize." In the Arcadia he explores the elements of horsemanship in greater detail, portraying the dynamics of control, the unspoken trust and communication between horse and rider, that makes of the two a single composite being.
Instructions from Leicester to hasten his return to England in the spring of 1575 altered Sidney's planned route through Burgundy and Paris. He followed Languet to Prague in early March, then joined Wotton in Dresden; after stops in Strasbourg and Frankfurt the company reached Antwerp at the beginning of May and arrived in England on the last day of the month--almost exactly three years after his departure. He found his family well, though still mourning the death, in February 1574, of Philip's youngest sister, Ambrosia, at the age of ten. This event had prompted from the queen a letter of uncharacteristically intimate condolence, in view of her usually aloof and ambivalent treatment of the Sidneys. The same letter commanded Philip's sister Mary, not yet fourteen, to court. Sir Henry, who had resigned his post as Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1571, was happily employed as president of the Marches of Wales, but his wife was seriously depressed through bad health, bereavement, and financial problems. Philip Sidney had left England "young and raw," in the words of his uncle Leicester; he returned in full manhood, having acquired a vast store of new experience and learning, a network of important Continental friends, and a knowledge of European political affairs that few Englishmen could match. Eager to enter the service of his country, he spent the next eighteen months in England, awaiting assignment. During his first summer at home he and his family witnessed the spectacular entertainments--pageants, speeches, hunts, tilts, games,

animal baitings, and more--presented daily to the queen during her three-week visit to Kenilworth, Leicester's estate near Warwick. Later that summer Sidney saw his father off to Ireland, where--much to Sir Henry's regret-- he had been reappointed Lord Deputy. Neglecting his correspondence with his European friends, Philip spent the autumn and winter in London, where he gave himself over to the pleasures at court; Elizabeth made him her cupbearer. Letters from Languet and other friends on the Continent were addressed to him at Leicester House, and an edition of Ramus's Commentaries (1555) was dedicated to him. During this period Sidney enjoyed a deepening friendship with Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex, Sir Henry's comrade in Ireland. The following summer he accompanied Essex back to Ireland and was reunited with Sir Henry. Essex soon fell victim to a plague of dysentery that swept Ireland, and he died on 22 September 1576 in Dublin. Sidney, who had received a letter summoning him to the earl's bedside, arrived too late. There he found a touching message, written during the earl's last days, in which he left Philip nothing except the wish that "if God do move both their hearts ... he might match with my daughter." The earl continued, "he is so wise, so virtuous, so goodly; and if he go on in the course that he hath begun, he will be as famous and worthy a gentleman as ever England bred." This daughter, Penelope Devereux, would become the "Stella" of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella. Although Essex's agent, Edward Waterhouse, repeated the hope that Philip and Penelope would marry, it is unlikely that Philip, much less his father or any of his mother's Dudley family, took this proposal seriously at the time. He was a man of twenty-one, Penelope a girl of twelve. Moreover, he longed for a political commission that would allow him to employ the knowledge and skills he had acquired during his three years on the Continent. If Astrophil is naively read as an undeflected representation of Sidney himself, he can be forgiven for his neglect of Penelope, though it is a neglect that he later regretted when she married Lord Robert Rich in 1581. In the second sonnet of Astrophil and Stella, Astrophil explains that his love for Stella was the result of a gradual process. In the thirty-third he blames himself for not having taken advantage of opportunity when it presented itself: But to myself myself did give the blow, While too much wit (forsooth) so troubled me, That I respects for both our sakes must show: And yet could not by rising Morn foresee
How fair a day was near, o punished eyes, That I had been more foolish or more wise. When news of the death of Maximilian II of Austria reached England in late October 1576, Sidney seemed to Elizabeth's advisers the logical choice to lead a special embassy to extend her condolences to the emperor's family. Ostensibly, Sidney's mission would be strictly formal; its informal purpose was entirely political. Hard upon this news came the death of the staunch Calvinist Frederick III, Elector of the Palatinate. Political uncertainty deepened when Spanish mercenaries in the Low Countries sacked and burned Antwerp as well as other smaller towns. While Sidney and his entourage visited the courts of Europe, he would use his audiences with heads of state to enlist their support for the creation of a Protestant League-- a mission that seemed now more urgent and propitious than before. After two months of preparations, Sidney's instructions were delivered on 7 February 1577, and he left for the Continent at the end of the month. Accompanying him were two experienced statesmen, Sir Henry Lee and Sir Jerome Bowes, among other career diplomats, and his personal friends Greville and Sir Edward Dyer, both of whom figure importantly in Sidney's literary career. At Louvain he charmed the Spanish governor, Don John, who (abetted by a group of English and Scottish exiles) was plotting to overthrow Elizabeth, free Mary, Queen of Scots, and marry her. From Brussels, Sidney's party traveled up the Rhine to Heidelberg, where he greeted Prince John Casimir, and from thence to Prague, where he accomplished his official mission of extending the queen's condolences to the family of Maximilian II. In Prague he also visited Edmund Campion, whom he must have known, if only casually, from their days at Oxford. To his tutor in Rome, Campion described Sidney, mistakenly, as "a poor wavering soul" who might be amenable to conversion to the Roman Church. It is clear that his interest in Sidney was opportunistic. Yet Campion's words provide no basis for saying, as John Buxton has, that Sidney was cynically "using all his tact and charm to learn from Campion's own lips how far conversion had led him on the path of disloyalty." Rather, though Sidney held Campion to be in "a full wrong divinity"--as he said of Orpheus, Amphion, and Homer in The Defence of Poetry--he probably admired the gifted and accomplished Jesuit, as many others did. Sidney genuinely sought "the prayers of all good men" and was happy to assist even Catholics who would ease the suffering of the poor. The catalogue of the long- dispersed library at Penshurst, recently discovered by Germaine Warkentin, lists an edition

of the Conference in the Tower with Campion, (1581) published shortly after Campion's execution. If in fact this book belonged to Philip Sidney, perhaps he hoped to find in it evidence that Campion had discovered the true religion in the hours before his death. On the return trip to England Sidney met with William I of Orange and discussed plans for a Protestant League. It is a testament to his growing international status--which S. K. Heninger, Jr. believes was so great as to unsettle Elizabeth herself--that William offered him his daughter's hand in marriage. The promised dowry included the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. Of course, Elizabeth would never have tolerated the marriage of one of her most powerful courtiers to a foreign royal family, no matter how close the interests of England and Orange might be, and the proposal was not advanced. In Ireland Sidney had witnessed firsthand Sir Henry's vigorous prosecution of the campaign against the Irish rebels. Returned from the Continent in the fall of 1577, he found himself obliged to defend his father's policies. To maintain the English garrison Sir Henry had ordered the imposition of a cess, or land tax, against certain lords living within the Pale. The Irish lords resisted the tax and through their effective spokesman, Thomas Butler, tenth Earl of Ormonde, argued their case before Elizabeth and the Queen's Council. Sidney entered the debate with his "Discourse on Irish Affairs," which survives only in a holograph fragment. To the modern reader Sidney's reasoning seems shockingly brutal, yet the repression he advocates is typical of English attitudes toward the Irish during Elizabeth's reign. He does argue that a tax that exempted no one would ease the suffering of the many, who had traditionally borne the brunt of taxation: "this touches the privileged ... persons [who] be all the rich men of the Pale, the burden only lying upon the poor, who may groan, for their cry cannot be heard." But this argument seems ingenuous, for further on he advocates a policy of complete subjugation, saying that severe means are more justified in Ireland than lenity. In the end Sir Henry's fortunes in Ireland worsened, and he was recalled as Lord Deputy in February 1578. In the years after 1577 Sidney's political career was frustrated by Elizabeth's interest in balancing the power of Spain against that of France, a balance she feared would be upset by the creation of a Protestant League. Thwarted in his political ambition, Sidney turned his attention briefly to exploration, investing in three New World voyages by Martin Frobisher. He also began, perhaps as early as 1578, what soon became an intensive writing career.

Among his first literary projects Sidney experimented with a type of drama that would reach its most sophisticated form in the seventeenth-century court masque. In 1578 or 1579, for the queen's visit to his uncle Leicester's new estate at Wanstead, he wrote the pastoral entertainment known as The Lady of May. The only published version, included in a 1598 edition of Arcadia, is not a text, but rather a detailed transcription of the production, perhaps done at Sidney's request. Ostensibly a tribute to Elizabeth, it is a work of some literary merit and considerable political and propagandistic import. The Lady of May, a young and beautiful maiden much pursued by country bachelors, faces an emblematic choice of marriage between two men she likes but does not love: the wealthy shepherd Espilus, a man "of very small deserts and no faults," and the pleasing but sometimes violent forester Theron, a man of "many deserts and many faults." The drama combines several elements that were to figure prominently as themes and issues in Sidney's later writings, especially Astrophil and Stella and the Arcadias: the Petrarchan stance of stylized veneration of a lady by her lover, the pastoral mode of setting and plot, and some dramatized speculations about the uses and abuses of rhetoric. But like many of his contemporaries, Sidney adapts convention to topicality; and Elizabeth's own unmarried status together with her apparent pleasure at the courtship of François, Duke of Alençon and (after 1576) of Anjou are deeply implicated in this superficially innocuous entertainment. The action was designed to favor Theron the forester over Espilus the shepherd, in whose country blandness Sidney intended to reflect Alençon. But "it pleased her Majesty to judge that Espilus did the better deserve" the Lady of May. Although Sidney left open the way to such a resolution--the final verses of Espilus and Theron allow for either choice--Elizabeth's selection of Espilus over Theron illustrates the degree to which Sidney and his queen saw things differently. Late in 1579 Sidney made his opposition to Alençon's suit explicit in an open letter to the queen. By that time the issue had focused the divided loyalties of English Protestants and Catholics. The queen had been considering Alençon's proposal of marriage for some time. Her childlessness invited a bitter struggle over succession, and many English Protestants feared a Catholic consort. Sidney's faction, which included his father and his powerful uncle Leicester, believed that a French marriage might lead to civil war. To the modern reader this letter, "Written ... to Queen Elizabeth, Touching Her Marriage with Monsieur," seems remarkably frank and fearless of the displeasure it might bring. Sidney

addresses the queen forthrightly as a courtier whose function it is to advise his monarch. He reminds her that the peace of the land, no less than her own power, depends upon the confidence of her subjects, a confidence likely to be eroded by an unpopular marriage. Although he does not mention Alençon's famed ugliness, as others did, he does rehearse much about her prospective husband that she already knew and did not need to hear from one of her subjects: that Alençon was "a Frenchman, and a papist"; that his mother was the notorious Catherine de Médicis, "the Jezebel of our age" (though he does not directly say that she had engineered the massacre of Huguenots in 1572); that Alençon himself had sacked La Charité and Issoire "with fire and sword"; and that his race was afflicted with congenital "unhealthfulness." Sidney concludes with the warning that "if he do come hither, he must live here in far meaner reputation than his mind will well brook, having no other royalty to countenance himself with; or else you must deliver him the keys of your kingdom, and live at his discretion." There is no evidence that Elizabeth took umbrage at the letter, but it is difficult to imagine that it did anything to smooth the troubled relationship that persisted between the Sidney family and the queen throughout Philip's lifetime. Perhaps Sidney's tone in the letter owes something to a liminal resentment he felt because of her niggardly treatment of his father, who, as president of the Marches of Wales and twice as her lord deputy of Ireland, had been among her ablest subjects. Perhaps too it reflects on an incident that embroiled Sidney's politics with his personal dignity. Greville reports that sometime in 1579 Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, a staunch supporter of Alençon's suit, had ordered Sidney off a tennis court in the presence of the French delegation, calling Sidney "a puppy." Sidney issued a challenge the next day, but the queen herself intervened to prevent the duel and reminded him of his inferior status--a rebuke that may have recalled to him as well that de Vere had married Anne Cecil after her father had found the Sidney family unworthy. Sidney was absent from the court the next year and probably spent much of the time at Wilton, his sister's home, composing the Old Arcadia. When he returned to court after a year in seclusion, Sidney presented Elizabeth with a 1581 New Year's gift of a "whip garnished with diamonds," signifying by this astonishing Petrarchan gesture his complete submission to the queen's will in the Alençon affair. That summer his personal fortunes received a blow when the countess of Leicester bore the earl a son, thereby depriving Sidney of both lands and title that he stood to inherit as Leicester's heir presumptive. On the following tilt day, Sidney bore the device S-P-E-R-A-V-I ("I hoped"), dashed through.

Around 1578 Sidney had begun writing poetry. It was an "unelected vocation," as he says in The Defence of Poetry , "in these my not old years and idlest times having slipped into the title of a poet." None of his works was published before 1590, four years after his death. This fact, together with the brevity and intensity of Sidney's writing career--no more than seven or eight years, during which he worked simultaneously on different texts--only complicates the problem of determining when his works were composed. Among Sidney's earliest ventures, undertaken with his friends Greville and Dyer, were attempts at writing a new kind of English poetry grounded not in accentual stress but in duration of syllables. The work that was in progress by October 1579, when Edmund Spenser reported it in letters to Gabriel Harvey. These experiments in quantitative verse, examples of which Sidney incorporated into the Old Arcadia, were efforts to make English verse conform to the rules of Latin prosody. Although they never exerted a significant influence upon English metrics, they have long interested scholars and critics. The dactylic hexameters of Old Arcadia 13 are an example of what Sidney achieved: Lady, reserved by the heav'ns to do pastors' company honor Joining your sweet voice to the rural muse of a desert, Here you fully do find this strange operation of love, How to the woods love runs as well as rides to the palace. In his correspondence with Harvey, Spenser also claimed that Sidney, Greville, and Dyer had formed an English Academy or Areopagus to advance the cause of the new metrics, a claim that has been investigated many times and is at present widely doubted. The years 1579 through 1584 represent the peak of Sidney's literary activity. The winter of 1579-1580 seems the best conjectural date for his composition of The Defence of Poetry , probably written in response to Stephen Gosson's School of Abuse, which was printed in the summer of 1579 and dedicated to Sidney without permission. The connection with Gosson's work, along with a reference to Spenser's Shepheardes Calender, also published in 1579 and dedicated to Sidney, indicate that Sidney began The Defence of Poetry in that year, whereas the sustained intensity of his argument would seem to make it equally likely that he completed the work in a relatively short time. It did not appear in print, however, until 1595, which saw two editions by different printers. William Ponsonby, the established printer for the Sidney family, entered The Defence of Poetry in the Stationers' Register on 29 November 1594 but

seems to have delayed publication until the next year. Before Ponsonby's text appeared, another edition, titled An Apology for Poetry, was published by Henry Olney. An unknown number of copies was sold before Ponsonby, claiming precedence, interceded and halted further sales. Ponsonby's edition was then printed and sold, and the title page of his edition was also fixed to some liberated copies of the Olney edition. The Ponsonby text and the De L'Isle manuscript at Penshurst form the basis of Jan van Dorsten and Katherine Duncan- Jones's definitive modern edition in Miscellaneous Prose of Sir Philip Sidney. (1973). The Defence of Poetry is undoubtedly the most important critical treatise on poetry written by an Englishman during the Elizabethan period. It has achieved the status of a classical text. Although it reflects Sidney's Protestantism, it is nevertheless a worldly work. Drawing on an extraordinary range of classical and Continental texts, Sidney sets out to defend "poor poetry" against its attackers and to argue positively that poetry, whose "final end is to lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate souls, made worse by their clayey lodgings, can be capable of," is the best vehicle for the "purifying of wit." He disposes his argument according to a traditional seven-part classical structure, beginning with an introduction or exordium and moving through the stages of proposition, division, examination and refutation to a final peroration, and including, as custom permitted, a digressio on a related issue. Sidney opens his argument by claiming that poetry gave rise to every other kind and division of learning. For this reason the Romans called the poet vates, "which is as much as a diviner, foreseer, or prophet," such as David revealed himself to be in his Psalms. With equal reverence the Greeks called the poet a "maker," as do the English (from the Greek verb poiein, "to make"). In all cases true poetry makes things "either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature." Nature's "world is brazen," Sidney argues; only the poets bring forth a golden one. Sidney next explains that the poet is able to create this heightened fictive world by coupling an idea with an image: "the skill of each artificer standeth in that idea or fore-conceit of the work, and not in the work itself. And that the poet hath that idea is manifest, by delivering them forth in such excellency as he had imagined them." The union of fore-conceit and image results in a poetic event that has extraordinary "energaic" capacity, that is, the power to move the human will and thus to motivate its own reproduction. Xenophon's Cyrus is then, a poetic creation so forceful that if readers comprehend the character, they will be prompted to reproduce its virtues in their own medium: "so far substantially it worketh, not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency as nature might have done, but to bestow
a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses, if [readers] will learn why and how that maker made him." It is the replicability of the poetic image among those who understand why and how it was created that distinguishes poetry from nature. The ongoing replication of poetic images is what enables our "erected wit" to mitigate against the effects of our "infected will." Sidney concludes this narration by presenting his central proposition, the crucial definition of the process of encoding fore-conceits in images to create energaic poetic constructs: "Poesy therefore is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word mimesis--that is to say,

100%	MATCHING BLOCK 45/50	SA	MA - English - SEM 1- Chaucer and the Elizabet ... (D143329215)

a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth--to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture- -with this end, to teach and delight."

This definition--a tightly composed amalgam of ideas lifted from Aristotle (mimesis), Plutarch ("speaking picture"), and Horace ("teach and delight")--with its emphasis upon activity, informs all the theoretical matter of The Defence of Poetry. In the section devoted to the divisions or kinds of mimetic poetry and their practitioners, Sidney conceives three types: divine poets who imitate the "inconceivable excellencies of God," of whom David, Solomon, and pagan poets--Orpheus, Amphion, and Homer, "though in a full wrong divinity"--are cited as examples; poets who imitate "matter philosophical," of which there are four subtypes (moral, natural, astronomical, and historical); and "right poets." Sidney is primarily concerned with the right poets: "these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate borrow nothing of what is, has been, or shall be; but range, only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be." They are arrayed in a hierarchy from "the most notable" heroic poets down to pastoral poets "and certain others, some of these being termed according to the matter they deal with, some by the sorts of verses they liked best to write in." But Sidney is quick to point out that verse is but "an ornament and no cause to poetry." Rather, the "feigning" of "notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching ... must be the right describing note to know a poet by. The right poet is then set off against other masters of "earthly learning" who claim to lead men to "virtuous action," an ancient contest developed at length in Aristotle's Poetics. The poet's principal competitors are two: the moral philosopher, a figure of "sullen gravity ... rudely clothed ... casting largess ... of definitions, divisions and distinctions" before him; and the historian, "laden with old mouse-eaten records," who knows more about the past than his
own age, who is "a wonder to young folks and a tyrant in table talk." The philosopher maintains that there is no better guide to virtue than he who "teacheth what virtue is; and teach it not only by delivering forth his very being, his causes and effects, but also by making known his enemy, vice, which much be destroyed, and his cumbersome servant, passion, which must be mastered." For his part the historian claims a significant advantage over the philosopher in that he teaches an "active" virtue rather than a "disputative" one. The philosopher delivers virtue "excellent in the dangerless Academy of Plato," but the historian "showeth forth [Virtue's] honorable face in ... battles." The philosopher "teacheth virtue by certain abstractions considerations," adds the historian, "but I only bid you follow the footing of them that have gone before you." Sidney can see no end to this tedious dispute and so interrupts it by noting only "that the one giveth the precept, the other the example. The poet, of course, "standeth for the highest form in the school of learning" because he is the moderator between the philosopher and the historian. Through the art of mimesis the poet unites in one event the philosopher's precept and the historian's example. Rephrasing his earlier argument on fore-conceit and image, Sidney proclaims that the poet gives "a perfect picture" of something, "so as he coupleth the general notion with the particular example." He then lists exemplary precepts that poets encode in speaking pictures: anger, wisdom, temperance, valor, friendship, remorse, pride, cruelty, and ambition. But the greatest of these is "the most excellent determination of goodness," as in Xenophon's "feigning" of the prince in Cyrus, in Virgil's fashioning of a virtuous man in Aeneas and in Sir Thomas More's representation of an entire commonwealth in his Utopia (1516). The reference to the Catholic More prompts a brief digression in which Sidney states a general tenet of mimesis he has not made before: if the poetic artifact is flawed, the fault lies with the poet, not with poetry. Having made this point, he caps his list by citing the practice of Jesus, who couched his teachings in lively stories. Because of its forcefulness, the poet's "feigned example" has as much capacity as the "true example" for teaching what is to be shunned or followed. Moreover, Sidney remarks wryly, by reading a representation of, rather than actually duplicating, the strategy of Darius's faithful servant Zopyrus, who severed his own nose and ears to persuade the Babylonians that he was a traitor, "you shall save your nose by the bargain." Conversely, the poet's "moving is of a higher degree than [the philosopher's] teaching," for which he cites as his authority Aristotle's comments on gnosis (knowing) and praxis (acting, doing) in the Ethics.
The poet emerges from this examination transformed from "moderator" to monarch. "

100%	MATCHING BLOCK 46/50	SA	013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 16 ... (D165066592)

Either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-enchanting skill of music,"

poetry has the capacity to transmute even horrors--"cruel battles, unnatural monsters"--into delightful experience. The effects of poetic invention are such that orators and prophets have employed it for their several purposes. Menenius Agrippa, Livy tells us, calmed the mutinous population of Rome not with "figurative speeches or cunning insinuations" but with a tale of the rebellious body attempting to starve the stomach and so hurting itself. Similarly, the prophet Nathan revealed to David a precept "most divinely true" by means of a feigned discourse. In a second examination section of The Defence of Poetry, Sidney considers the various subgenres in which poetry is arrayed, with a cautionary comment about overly rigid distinctions. At the very outset he warns against overdetermining such matters, noting that "some poesies have coupled together two or three kinds, as the tragical and comical, whereupon is risen the tragicomical." Anticipating the design of his Arcadias , he recommends Jacob Sannazaro and Boethius, who "mingled prose and verse," and others who "mingled matters heroical and pastoral." If severed genres be good, he concludes, "the conjunction cannot be hurtful." Sidney moves up the hierarchy of genres from the lowest to the highest, discussing pastoral, elegy, comedy, lyric, and epic or heroic, "whose very name (I think) should daunt all backbiters." Characteristically, he reserves his highest praise for the epic, whose champions- -Achilles, Cyrus, Aeneas, Turnus, Tydeus, and Rinaldo--"not only teach and move to a truth, but teacheth and moveth to the most high and excellent truth." Epic is, in short, "the best and most accomplished kind of poetry." He concludes this second examination with a summary of his major points: that poetry deals with universal considerations; that (unlike the historian and the philosopher) the poet is not confined to already delimited parameters of inquiry but brings his own "stuff" to the act of mimesis, so that he "doth not learn a conceit out of a matter, but maketh a matter out of a conceit"; that poetry teaches goodness and delight; and that the Scriptures--indeed Christ himself--employed poetry. All this indicates that "the laurel crown appointed for triumphant captains doth worthily (of all other learnings) honor the poet's triumph." Yet such reasoning is not likely to dissuade the misomousoi, the poet-haters, who wrongly identify poetry with rhyming and versifying, although, Sidney concedes, poetry often employs verse because "verse far exceedeth prose in the knitting up of memory." But laying this complaint aside, Sidney begins his refutation with the claim that poetry and poets stand accused of four principal crimes: that they divert men from the pursuit of "other more fruitful knowledges"; that poetry "is the mother of lies"; that poetry "is the nurse of abuse, infecting us with many pestilent desires"; and that Plato banished poets from his ideal commonwealth in the Republic. These charges are, of course, made by straw men whom Sidney will easily hew down. The first charge he has already demonstrated to be spurious, since of all learning poetry alone "teacheth and moveth to virtue." "I still and utterly deny," he writes, "that there is sprung out of the earth a more fruitful knowledge." The second charge, that poetry fosters lies, occasions a spirited rebuttal that anticipates several hallmark concepts of structuralist and poststructuralist assumptions about language, such as arbitrariness and difference. The confidence with which he addresses the third charge, that poetry fosters "not only love, but lust, but vanity, but (if they list [please]) scurrility," would seem to belie Astrophil's failed attempt to transmute his desire into spirituality. Nevertheless Sidney maintains that if love poetry leads man astray, we "need not say that poetry abuseth man's wit, but that man's wit abuseth poetry." Moreover, rather than enervating the spirit of warriors, implicit in the charge that it is the nurse of abuse, poetry is often "the companion of camps." Thus, Plutarch tells us, when Alexander went to war he left his teacher Aristotle behind but took Homer with him. Of the four charges against poets issued by the poet-haters, Sidney devotes the most space to refuting the final one, that Plato banned poets from his ideal republic. "But now indeed," he begins, "my burden is great; now Plato's name is laid upon me, whom, I confess, of all philosophers I have ever esteemed most worthy of reverence," for Plato "is the most poetical." Yet if Plato would "defile the fountain out of which his flowing streams have proceeded," Sidney says, "let us boldly examine with what reasons he did it." He claims that philosophers have made a "school-art" out of the matter that poets have conveyed "by a divine delightfulness," and then cast off their "guides, like ungrateful apprentices." Yet as Cicero noted, though many cities rejected philosophers, seven cities wished to claim Homer as a citizen. Simonides and Pindar made of the tyrant Hiero I a just king while, and here again Sidney follows Cicero, Plato was made the slave of Dionysius. For a clinching rhetorical effect Sidney, whose debt to Plato is everywhere apparent in The Defence of Poetry, reminds his readers that both Plato (in the Symposium and the Phaedrus) and Plutarch condoned the "abominable filthiness" of homosexuality.

Having thus exposed in Plato crimes far exceeding those of poets, Sidney rehabilitates his straw man. When he claims that in banning the poet from his republic Plato places the onus "upon the abuse, not upon poetry," one should remember that he began this passage by confessing that Plato was the most poetical of philosophers. Plato's strictures were directed toward practitioners of mimesis rather than mimesis itself: "Plato therefore ... meant not in general of poets ... but only meant to drive out those wrong opinions of the Deity (whereof now, without further law, Christianity hath taken away all the hurtful belief...) nourished by the then-esteemed poets"--as can be seen in the Ion, where Plato "giveth high and rightly divine commendation unto poetry." Indeed Plato, who "attributeth unto poesy more than myself do, namely, to be a very inspiring of a divine force," has been misread: witness Plato's mentor Socrates, who spent his old age turning Aesop's fables into verse, and Plato's student Aristotle, who wrote the Poetics--"and why, if it should not be written?" Nor Should one forget Plutarch, who in writing philosophy and history "trimmeth both their garments with the guards of poesy." Following this stirring refutation--actually a set piece with unanticipated ramifications for his own later work--Sidney considers, in a relevant digression, the lamentable condition of poetry in England, directing his criticism, characteristically, at poets rather than poetry. "Sweet poesy," he begins, "that hath anciently [claimed] kings, emperors, senators, great captains," and which had heretofore flourished in Britain, is in "idle England" now little more than flimflam, poets having "almost ... the good reputation as the mountebanks at Venice." "Base men," he asserts, "with servile wits undertake it ... as if all the Muses were got with child to bring forth bastard poets." Feigning as burdensome the task of defending poets and their work, only to be "overmastered by some thoughts" and thus yielding "an inky tribute to them," he defers authority in the matter of poetry to those who practice it. Restating the hugely problematic conditions of mimesis he had already presented in the Cyrus passage, he concludes that "they that delight in poesy itself should seek to know what they do, and how they do and especially look in the unflattering glass of reason" (emphasis added). For poetry must be led gently--or rather it must lead, as it cannot be acquired by "human skill." "A poet no industry can make," Sidney claims in a reaffirmation of the poet as vates, "if his own genius be not carried into it." Yet there are English poets who warrant commendation. Sidney is typical of his age in praising Geoffrey Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (circa 1385) but exceptional in
acknowledging that Englishmen of his time had not mastered Chaucerian metrics: "I know not whether to marvel more, either that he in that misty time could see so clearly, or that we in this age go so stumblingly after him." He also approves of the brief tragedies gathered in the Mirror for Magistrates (1563) and commends the lyrics of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who regularized the English sonnet form. None of this is controversial. However, Sidney's subsequent discussion of The Shepheardes Calender raises the question of how well, if at all, Sidney and Spenser were acquainted. He acknowledges that Spenser, who dedicated The Shepheardes Calender to him in 1579, "hath much poetry in his eclogues, indeed worthy of reading, if I be not deceived." In his correspondence with Gabriel Harvey, Spenser claimed to have had Sidney "in some use of familiarity." The two poets may have met at Leicester House, where Spenser was employed and where Sidney was a frequent guest at the time. Yet they were of vastly different social rank, Sidney being the earl's nephew and Spenser the earl's secretary. Sidney does not mention Spenser by name in his discussion of The Shepheardes Calender in The Defence of Poetry. Indeed, after praising its poetry, Sidney criticizes its author for the "framing of his style to an old rustic language." After his death in 1586, Sidney's influence upon Spenser was pervasive. Yet his only comments upon Spenser's work do not suggest the intimacy between them that Spenser claimed to enjoy. It is noteworthy that Sidney devotes more of his survey of English literature to drama than to poetry. He possessed an instinctive sense of dramatic structure, as The Lady of May demonstrates. Readers since Thomas Nashe have been impressed by the dramatic character of Astrophil and Stella, and the first version of Arcadia is divided into acts. Yet although he offers here the first example of sustained dramatic criticism in English, Sidney's discussion utterly fails to anticipate the maverick forms of English theater that were to explode with such brilliance in the decade after his death. Except for Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton's Gorboduc (1561), the first English tragedy in blank verse, which he endorses with qualifications, and the tragedies of his friend George Buchanan, Sidney dismisses the rest of English drama he has seen as "observing rules neither of honest civility nor skillful poetry." He criticizes English playwrights for failing to observe the rigid program of unities (time, place, and action), a prescription generally attributed to Aristotle, and he praises ancient exemplars such as Terence (Eunuchus), Plautus (Captivi and Amphitruo), and Euripides (Hecuba).

Though he has claimed to see no harm in mixed poetic genres per se, he is especially harsh in his comments on English tragicomedy, which, he remarks, is guilty of promiscuously "mingling kings and clowns" and "hornpipes and funerals." English comedy also fails to make the necessary distinction between delight and laughter, a distinction he develops in considerable detail. He concludes that he has spent too much time on plays because "they are excelling parts of poesy" and because "none [other poetry is] so much used in England, and none can be more pitifully abused." Just before his peroration Sidney returns to the subject of lyric poetry, "songs and sonnets," which poets should direct toward the Platonic end of "singing the praises of immortal beauty: the immortal goodness of that God who giveth us hands to write and wits to conceive." In a passage rife with implications for Astrophil and Stella , he complains of the wooden language of so many love poets who, "if I were a mistress, would never persuade me they were in love." He attacks pseudo-Ciceronianism at some length, allowing himself to stray "from poetry to oratory." But he finally excuses the slip because it allows him to include penultimately a tribute to the ease, grace, and beauty of the English language, which "for the uttering sweetly and properly [of] the conceits of the mind ... hath not its equal with any other tongue in the world." Apparently Sidney was serious in his private, concurrent hopes of introducing a quantitative metrics into English poetry, for he writes that of the two methods of versifying, by quantity and stress, "the English, before any vulgar language I know, is fit for both." Of other poetic qualities loosely grouped under the heading of rhyme, he argues that English is superior to other modern languages in its use of the caesura and in its ability to rhyme with masculine, feminine, and medial formations. The brilliant peroration to The Defence of Poetry is a masterly composite of summary, exhortation, and admonition. Every praiseworthy poem is full of "virtue-breeding delightfulness" and possesses all traits of learning; the charges against it are "false or feeble," and bad poetry is produced by "poet-apes, not poets." The English language is "most fit to honor poesy, and to be honored by poesy." Then, in the name of the Nine Muses, Sidney enjoins the reader of his "ink-wasting toy" to believe with Aristotle that poets were the keepers of the Greek divinities; with Pietro Bembo that poets first brought civility to mankind; with Joseph Justus Scaliger that poetry will sooner make an honest man than philosophy; with the German Conrad Clauser that in fables poets communicated "all
knowledge, logic, rhetoric, philosophy natural and moral, and quid non"; with Sidney himself "that there are many mysteries contained in poetry, which of purpose were written darkly"; and with Cristoforo Landino that poets are so loved by the gods that "whatsoever they write proceeds of a divine fury." Alluding wryly to the often fulsome tone of dedications and patron- seeking prefaces, he reminds potential defenders of poetry that poets will make them "immortal by their verses," that their names "shall flourish in the printers' shops," and that poets shall make laymen "most fair, most rich, most wise," so that their souls shall dwell with Dante's Beatrice and Virgil's Anchises. His concluding admonition, directed to anyone who might have "so earth-creeping a mind that it cannot lift itself up to look to the sky of poetry," is a masterpiece of tone, combining the witty with the deadly serious for an audience that knew both the triviality of much fashionable rhetoric and the crucial role of literature and language in resisting the monument- destroying power of mutability and relentless time. As for those who refuse to value poetry, in the name of all poets Sidney offers the malediction that "while you live, [may] you live in love, and never get favor for lacking skill of a sonnet; and when you die, your memory die from the earth for want of an epitaph." The Defence of Poetry emerges today, in the hindsight of literary history, as a fulcrum in Sidney's career, gathering, organizing, and clarifying the critical energies developed in his early work (such as The Lady of May and the experiments in quantitative verse) and discharging these energies into the mature creations of the 1580s, Astrophil and Stella and the revised Arcadia . Sidney's attractiveness as a critic, like that of John Dryden in a later age, derives partly from his authority as a practicing poet who speaks as much from experience with what works and what does not as from familiarity with abstract notions of art. This is not to say, however, that his later works simply actualize conceptual blueprints from The Defence of Poetry.

Unit 8: Philip Sydney: Astrophil and Stella 8.5 About Astrophel and Stella 8.6 Astrophel and Stella Summary 8.7 Astrophel and Stella Character List 8.8 Sonnets 8.8.1 Sonnet 1 (Summary and Analysis) 8.8.2 Sonnet 15 (Summary and Analysis) 8.8.3 Sonnet 27 (Summary and Analysis) 8.8.4 Sonnet 34 (Summary and Analysis) 8.8.5 Sonnet 41 (Summary and Analysis) 8.1 About Astrophel and Stella Astrophel and Stella (now called Astrophil and Stella), which includes 108 sonnets and 11 songs, is the first in a long line of Elizabethan sonnet cycles. "Sonnet cycles" were so named because they incorporated linked sonnets that generally described the progressive rise and fall of a love relationship. In other words, through a number of distinct but related poems, it was possible to infer a plot. Most of the sonnets in Astrophel and Stella are influenced by Petrarchan conventions, incorporating traditional methods such as addressing the moon and the world of sleep and dreams, mourning the lady's absence, praising her unique beauty, bemoaning her coldness, and highlighting the lover's frustrated longings. Like Petrarch's poems, Sidney's work displays a variation of emotion from sonnet to sonnet within the trappings of a vague but thematic narrative. Sidney's experiments with rhyme scheme in his sonnets also were deeply significant for English Renaissance poetry, essentially freeing the English sonnet from the inflexible rhyming requirements of the Italian sonnet form. Though the poems circulated widely in manuscript form, an official edition was not printed until 1591, five years after Sidney's death. This text, however, was considered to be inaccurate, and the most authoritative version came from a 1598 folio of Sidney's Arcadia, which contained an edition of Astrophel and Stella. This folio was supervised directly by Sidney's sister.

Sidney's sonnet sequence also exhibits clear references to Homeric epic, particularly Homer's Penelope. Some scholars have suggested that the 108 sonnets in the sequence represent the 108 suitors of Penelope, who play a game of striving to hit the Penelope stone in order to determine who can court her. The 119 poems are also just one number short of the number of months Ulysses spent trying to return home to Penelope in The Odyssey. The structure of the sonnet sequence, falling one month short of achieving Ulysses's journey home, can be seen as an emphasis on Sidney's failure in his pursuit of his own Penelope. It is generally accepted that the Stella of the poems is Penelope Devereux, later Lady Rich, and that Astrophel (Astrophil) is Sidney himself. Critics disagree, however, on whether Sidney's love for Penelope is real or merely literary, meant simply to emulate the style of Petrarch's poetic adoration of "Laura." Because neither Elizabethan historians nor Sidney's own early biographers gave any clear account of his relationship with the Stella of the poems, the sonnets themselves are the only key to contextualizing the poetry with his romantic life. The impossibility of a successful relationship between the two is a key theme of the sequence. The rift between the two is also expressed in the title of the piece. First of all, the title is made up of one name of Greek origin and one name of Latin origin: a clear disjunction. The presence of the grammatical copula "and" suggests that the two are a couple (such as "Tristan and Isolde" or "Romeo and Juliet"), which readers immediately realize is not the case. Even the names themselves, meaning "star-lover" and "star," describes a separation between the two: there will always be distance between the stars and those who love them. 8.2 Astrophel and Stella Summary

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Astrophel and Stella tracks the development of a love affair. Over the course of the sequence of poems, the protagonist and narrator Astrophel falls in love with the beautiful Stella, a woman who is virtuous, intelligent, and his idealized partner in life. Most of the sonnets consist of Astrophel as the speaker and Stella as the recipient of his speeches. Because Astrophel is the "author" of the sonnet sequence, we can perceive his inner thoughts and emotions but not much of Stella's. Stella's thoughts and personality are revealed to us only through her actions and occasional speeches to Astrophel. The sonnet sequence would be very different if Sidney had provided a more obvious indication of Stella's feelings. As it is, we partake mainly in just one side of the romance.

Although she initially does not return his affection, Stella tries to be kind to Astrophel, or at least, Astrophel believes that she is trying to be kind to him. Although she does not show him any particular favor in the first thirty or so sonnets, Stella never blatantly snubs him. Eventually Stella marries another man, a fact which Astrophel discovers in the middle of the sequence. Stella is extremely unhappy in her marriage, and Astrophel is even more attracted to her because of her personal sacrifice in the marriage. Stella eventually begins to return Astrophel's affection, but she never is overcome by her passion for him, something which Astrophel is unable to avoid doing. Near the end of the sonnet sequence, Astrophel attempts to coerce her into making love with him despite her marriage vows. He even steals a kiss from her while she is sleeping. Stella realizes that, even though she loves Astrophel, the affair cannot continue if Astrophel needs his passion to be consummated. As a result, Stella ends the relationship. Using clues in the sonnets and comparing them with Sydney's life, one can interpret that, with the exception of Sonnet 24, the first thirty sonnets of the sequence were written while "Stella" was still the unmarried Penelope Devereux. Though she did not give Sidney any overt marks of encouragement, she also did not express any displeasure with his romantic attentions. These first thirty sonnets probably encompass the poetry of over a year: some dating from before Sidney's exile from court, some from the time spent at his sister's estate, some from time spent seeing Stella at the home of one of their common relatives in the summer of 1580, and some dating from after his return to court. Sidney discovers Penelope's marriage to Lord Rich between the thirty-first and thirty-third sonnet. The thirty-third sonnet, with its anguished "I might," clearly describes Sidney's first interaction with Penelope as the now-married Lady Rich. As for Astrophel, he nevertheless resolves to continue in his love for Stella-that is, in spite of her marriage. If anything, the fact that she now belongs to another man makes him even more willing to love her and hopefully win her heart. Even though he knows that she is unhappy in her marriage, Astrophel is often consumed by his jealousy, realizing that Lord Rich always has access to Stella but never appreciates her. Stella first begins to express affection for Sidney around the sixtieth sonnet. It is at this point in the plot that their love affair finally begins to move forward. Astrophel no longer simply describes Stella's beauty and his slavery to Love; he describes real interactions that occur

between the two. But as soon as Stella admits her love for Astrophel, the affair becomes far more problematic. The first major conflict that immediately appears in their relationship is Astrophel's too-strong passion for Stella. Because she is already married, Stella is unwilling to enter into a physical relationship with Astrophel. She offers him her love on the condition that their relationship will be platonic. Astrophel is content with this arrangement for a few sonnets, but then his physical desire for Stella begins to overwhelm him. Several of the sonnets are devoted to this conflict: his rational mind recognizes that the only way to please Stella and continue the affair is to suppress his physical desire for her, yet Astrophel's desire supplants any of his rationality. He thus cannot help but wish to be with her physically. In Song 2, Astrophel kisses Stella while she is sleeping, an act which is the closest Astrophel ever gets to a physical consummation of his desire. The wording of the Song is very telling: the kiss is expressed as a sort of rape. Stella is incredibly angry at Astrophel's betrayal of her trust, but Astrophel is still unable to appease his desire. The stolen kiss prompts Stella's first major rejection of Astrophel. She admits that she loves him but insists that they can no longer see each other. Astrophel is tormented by her absence, but he is comforted by the knowledge that she still loves him. The relationship becomes even more dramatic and complicated as the sequence continues. The two are separated, but they continue in their love for one another. Astrophel, in particular, loves her even more deeply than ever. In Sonnet 93, he admits that he has harmed Stella in some way, and he is overwhelmed by guilt and sorrow for the next few sonnets. We never discover how Astrophel has harmed her (he never provides any specific details-is this all about the kiss?), but his actions and guilt make it clear that the relationship is now doomed to end forever. Stella falls ill in Sonnet 101, which spurs Astrophel to confess his love for her again. He serenades her under her window in Song 11, hoping that she will change her mind and stay with him. Despite his entreaties, Stella refuses to sacrifice her husband and her reputation. For the first time in the sequence, we see her true anger and disdain for Astrophel. She is appalled that he would continue in his attentions even while she has begged him not to do so. Finally, she dismisses him forever. Astrophel ends the sonnet alone and isolated, empty without Stella's presence. Yet, despite the tragedy of the end, Astrophel retains some happiness in the knowledge that he loved Stella and that she once loved him in return.

8.3 Astrophel and Stella Character List •

Astrophel Astrophel (now called Astrophil) is the protagonist of the poem, a man modeled after Sir Philip Sidney. The name "Astrophel" comes from two Greek roots: "astr-," meaning "star," and "phil-," meaning "lover." The "phil" in the name is also a pun on Sidney's first name, Philip. Astrophel is attracted to a married woman and tries in vain to pursue her. He experiences a range of emotions. First he is filled with hope at the prospect of gaining her love, but later he is filled with despair over his inevitable failure. After being refused by her again and again, he becomes angry and defensive, but he is unable to stop himself from trying to seduce her yet again. Astrophel's actions make him a sympathetic character for many literary critics. Above all, he is driven by love, and even the worst of his actions can be rationalized through the intensity of his love. Throughout Astrophel's lamentations and his praise of Stella, the reader finds empathy with his lost cause. Astrophel's characterization, however, also can be interpreted as an expression of a code of moral conduct constructed by Sidney. Astrophel is an example of a man who lets his emotions get the better of him, something that was nearly unforgivable for an established courtier during the time when Sidney was writing the sonnet sequence. His inability to control his emotions eventually leads him to total despair and the loss of Stella forever. Astrophel's characterization also can be read as a metaphor for Christian development. His journey from hope to despair is similar to the progression of human desire in Christian terms-or even a mirroring of the fall of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Astrophel's character also has its share of comic elements. Sidney wrote his sonnet sequence in the cradle of Elizabethan comedy and appeared to share his contemporaries' enthusiasm for dramatic gestures. Although Astrophel does not try to be funny, he is comic in his very seriousness. (Perhaps he is a Quixote.) No reader can take him as seriously as he takes himself and, though he remains sympathetic throughout the text, his dramatic ups and downs and complete absorption with his love make him a comic figure. Although Astrophel appears to have been based on Sidney himself, Sidney is able to detach himself from his character in order to capture not only the desperation but also the humor of a passionate lover. • Stella Stella is the heroine of the poem and the object of Astrophel's desire. The name "Stella" comes from the Latin word meaning "star." This definition has two possible meanings in the context of the poem. In one respect, the name could suggest Stella's superiority to Astrophel. As a star, Stella is a celestial being, far beyond the reach of a human like Astrophel. On the other hand, however, as a star, Stella is just one of a million other stars in the skies. She is not unique or, perhaps, not even worthy of Astrophel's attention. Stella corresponds to the stereotypical characterization of women in the Petrarchan tradition. Following this tradition, Stella has blond hair, black eyes, ruby lips, pearl teeth, and lily-white skin. In an unconventional twist, however, Stella is not the unapproachable ideal that appears so often in Petrarchan poetry. Instead, she is a real woman, made of flesh and blood, not necessarily a celestial star. As a result, readers can view glimpses of Stella's personality as she understands and returns Astrophel's love but eventually rejects him. Not only is she beautiful, but she also is intelligent and rational. When she begins to return Astrophel's love, she refuses to allow her emotions to overcome her reason. She recognizes that their love cannot exist and that she must guard herself. Unlike the stereotypical figures of desire in other poetry from the time, Stella is a complex character and, above all, a real woman. Corresponding to this expectation, Stella has a personal life and a background. Her past has shaped her into the woman whom Astrophel loves. Even if Stella is not Penelope Devereux herself, her personal life is still filled with all of the troubles of a normal person, rather than expressing a romantic ideal. She is trapped in a loveless and even abusive marriage, a fact that Astrophel emphasizes in Sonnet 24. The courtship between the two characters also takes place in real life, through common social circumstances. 8.4

Sonnets 8.4.1 Sonnet1: Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show, That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain, Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know, Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain, I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe; Studying inventions fine her wits to entertain, Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow

Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sunburn'd brain. But words came halting forth, wanting invention's stay; Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows; And others' feet still seem'd but strangers in my way. Thus great with child to speak and helpless in my throes, Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite, "Fool," said my Muse to me, "look in thy heart, and write." Summary I am truly in love and am desirous to show my sincerity through these verses so that she may understand the pangs of love and get some pleasure when she reads my poems. The pleasure may impel her to read, and by reading, she may realize my intense love for her. This knowledge may cause or engender pity, and pity may bring favour. The poet assures the lady that he has explored all modes of expression to find the most suitable words to reveal his frustration and misery. He has studied all fine inventions in order to entertain and please her. He has also read similar writings of other poet-lovers to ensure whether those expressions can bring some new ideas or fertilize his creative faculties which are now dried up by the heat or fire of passion or love. But the words came limping as they lacked the support of the invention, which is the child (product of Nature, and step-mother of imitation, which, in turn, is the product of the study of ancients). All such poets were alien (and unsuitable) to his purpose, and hampered his creative process. Sometimes his mind is pregnant with ideas but otherwise helpless because those words of ancients and other love-poets are inadequate to express the intensity of his Passion, and his pen starts playing truant, shirking its duty to write, and the poet beats his head in sheer anger or spite. While the poet struggles to invent words, the goddess of poetry, the Muse called him a fool but advised him to look within and write as passions flow and erupt.
Analysis

99%	MATCHING BLOCK 49/50	SA	II SEM B.A. ENG - 22DCBEN23 - THE ELIZABETHAN ... (D143333349)

The first sonnet of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella introduces the theme of love as well as his critical creed. This introductory sonnet performs the double function of praising Stella as the source of all poetical invention and providing a brief essay on the proper method of writing love poetry. The poet says that his love is sincere and true, and that he is writing these sonnets so that his beloved may read them and thus come to know of his intense love for her. He hopes that the sonnets would provide her pleasure, for he has taken a great many pains in writing them. After reading these sonnets, she would understand or know how intense his love for her is. And this knowledge would make her pity him, and pity would soon make her favour or love him. Thus by gradation she would come to love him. In order to attain this end, he has painted 'the blackest face of woe', i.e., to express the intense agony and anguish caused to him by her cruelty. The poet says that he made a thorough study of other poets, especially the ancients, to find suitable words for his purpose, so that his parched up brain may be fertilized, and he may be able to write better verses, but he was disappointed. He tried to imitate others, but such imitation hampered his poetic creation. With great difficulty, he could discover a few words and expressions but such expressions and words lacked dynamic vigour, and were inadequate to express the intensity of the passion. He realized that imitation of others cannot replace invention which comes from within, from the heart and mood of the poet, and not from reading the other poets. Nature is the mother of invention, while she is only the stepmother of imitation. The ancients imitated nature and they were able to write original poetry, but the moderns start imitating the ancients and therefore they are twice removed from nature. In Sidney's view, the poet who wants to write genuine love-poetry, must go to Nature and not slavishly imitate other love poets. The poet discovered that the poetry of all others which he studied rather hampered his poetic creation than being of any help. In fact, their poetry (which was mostly imitation) drove away from his own poetic faculties and this checkmated original creation. When the poet was pregnant with passion and wanted to express his ideas, he remained helpless and suffered intense agony. His pen started playing truant and could not write; as a result, he often beat his head, so intense was his pain and frustration. His frustration and suffering were like the pangs of a woman in labour-pains, but who is not able to deliver the child. But soon he realized the truth that really great poetry results only when the poet looks within, into his own mind, and expresses his personal emotions. His Muse advised him to look into his heart and write. His Muse is Stella, whose figure is imprinted on his heart, she is the real source of inspiration. This is the introductory sonnet, and in this sonnet, Sidney not only expresses his intense love for Stella (Penelope) but also intermingles his poetic creed so as to show how good poetry should be written. His love for Stella is sincere, but the sonnet as a whole reads like a piece of advice to the contemporary and upcoming love-poets as to how they should write. His poetic creed gets mingled up with his love for Stella, and thus lacks the purity a love poem normally shows.

The structure of the sonnet is Petrarchan, divisible into octave and sestet with a pause in between. His originality lies in the fact that he has used twelve-syllabled lines instead of the usual ten-syllabled. The rhyme scheme is abab, cdcd, efef, gg. The rhyme scheme is seemingly Shakespearean, but the octave consists of one sentence and the subject "I" comes in the fifth line. The two quatrains are interlinked to form a single whole (octave) by the use of strongly stressed participles—loving, turning, studying, etc. In the sestet he rejects imitation and lays stress on the invention. The development of thought is logical, but as a love-sonnet, it lacks the smoothness, the harmony and the melody. Thought supervenes the flow of emotions. 8.4.2

Sonnet 15: You that do search for every purling spring You that do search for every purling spring Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flows, And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which grows Near thereabouts, into your poesy wring; Ye that do dictionary's method bring Into your rimes, running in rattling rows; You that poor Petrarch's long-deceased woes With new-born sighs and denizen'd wit do sing: You take wrong ways; those far-fet helps be such As do bewray a want of inward touch, And sure, at length stol'n goods do come to light. But if, both for your love and skill, your name
You seek to nurse at fullest breasts of Fame, Stella behold, and then begin to endite. Summary This sonnet is addressed to contemporary protestors who seek the aid of the Muses and search for inspiration from the poetry of the classical poets and their stock images. Thus they write imitating the style and modes of the ancients and use as images all objects on Mount Olympus and from the waters flowing of from the fountain Parnassus, whether sweet or bitter. And then there are others who use the dictionary methods to choose and select words to make noisy rhymes, and others who follow Petrarch in expressing their feelings in the conventional mode, though the great poet is long dead. Sidney seems to criticize contemporary poets like Gascoigne and Wharton (without naming them) who make extensive use of dictionaries to find suitable words for their rhymes. The result is awkward and rhymes make rattling sounds. He says that they are mere plodders and lack invention. (Sidney calls them almost dullards devoid or bankrupt of creative faculties). Sidney goes on to mention those who still continue to sing their woes as Petrarch who is long dead; such poets lack invention and are mere imitators. Their poems are full of images of sighs, woes (taken from Petrarch), stolen from the great poet though they wish to pass for great 'wits'. But they are wrong to seek the far-fetched help of others in a slavish manner. But (perhaps they are unaware) the stolen (borrowed) parts get revealed quickly; such poets lack inspiration, real or true feeling. Their process of getting fame with the help of borrowed material comes to nothing. They stand exposed. In the last lines, the poet sums up his ideas. Look within and start writing – they should look at the beautiful (breastfull) image of their Stella (beloved), real or imagined and then write — because there lies the real source of inspiration. Once again Sidney brings Stella before the readers for she is equated with the classical Muses. She is a better, rather true, source of inspiration. Analysis Like Sonnet 1, this sonnet too is an exposition of Sidney's poetic creed, and also a compliment to his beloved Stella, whom he considers to be his true Muse who, (unlike the Muses invoked by the ancients) lives in the heart of the poet, and it is she who is the real source of inspiration. The poet criticizes the contemporary poets who try to seek inspiration from the ancients or the Italian poet Petrarch. They freely borrow their images and rhetorical devices to embellish their verses. Some of them use dictionaries to find suitable words for their rhymes. All their

borrowed material is soon exposed. This also shows that these poetasters are bankrupt of inherent poetic ability nor do they have any real inspiration. Their verses are thus hackneyed and stale having no freshness of a true poetic genius. The frequent use of dictionaries is still worse. They hunt for rhyming words and alliterative words to decorate their verses. This practice makes their poetry look artificial and consequently boring. Their main interest seems to discover rhyming words whether they make any sense or not. Sidney advises such poets to give up their practices, instead of seeking far-fetched help, they should seek inspiration from within—from their own feelings and emotions. They should look into their heart and write. Sidney is closer to the Romantics who gave importance to their own feelings — poetry was considered to be a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". For Sidney, 'Stella' is his true Muse. She inspires him to write. Thus the sonnet becomes both an exposition of Sidney's poetic creed and a great tribute to his beloved. The structure of the sonnets is Petrarchan. It is divided into an octave often followed by a sestet with a pause in between. Sidney's rhyme scheme varies from sonnet to sonnet, sometimes it is Petrarchan, and sometimes he follows the English pattern with a little modification. The rhyme of this sonnet is abba, abba, ccde, ed. A Shakespearean sonnet follows abab, cdcd, efef, gg rhyme-scheme with three quatrains followed by a rhymed couplet which sums up the idea. Sidney feels that the poets should seek inspiration from within their own mind and heart and express their own feelings arid emotions as they flow out rather than slavishly imitating the method or the style of the ancients or foreign poets. They are at liberty to use any rhyme scheme which may beautifully embody their feelings, restricting to the overall unity and the fixed number of lines, i.e., fourteen, if they choose to write a sonnet. They can use any rhyme scheme and use any number of lines if they wish to write a lyric or a song. 8.4.3 Sonnet 27: Because I oft, in dark abstracted guise Because I oft, in dark abstracted guise Seem most alone in greatest company, With dearth of words, or answers quite awry, To them that would make speech of speech arise,

They deem, and of their doom the rumor flies, That poison foul of bubbling pride doth lie So in my swelling breast that only I Fawn on myself, and others do despise. Yet pride, I think, doth not my soul possess, Which looks too oft in his unflatt'ring glass; But one worse fault, ambition, I confess, That makes me oft my best friends overpass, Unseen, unheard, while thought to highest place Bends all his powers, even unto Stella's grace. Summary In this sonnet, Sidney explains how, even in the court, he remains lost in the thoughts of Stella, and the courtiers ignore him. He finds himself alone even when he is in the Queen's court with a large company. The lords make speeches on various subjects, and when he is not able to answer them, they consider him proud and his reputation as a courtier suffers; they attribute his silence to pride, and that I love myself, and despise others. This foul rumour flies in the court like poison. Sidney asserts that he is not at all proud or haughty—the fact which is much too obvious, yet he has one worse fault or defect, i. e., he is ambitious, he confesses. This fact itself makes many friends ignore him. He feels that because of his intense love, he has been ignoring the claims of his friends. Though he is among friends, but because his thoughts are fixed on Stella, his friends remain unseen, their conversation remains unheard, while his thoughts mount to the highest place; all these faculties and powers are bent upon one object; to seek Stella's favour. Thus reason gives way to passion. Here all his thoughts are being directed by Stella who has some mesmeric power impelling the poet's thoughts to focus on her only and ignore all other company. The poet regrets his conduct in the court but he attributes all his failures as a courtier to the influence of Stella. Analysis Sonnet 27 shows Sidney as a courtier and statesman who is also overwhelmed by a passion for Stella, who is constantly present in his mind and often distracts his mind while he is in the company of many noblemen, lords and ladies in the Queen's court.

Among such a large gathering of great men, the poet-feels, a sense of loneliness. He finds no words to respond to the queries made by other nobles, in fact, his mind is overshadowed by the thoughts of his beloved so that he cannot take an active part in political matters or discussions, as is expected of a courtier and statesman. His silence is consequently misconstrued and their judgments adversely affect his reputation as a diplomat. The pun on the word 'doom' which means judgment, and also his 'doom' as a courtier, as it engenders all sorts of rumours that he is vain or proud. But the poet says that whatever else he might be, he is not at all proud nor does he nourish any dislike towards others. However, he confesses that he has one weakness or defect – he nurses ambition. Again the word 'ambition' has dual meanings: (i) ambition to rise high to get the monarch's favour, and (ii) ambition to possess 'Stella' or to win her love. Thus his mind continues to oscillate between two nodal targets. This situation causes the loss of his best friends who simply ignore him. All the same his friends remain unseen and unheard (metaphorically) while all his thoughts are inclined towards (or fixed on) Stella in an endeavour to seek her favour. Stella's magnetic personality seems to have so mesmerised him that the poet can think of none else but Stella. The question that we should pose to ourselves is: whether or not Stella's influence on the poet lover (who is a courtier and an ambitious diplomat) is negative–causing hurdles in his advancement as a career diplomat. The sonnet is self-exploratory and is autobiographical. The lover Astrophil is fully conscious of the blatant neglect of his true role as a courtier, in the chess game between reason and passion, it is the latter which triumphs. The court throbbed with cheerful pleasantries, discourses and speeches about England's relations with other countries, English Empire was expanding. Political matters engaged astute minds. Here was Sidney, whose thoughts were fixed on Stella. Did the passion for the lady have any constructive and positive influence on the poet? Astrophil knows it but can't help loving the lady. Astrophil is at once inspired by and degraded by his love for Stella.
8.4.4 Sonnet 34: Come, let me write Come, let me write. 'And to what end?' To ease A burdened heart. 'How can words ease, which are The glasses of thy daily vexing care?' Oft cruel fights well pictured forth do please. 'Art not ashamed to publish thy disease?' Nay, that may breed my fame, it is so rare. 'But will not wise men think thy words fond ware?' Then be they close, and so none shall displease. 'What idler thing, than speak and not be heard?' What harder thing, than smart and not to speak? Peace, foolish wit, with wit my wit is marred. Thus write I while I doubt to write, and wreak My harms on ink's poor loss; perhaps some find Stella 's great powers, that so confuse my mind. Summary The poet asks his heart to get ready to write. Reason tells him, to what purpose, or what for? The heart replies that it wishes to unburden itself (Reason) — How can the words reduce the burden as they are the mirror, an insight to his misery (Heart) — well-painted conflict is certainly pleasing. The reason asks if he would not feel ashamed to make his woes caused by wooing a lady who refuses to relent. The heart argues that his poems may bring fame instead of shame, for fame is so rare. The reason rejects this contention and argues that wise men will consider his love affair as something foolish, a mere trifle. The reason advises that such things matters should be kept as a guarded secret so that no one knows. Thus reason is not against expressing his thoughts and feelings in verse, but such matters should be kept private and not made public. The heart has yet another argument. Is it not a foolish thing to speak (write verses) and be not heard by anyone? The poet compares the heart to a speaker, What's more, idle thing for a speaker to go on speaking with none to hear. He finally asks his faculties to cease, for reason has silenced all his eloquence. Even after this, he wants to write, but now doubts have started sneaking in. However, he feels that he can release (give vent to) all his pent-up desires and thoughts, his frustration and

disappointments by writing—making or causing a huge loss of ink. His hopes of winning Stella are just a dream; instead of inspiring him, Stella is now confusing his mind and thoughts. Stella is glorious she is almost a goddess. But she is now confusing the poet's mind. He remains undecided (after the preceding dialogue) whether he should continue to write or not or whether he should remain content with his usual way of admiring her. Analysis This sonnet is in the form of a dialogue between reason and heart—almost an inner conflict. While the poet's heart impels him to write, Reason checks him. Aristotlianism comes into the progression of the poem. Heart wants to unburden itself by writing verses which will release his pent-up emotions and thus ease his mind. Reason argues as to how verses will ease his mind while they are the mirrors of his frustration and woe. On the other hand his heart says that beautifully painted conflict will please Stella. Reason asks him if he is not ashamed to print and make public his weakness and woes. Heart responds that his verses may bring him fame which is rare. The poet's reason counters this argument by saying that all wise men will consider his verses and pleas as foolish trifles. The heart suggests that if such pleas of love are kept secret, no one shall know and consequently they will displease none. Once again the heart-shoots another arguments that it is mere foolishness or an indication of idleness to speak out and at the same time wish not to be heard; it is certainly hard and difficult to remain silent and not utter a word of protest against torment and torture one undergoes. However in this debate reason wins and the poet's mind is silenced. But then he writes but now he lacks confidence and doubts overwhelm him as he wastes ink while expressing his miserable condition which he attributes to the magnetic powers of Stella, his goddess, and remains in the stake of mental and emotional confusion. It is a fascinating sonnet which reveals the lover's miserable plight. He wants to ease his mind by writing, but reason cautious him against his foolish idea of making his passions and related weaknesses public. No one will appreciate his verses, wise men may even ridicule him and make fun of his trifles. Astrophil finds himself trapped and feels that all this situation is caused by Stella who has great and overwhelming power. Aristotle has given primacy to intellect and reason, as against emotions and passions. In the neo-Platonic ladder passions are earthly and man is no better than beasts, if he does not use the higher faculties. However, Sidney allots a much higher status to poets in his Apology for Poetry. 8.4.5 Sonnet 41: Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance Guided so well that I obtained the prize, Both by the judgment of the English eyes And of some sent from that sweet enemy, France, Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance, Town-folks my strength; a daintier judge applies His praise to sleight which from good use doth rise; Some lucky wits impute it but to chance; Others, because of both sides I do take My blood from them who did excel in this, Think nature me a man of arms did make. How far they shoot awry! The true cause is, Stella looked on, and from her heavenly face Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race. Summary The poet says that today he won the prize, guiding his hand, his lance and his horse extremely well and with great skill. The poet's triumph aroused great debate among the spectators. The assembled spectators included the English and the French nobles. All argued as to the possible causes of his victory. The spectators give different reasons for the poet's success. The townsfolk admired his skill and horsemanship, as well his strength. More discerning judges attributed his success as well as praise his great skill which he had acquired by constant practice. Those who believe in luck attribute it to mere chance. Some others believed that he had inherited a lot of talent from both of his parents, i.e., the father and the mother. (Sidney's ancestors on both sides were excellent men-at-arms and excelled in many tournaments).

The poet wonders at their guesses and says that they all miss the target and they fail to know the true cause. The poet himself gives out the secret. The true cause was the presence of Stella whose heavenly face sent forth beams that guided him and brought him success in the tournament. Thus he attributes his success to Stella's divine presence. Once again he pays a great tribute to the lady whom he loves. Analysis In this sonnet, we find Sidney as an experienced soldier taking part in tournaments, jousts and duels which were a common affair. Such contests were often watched by the Queen and the nobility. Here the sonnet is autobiographical. The poet describes his triumph in a tournament. He makes a special mention of the envoys from France (sweet enemy) who took part in the tournament. The poet on the horse which was under full control guided his lance at the target thus winning the prize to the dismay of the French envoys. It was a stiff competition, and the victory was hailed by all the spectators who attributed his victory to luck or regular practice or the skill he had inherited from his parents and grandparents, both on the paternal and the maternal sides. The poet however says that the true cause of his success was not what the spectators believe, but it was the presence of Stella whose 'heavenly face' sent force radiance that enabled him to emerge successful in the tournament. What he means is that Stella's presence was a great source of inspiration that brought him the prize. Thus he pays the highest tribute to 'Stella' whose 'heavenly face' is the guiding star. Sidney was a complex amalgam of a statesman, courtier, soldier, diplomat a literary theorist and lover. Only on rare occasions could he be just one. Even in this autobiographical sonnet he expostulates on his skill as a soldier fighting his adversaries in a tournament and goes on to describe his ancestral lineage and ends up with a compliment to his "Stella' whose heavenly face' brought him the coveted prize. In fact in the entire sonnet sequence, we have not a single sonnet that reveals just one facet of his personality. Had he lived longer, we might have had more poems without any mixture of multiple ideas. However, his Apology for Poetry shows him as an actuate literary critic and
theorist; there is no diplomat, soldier or lover intervening in the flow of his thoughts and ideas on the subject.
Unit 9- Christopher Marlowe: Edward II 9.1 Introduction 9.2 About the Author 9.3 Critical Appreciation of Edward-II 9.3.1 Edward II: Scene-By-Scene Interpretation 9.3.2 Significant Features of Edward II 9.1
Introduction Christopher Marlowe was one of the greatest writers of the Elizabethan era. Even Shakespeare had payed a tribute to him through his play As You Like It in which he has quoted a line from Marlowe's play. Marlowe had a great impact on Shakespeare which is very clear from the fact that Shakespeare in his plays used lines that were there in Marlowe's plays. Edward II is a historical play about the assassination of the King by his Queen and the Barons. He portrayed the Saint Bartholomew's day massacre in his very vivid work which was named The Massacre at Paris. This unit discusses Edward II in detail. 9.2
About the Author Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) was an Elizabethan poet and playwright at the forefront of the 16th century dramatic scene. Scholars believe that his works influenced playwrights like William Shakespeare and dramatists who succeeded him. Christopher Marlowe was born in Canterbury (England) in 1564. Christopher Marlowe's literary career spanned for less than six years. He lived for only twenty-nine years. He has left his indelible mark through his famous literary work like The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus. Marlowe went to King's School where he was awarded a scholarship. With the help of this scholarship he managed to study at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge until 1587. In 1584 Marlowe received his Bachelor of Arts degree. However, in 1587 the university did not grant him a Master's degree. His regular absence from college along with the belief that he had converted to Roman Catholicism or would soon join some college elsewhere brought

him some bad name. It was only after the Privy Council wrote a letter to the university declaring that Marlowe was now engaged in 'matters touching the benefit of his country,' that he was finally awarded his master's degree. Conspiracy theorists love to believe that Marlowe was a secret agent. The exact nature of Marlowe's service to England was never clearly specified by the Council. So the letter sent to Cambridge aroused much curiosity and speculation, leading many to believe that he was engaged as a secret agent. Perhaps he was working in the intelligence service of Sir Francis Walsingham; though no direct proof could substantiate this theory. Yet the Council's letter spells out clearly that Marlowe indeed was serving the government in some discreet manner. The records available in Cambridge for the period when Marlowe studied, shows that Marlowe was absent from the university for substantial period, suspiciously much longer than regulations permitted. Moreover, his dining room accounts suggest that he spent lavishly on food and drink which was impossible to afford in his limited scholarship income. Such behaviour indicates that he might have some other source of income. Yet with such limited evidence and rampant speculation, the mystery only turned deeper regarding the kind of service that Marlowe offered to the Queen. It will remain unknown as to whether Marlowe was a spy or not; but after obtaining his Master's degree, Marlowe settled in London and absorbed himself in full-time writing. Early Writing Career After 1587, Christopher Marlowe settled in London. He was engaged in writing for theatre and was also probably engaged in occasional government service. It is believed that his first play was Dido, Queen of Carthage, but it was not published until 1594. However, scholars believe that it was written while he was still a student at Cambridge. Company records suggest that the play was performed by the Children of the Chapel (which was a company of boy actors) between 1587 and 1593. Marlowe's next play the two-part Tamburlaine the Great was published in 1590. Records suggest this was Marlowe's first play to be performed for a mass audience on the regular stage in London. It is considered to be the first English play composed in blank verse. It is also benchmarked as the beginning of the mature phase of Elizabethan theatre. Nevertheless, it was the last of Marlowe's plays to be published.

It must be mentioned here that there is serious disagreement among Marlowe scholars with regards to the order in which plays after Tamburlaine were composed. Some insist that Doctor Faustus immediately succeeded Tamburlaine, after which Marlowe focused on writing Edward the Second, The Massacre at Paris, and ending with The Jew of Malta. As per the Marlowe Society's chronology, the sequential order of his plays is The Jew of Malta, Doctor Faustus, Edward II and The Massacre at Paris. Although the chronological order suggested that Doctor Faustus (1604) was first to be performed and The Jew of Malta (1633) the last one. The Plays 1. The Jew of Malta

The Jew of Malta (whose full title is The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta)
has a prologue that is delivered by a character called Machiavelli. The play depicts the life of Jew Barabas, who is the richest man on the island of Malta. After his wealth is seized, he puts up a brave fight until his death with the government to regain his lost wealth. However, finally he meets his end at the hands of Maltese soldiers. The play highlights the religious conflict. It is based on intrigue and revenge. It is believed that The Jew of Malta has a major influence on Shakespeare's famous play The Merchant of Venice. The central character, Barabas, is considered to be the main inspiration for Shakespeare's creation of Shylock, his main character in The Merchant of Venice. The play also has the distinction of being the first successful tragicomedy or black comedy. Barabas is a complex character. He has garnered mixed reactions from the audiences. Critics have had extensive debate about the portrayal of Jews in The Jew of Malta. The play is full of unseemly characters, and it ridicules the oversexed Christian monks and nuns. It has a pair of greedy friars who are keen on usurping Barabas' wealth. 2. Edward II Edward II is a historical play. The full title of
the play is The Troublesome Reign and Lamentable Death of Edward the Second, King of England, with the Tragicall Fall of Proud Mortimer.

The play is about the deposition of England's
King Edward II by his barons and the queen. They all resented the undue influence that the king's
men had over his policy matters.

Edward II is a tragedy. The play depicts a weak and flawed monarch. It is believed that this play paved the way for Shakespeare's more mature historical compositions like Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V. 3. The Massacre at Paris The Massacre at Paris is a short work. Interestingly, the only extant text of this play is a reconstruction from memory, or 'reported text,' of the original performance. Due to its unsystematic documentation the play is more or less half the length of Edward the Second or even The Jew of Malta. The play comprises mostly serious action with little concern to characterization or even to quality verse. For the above-mentioned reasons, the play has not managed to gain much prominence unlike Marlowe's other works. The Massacre at Paris portrays the events of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre which took place in 1572. In this massacre, French royalty and Catholic nobles planned the murder and execution of protestant Huguenots. 4. Doctor Faustus Marlowe is largely remembered by readers and critics for his successful play Doctor Faustus. The complete title of the play is The Tragicall History of Doctor Faustus. The play is based on the German Faustbuch. Doctor Faustus is considered to be the first dramatized version of the Faust legend. It narrates about a man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for power and knowledge; though many versions of the story can be traced back to as early as the 4th century. Nevertheless, Marlowe deviates significantly by making his hero incapable of repentance and
have his contract annulled at the end of the play.
Faustus is warned to do so throughout the play by another Marlowevian interpretation —a Good Angel. However, Faustus chose to ignore the angel's advice throughout the play. At the end of the play, Faustus is shown as repenting for his actions but unfortunately, it is too late as the Devil's agent has already arrived to collect his soul. Arrest and Death of Marlowe Christopher Marlowe's atheism resulted in his arrest for just that 'crime' in 1593. Atheism was a serious offense in those times and the only penalty that was meted out was burning at the stake. Interestingly, despite the seriousness of the charge Marlowe was not put behind
the bars nor was he tortured. He was rather released on the condition that he would report every day to an officer who was part of the court. But on 30 May 1593, Marlowe was killed by a man named Ingram Frizer. He was assisted by Nicholas Skeres and Robert Poley. All the three men were related to one of the many Walsinghams—including Sir Francis Walsingham (the same man who had appointed Marlowe in the secret service). Popular belief suggests that the three spent the day together with Marlowe in a lodging house. But then a fight broke out between Marlowe and Frizer over the bill. And the fight took a sharp turn when Marlowe was stabbed in the forehead and was immediately killed. Conspiracy theories have many stories to offer from being a spy to an atheist but the real reason for Marlowe's death is yet to be discovered. However, it is unanimously agreed that Marlowe was a contemporary of Shakespeare with significant literary works to his credit. 9.3
Critical Appreciation of Edward-II In this section, we will critically analyse the play Edward-II. Edward II: Historical Background The historical Edward II (AD 1307–27) lacked the royal dignity that his father (Edward I) possessed. He even failed miserably as a king. Edward II was expected to carry forward his father's war with Scotland. But unfortunately, he displayed his incompetency as a soldier. The dissatisfied barons, not in favour of Edward as Prince of Wales, decided to curtail his royal power from the beginning of his reign. Edward brought himself more wrath by extolling money and other rewards upon his male favourites while other deserving people went unnoticed. Such unpopular ways of running the empire only cost Edward his life. Edward I had dreamt of a unified British world. But his dream immediately got disintegrated under Edward II. Rebellion of the barons led way for Robert Bruce to win back much of Scotland. However, finally in 1314, Bruce managed to defeat the English forces completely at the battle of Bannockburn. This Scottish independence continued until 1707, when the union of England and Scotland finally took place. History suggests that Bruce is responsible for inciting a rebellion in Ireland.

Edward II felt elated while he was surrounded with outsiders and sycophants that brought around the same memories that haunted the reign of Henry III. History does mention of one Piers Gaveston, a young man who was exiled by Edward I for exercising undue influence on the then Prince (Edward II). He was also considered to be his homosexual lover. Gaveston wielded strong influence on the court and administrative decisions after he was recalled by Edward once he occupied the throne. However, such contemptible decisions in courtly matters let the magnates to unite in opposition under the king's cousin, Thomas (Earl of Lancaster). The Parliaments of 1310 and 1311 imposed restrictions on the power of Edward and sent Gaveston to exile. Immediately the next year, in 1312, the barons revolted. This rebellion also saw Gaveston being murdered. Fortunately, a full rebellion was evaded by making Edward accept further limitations to his sovereign powers. After this incident, Earl of Lancaster shared the responsibility of governing the nation along with Edward. Soon afterwards, the king once again fell prey to the influence of another licentious person, Hugh Dispenser. In the year 1322, Edward displayed unexpected resolve and brought together an army to face the Earl of Lancaster at the Battle of Borough bridge. The war saw Edward emerging as winner who executed Earl of Lancaster. Edward II along with Dispenser continued ruling for a while but again they came across many enemies. So immediately some knights and barons were executed and many more were exiled for rebellion. Making things more complicated there were problems in Gascony. Hence, Isabella (Edward's queen) was sent to negotiate French king Charles IV (her brother) to bring out a solution to the problem. But Isabella got involved in a romantic relationship with Roger Mortimer who was one of the disaffected barons of Edward. Instead Edward was convinced and persuaded to send his son to France to follow up on the negotiation. In 1326, Isabella and Roger Mortimer invaded England and imprisoned Edward. Edward II left his throne and, Edward III (his son) replaced him and took over the kingship in 1327. Edward II was finally murdered at Berkeley castle. Sir Richard Baker, historian and religious writer in his A Chronicle of the Kings of England, while mentioning about Edward I asserts his indictment against Edward II. He writes: 'His great unfortunateness was in his greatest blessing; for four sons which he had by his Queen Eleanor, three of them died in his own lifetime, who were worthy to have outlived him; and the fourth outlived him, who was worthy never to have been born.'

9.3.1 Edward II: Scene-By-Scene Interpretation Let us go through a scene-by-scene interpretation of Edward II. ACT I, SCENE I The play begins with Piers Gaveston entering the stage while reading an intimate letter which had arrived from King Edward II. The letter conveys the information about the demise of the old king which ultimately paves the way for Gaveston's return to England. Gaveston is overjoyed to receive the news. Three poor men then approach Gaveston and ask for his assistance. Being coerced, he finally tells those men to come back later after he has finished his meeting with the king. Just then, Gaveston moves aside, while the king and the lords come out from the Parliament. Everyone including the Mortimers, the Earl of Lancaster are troubled with the fact that Gaveston has been asked to come back from exile. Moreover, he will again earn the favour of the new king. Edward II seems disinterested in knowing the concerns of the lords. He informs them in clear terms that he is not going to send his beloved Gaveston away from kingdom. The lords become annoyed and angry and threaten to have an open war if Gaveston is not expelled. Just then Gaveston enters and the king receives him with joyous arms. The king makes him lord chamberlain, the royal secretary and Earl of Cornwall and gives him a word suggesting that he will be given protection against his enemies. In an ironic situation, the man who had set the order of exile on Gaveston, The Bishop of Coventry, entered the stage. He is sad to see the exiled man back in the kingdom. He reminds once again that there will be retribution for breaking the law. But to such honest words, the king reacts by stripping the Bishop of all his possessions. The king passed on the Bishop's possession to Gaveston and imprisoned the Bishop. ACT I, SCENE II In Act 1, Scene 2 the Mortimers, the Earl of Lancaster and Warwick come together and discuss how they can get rid of the influence of Gaveston. They also express their disgust over the new titles and positions that he was being ushered with. They also felt unhappy over the fact that the Bishop of Conventry's possessions have been given to Gaveston. Soon the ArchBishop of Canterbury joined them and expressed his unhappiness with the treatment meted out to the Bishop. He agrees to be part of the forces that are with the lords against Gaveston. But clearly mentioned he is not keen on joining the king. Just then Queen Isabella

enters, and complains that the king does not care about her and has focused all his attention on Gaveston. The lords extend their sympathy to her informing her that they will take care of Gaveston. Isabella requests the group not to raise force against the king. But then Mortimer makes it clear that they will if verbal diplomacy fails. ACT I, SCENE III In this scene, Gaveston informs Kent that the lords have marched towards Lambeth. ACT I, SCENE IV In this scene, the lords manage to draw up a document suggesting that Gaveston should once again be exiled from England. They get ready to get the document signed from the king himself. As soon as the king and Gaveston enter, the lords put across their perspective. They want both Gaveston and Kent to be moved out and asked the king to get rid of Gaveston. The king tries to dissuade them by offering them high offices. But the lords persist in their demands. So finally, Edward signs the document and the lords leave the place in happiness. Soon Gaveston and Edward II bid each other farewell. However, then the queen arrives and an argument sparks between them over the king's affection for Gaveston and queen's relationship with Mortimer. The queen is unhappy with the situation. She finally decides that the best way to win Edward II's affection is to support Gaveston. The lords comfort the queen and try to make her happy. She says that she wants Gaveston to return to England so that the king is happy. Most of the lords do not agree with this idea. But Isabella takes Mortimer into confidence and explains him that it would be more beneficial for Gaveston to remain in England so that it might be easy to kill him off. On listening to the reason, the lords unanimously agreed to revoke Gaveston's exile proposal. The king is informed by the queen that Gaveston will not be banished. On listening to this news, Edward is overjoyed and expressed his gratitude to the queen and all the lords who express their wish to bring back Gaveston. King Edward announces that to celebrate the joyous occasion tournaments will be organized and Gaveston will marry his cousin, the heiress to the Earl of Gloucester. After this everyone except the Mortimers take their leave. The senior Mortimer explains that he must go to Scotland and that his nephew (the younger Mortimer) will look into affairs of the court. He also suggests not to worry much about Gaveston because it is natural for kings and rulers to have favourites. The younger Mortimer is not very keen to remain secondary to a person of such low birth (Gaveston) but nonetheless pledges his loyalty to the royalty. ACT II, SCENE I This scene takes place in Gloucester's house. Baldock inquires Spencer Junior under whom he would like to serve as the Earl of Gloucester who is now no more. Spencer quickly replies that he desires to serve Gaveston because he wanted to receive the king's favour. They both discuss how happy the king's heiress to the Earl of Gloucester must be as Gaveston has returned from exile. Just then the lady enters, merrily reading a letter that informs her of her love's return. Soon Margaret and Spencer move to meet Gaveston. ACT II, SCENE II As Edward II waits for Gaveston to return, he keeps talking about his friend. The lords are irked with this as he showed no interest in matters of the state. Mortimer made many unsuccessful attempts to convey Edward II the urgency of the state affairs. Finally, Mortimer and Lancaster use allusions to convey the king of their hatred towards Gaveston. This makes the king angry. But just then Gaveston arrives and the king is overwhelmed again. On the other hand, the lords only extend their welcome that aggravates the king's anger. This led to a tiny fight which leads to Mortimer wounding Gaveston. Edward in a fit of rage admonishes the lords for their actions and threatens to bring together an army to annihilate them. The lords did not take these words kindly and decided to eliminate Gaveston at the earliest. While the discussion was still going on, a messenger arrived and informed the lords that the Senior Mortime has been seized by the Scots. Listening to the news Mortimer Junior immediately suggested that the king should pay for his uncle's freedom because he was captured while fighting a war on behalf of the king. The king comes again, and Mortimer immediately informs him of his uncle's delicate situation and requested him to pay the ransom. But Edward outright refused the proposal. This refusal acted as the catalyst and both Mortimer Junior and Lancaster infuriated in anger inform the king about his bad deeds. According to them, France, Ireland, Scotland and northern England are beyond control because of Gaveston's mismanagement. They said the queen is also not taken care of which has made things worse; moreover, the people were becoming rebellious. To make matters worse, the only time the king had led an army (at Bannockburn against the Scots), the battle

had turned into a complete disaster. Mortimer and Lancaster leave the place suggesting a rebellion. In a state of absolute anger, the king blames his brother Kent for the situation. But Kent tells him that the lords are right in their opinion about Gaveston. This further angers the king which leads to Kent's dismissal. Around that time Gaveston, Spencer, the queen, and some other enter the place and the king expresses his displeasure about the rebellious behaviour of Mortimer and the lords. In a bid to escape the situation, the king indicates advancement for Spencer as well as Baldock but to no avail. Edward swears revenge against the lords and announces about the marriage which will take place between Gaveston and Margaret. ACT II, SCENE III This scene takes place near Tynemouth's castle. Kent expresses his desire to join the lords in their rebellion against Gaveston. This draws enough suspicion from the lords because he is the king's brother. Eventually, they accept him with open arms. The lords decide to take on their enemy Gaveston and his followers but do not intend to harm the king. ACT II, SCENE IV The king, Spencer, Gaveston and Margaret are unexpectedly pursued by the lords. In a state of panic they frantically flee but even at this point the king accused the queen of showing interest in Mortimer. The lords enter in time and comfort the queen. She informs them of the king's plan and where can they locate the king and Gaveston. The lords follow the king and his accomplish in a boat. The queen keeps lamenting about her miserable conditions and decides that if Edward does not give her the respect and the attention that she deserves then she will leave England with her son. She will leave for France where her brother is king. ACT II, SCENE V This scene starts with Gaveston being captured. Lords tell him that he will be executed immediately for misleading their king. In the meantime, the Earl of Arundel arrived and told the lords that the king knew of Gaveston's arrest and requests them to permit him to meet his friend one final time before he is killed. Initially, the lords did not change their resolve but only after the Earl of Pembroke agreed to bring back Gaveston on his own risk once he has
met the king. The lords give their consent to this suggestion and Gaveston was put in charge of James, servant of Pembroke. ACT III, SCENE I The Earl of Warwick comes to capture Gaveston from the army of Pembroke. The Earl of Warwick comes to know that Gaveston has not got an opportunity to speak with Edward. Warwick takes away Gaveston with him. ACT III, SCENE II Edward is seen busy mourning about Gaveston. On the other hand, Spencer asked the king to be stricter with the rebel lords. Edward concurred with his opinion. After that Spencer Senior arrived to show his support to the king's cause. Just then, the queen and Prince Edward reached the place and inform Edward II that the King of France has captured the English holdings in Normandy. Consequently, Edward sent his wife and his son to France to take care of the crisis. In the meanwhile, the Earl of Arundel entered and told the king that Gaveston is no more after he was abducted from the custody of Pembroke. The king is emotionally shattered on hearing the news. He vows to take revenge on the rebel lords who have brought him such sorrow. A messenger from the lords arrived and informed the king that they want Spencer to be ousted from the kingdom. The king dismisses the messenger and asks him to inform the lords that they should be prepared to meet him in the battle field. ACT III, SCENE III Act 3, scene 3 describes the fighting which takes place in the battlefield at Boroughbridge, Yorkshire. The battle takes place between Edward and the Spencer on one hand and the rebel lords on the other hand. The lords then come and inform the king of his partiality towards base sycophants while ignoring the honest ones. The king declares that he will fight until his death and kill all the traitors.

ACT III, SCENE IV Edward finally wins the battle of Boroughbridge. He manages to have all the lords, as prisoners, including his own brother Kent. Edward expresses his displeasure to them for their treacherous actions and the murder they planned for Gaveston. Finally, he dismissed his brother but not before ordering that the executions of Lancaster and Warwick while announcing the imprisonment of Mortimer and then departs with a triumph. Soon after Spencer Junior, Levune and Baldock try and work out a strategy against the queen, who it was believed was making a deal with the French king, her brother, to dethrone King Edward. Levune is sent to France to prevent this deal. ACT IV, SCENE I Kent is unable to bear the actions of his brother and laments his decision taken to exhibit his preference for the sycophant nobles and also his attempt to travel to France to help the queen in her mission. Mortimer manages to escape from imprisonment, and the two of them leave for France. ACT IV, SCENE II The queen informs Prince Edward that her brother will not help them. The prince then suggests that they should march back to England. Right at that moment, Sir John of Hainault arrives and tries to console the queen. The queen tells him that she and the prince would like to join him in Hainault, where they will definitely support their cause. Soon Kent and Mortimer meet the queen and she is happy to see that both of them surviving the rebel defeat. Immediately, Mortimer states that he intends to depose the king and instead make Prince Edward the king of England but surprisingly the prince does not agree with this idea. Everyone, except the prince, vow to do everything possible to dethrone the king and bring down his sycophants and hence, reinstall good governance in England. They all depart for Hainault. ACT IV, SCENE III After returning victorious from the battlefield, the king and Spencer boast about their victory in the battle and declared that, if Mortimer decides to return England, then he will be recaptured and punished for his audacity.

A messenger comes and informs the king that the queen, prince, Mortimer and Kent have been seen together in Hainault where they are receiving assistance and are planning to place the prince on the throne. On hearing this Edward is extremely disappointed and is upset that his young son is being made a scapegoat and promises to raise another battle against the rebels. ACT IV, SCENE IV The rebel group enters England. The queen and Mortimer strategize how they can depose the current king (Edward) along with his sycophants and place the crown on Prince Edward. ACT IV, SCENE V The king's army and his allies are defeated in the battle against the rebels fought near Bristol. As a result, Spencer suggests that they should take refuge in Ireland, but Edward denies. Kent undergoes a change and delivers a soliloquy on how he took a wrong decision of deserting his brother, the king, and assisting the rebels. Just then the rebel party arrives and announces about their proud victory against the royal army. They declare Prince Edward, the Lord Warden of the country. Kent wonders what will happen to the king now (just as Mortimer and the queen's had expected). Mortimer tells him that it is the decision of the Parliament to decide how to deal with Edward. Howell enters with his prisoner Spencer Senior, and everyone praises him for his exceptional services. But their happiness was short lived, and they are informed that the king and the rest of the royal party along with Spencer Junior have escaped and have marched to Ireland. Immediately, Mortimer orders Spencer Senior to be beheaded and the rebels undertake a serious discussion to figure out their next plan of action. ACT IV, SCENE VI We find the king, Spencer and Baldock hiding in Neath abbey while disguised as monks. They are seen as lamenting over their tragic situation and feel envious of the monks who lead a quiet and peaceful life. However, Rice and the Earl of Leicester reach the abbey and arrest Spencer and Baldock for treason.

ACT V, SCENE I Act 5, scene 1 is set in a room in Kenilworth Castle. King Edward is seen sitting with Earl of Leicester, Trussell and the Bishop of Winchester. Both Trussell and the Bishop of Winchester are busy convincing the king to give up his crown in favour of his son (Prince Edward). The king finally agrees and in a remorseful speech acknowledges that finally it is going to be Mortimer and not Prince Edward who will govern England. However, Edward changes his mind and refuses to give up his crown. The men depart to convey his reply to the Parliament. Then Leicester convinces the king to change his mind because if he does not willingly give up the throne, then that would mean that the prince is disinherited. On hearing this, Edward gives up his claim to the throne and hands over a handkerchief for his wife. Soon Lord Berkeley comes in with directions from Mortimer that the king has to be transferred to his custody. ACT V, SCENE II In the royal palace Mortimer informs the queen that the king's sycophants have been beheaded. He expresses his pleasure on how he would remain the guardian of England with Prince Edward ruling as the king of England. Isabella, the queen agrees to be part of any plan that he may propose. The Bishop of Winchester and a messenger inform the duo that the king has willingly renounced the throne. The Bishop brings in the message that Earl of Kent has made an attempt to make his brother free. Moreover, both Berkeley and Leicester seem to be showing their loyalty towards the king. Mortimer feels dismayed on hearing this news. As a precautionary measure, Mortimer asks Matrevis and Gurney to keep an eye on the king. Mortimer instructs them to treat the king in a merciless manner and keep shifting his location so that it will be difficult for anyone to find his whereabouts. Isabella, whose heart longs for her husband, hands over the men a ring to gift the king. Prince Edward arrives, and Mortimer promises to speak politely to Kent in spite of his attempt to show his loyalty towards the king. Mortimer insists that Kent should act as guardian to the prince. Nonetheless the earl puts his foot down and insists that the queen should take on the role of regent. Kent immediately understands that Mortimer is being sly. Prince Edward, on the other hand, wants his father to continue as the ruler of England and is not keen to reign at such a young age. Hence Mortimer forcibly takes the prince out of the place and the Earl of Kent promises to free king Edward.

ACT V, SCENE III Matrevis and Gurney carry the king to a different location. Kent arrives and attempts to rescue the king, his brother, but unfortunately is taken captive. ACT V, SCENE IV In the royal palace, Mortimer, in a soliloquy reveals his feelings that he must dispose of the king in order to rise in status. He discloses about a plot that he has laid to get rid of the king but makes it appear as if Matrevis and Gurney are responsible for the plan. Mortimer then speaks to Lightborne, the man he has hired to kill the king. Soon after, captive Kent is brought into the court of the new king Edward III (previously Prince Edward) and Mortimer instructs that Kent should be executed. Edward III pleads not to carry out the order. On the other hand, even the Queen insists that the act is justified. ACT V, SCENE V At Berkeley castle, Matrevis and Gurney cannot believe that the king has been living in a miserable condition for so long. Then Lightborne arrives and asks the two of them (Matrevis and Gurney) to leave. Lightborne kills the king. On seeing the king dead, Gurney then kills Lightborne and throws his body in the moat and finally departs to send the king's body to Mortimer. ACT V, SCENE VI In the royal palace, Matrevis informed Mortimer that the king as well as Lightborne have been murdered and Gurney has fled without intimation. The queen informs Mortimer that Edward III is holding them responsible for the death of his father. Edward III refuses to accept Mortimer or his mother's denial in the murder and shows them the letter that Mortimer wrote to carry out the murder of the king. Mortimer is taken for execution and the king shows pity on his mother and leaves her with a note of warning and laments about his dead father. 9.3.2 Significant Features of Edward II Let's study the significant features of Edward II. ➢ Queerness and Edward II Edward II is an early modern period play written by Christopher Marlowe. Many critics believe that King Edward II was a homosexual. There are few extant descriptions coupled

with centuries-long rumour which consolidated the belief. Moreover, the play has gone to the extreme to convey the 20th and 21st century's audience that Edward II was 'a homosexual, a sodomite, and a sexual deviant'. Historical evidence suggests that Edward's so called brotherly relationships made some believe that he was engaged in intimate sexual relationships with people of the same gender, while many others insist that the lack of firm proof in this regard and the fact that he had produced an heir proved that he could not have had sexual relationship with men. Interestingly though, Marlowe's own story suggests that he might have had male sexual partners. And this further only adds to Edward's mystifying representation in his play. It is not possible at this juncture to prove authentically that Edward II actually had sex with men and his sexual predilections will remain shrouded in doubts. Still, needless to say, it is a homosexual Edward II that has always caught the fancy of the contemporary audience. In 1968 critic Wilbur Sanders in his work The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare lamented about the 'unholy fascination' that readers have associated with Christopher Marlowe's Edward II. Moreover, with the general belief that associates homosexuality with mental illness, Sanders suggests that readers might 'confuse the deep satisfactions of great imaginative literature with the idle pleasure of indulging [their] curiosity about the fringes of human sanity'. Years later Edward II's so called affairs with Piers Gaveston became the central premise of Chris Hunt's 1992 novel, Gaveston. Gaveston highlights the purported love affair between the two and the story is told from Edward's point of view. Time and again, Edward II's sexual preferences have been spoken about not to uncover facts about his past but to introspect about contemporary ideas that concerns homosexuals and homosexuality. Edward II by Marlowe's speaks about a character that the contemporary audiences of 20th and 21st century identify as gay. In the play, one comes across many instances of desire being openly expressed between men and reciprocated by other male characters. Soon after Edward II takes over the English throne after Edward I, he lavishes unreasonable affection and showers unprecedented titles on Piers Gaveston. Gaveston was a man who was in general hated by others in Edward's court because of the low nature of his social origin. Mortimer Senior did his best to dismiss Edward's curious obsession with Gaveston as mere youthful transgression which will be cured with the passage of time. 'The mightiest kings have had their minions,' he had reasoned in the play. He also had provided a listing where great men have displayed their interest in boys. Mortimer had said, (Edward should) 'freely enjoy that vain, light- headed earl' while he is still a young boy '(f)or riper years will wean him from such toys.' Mortimer's notions indeed resonate the 20th century concepts that homosexuality is syndrome or a phase that can be easily outgrown with age. To put it simply, it is just a passing phase. On the other hand, Queen Isabella (Edward's wife) turns jealous of Edward's affection for Gaveston. She is remorseful and laments that 'never doted Jove on Ganymede / So much as he on cursed Gaveston.' In addition, critics point out the manner in which Edward was killed to highlight his homosexual preferences. His executioners killed him by thrusting a hot iron poker through his anus thus putting an end to his life and reign. Edward II's performance history from 1950 onwards suggests that directors over the years have interpreted the play as per the demands of the contemporary audience and their notions of homosexuality. Angela K. Ahlgren, professor at the University of Texas, United States in her article 'Christopher Marlowe's "Unholy Fascination": Performing Queer Edward II in the 1990s' says 'as American playwrights like Tennessee Williams and Edward Albee were masking gay themes in codes and innuendo to avoid detection by censors and the House Un- American Activities Committee (HUAC), British directors were interpreting Marlowe's Edward as an openly homosexual man.'Ahlgren mentions in the same article that Toby Robertson, a famous television and stage director who in the 1960s and 1970s had directed Edward II had incorporated a scene where a ward and Gaveston share a long passionate kiss. In one of the interviews published in 1964, Robertson says that, 'The homosexuality in the play is treated without the reserve, almost hesitancy, found Tennessee Williams The lack of shame about homosexuality in Edward II perhaps partly created the enormous interest.' A Time magazine reviewer writes of the 1969 Edinburgh Festival production of Edward II that featured Ian McKellen as the central character that 'McKellen and Director Toby Robertson have confronted with stark candor the fact that Edward II is a play by a homosexual about a king who was a homosexual who indeed ruined himself for an infatuation.'

In addition, Gerard Murphy's Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) production of Edward II in 1990 and Derek Jarman's film on Edward II in 1991 both showcase the play in sync with the current notions of homosexuality. From the middle of 20th century onwards several stage productions of the play Edward II, have presented the character of Edward in concurrence with the current notions on politics of sexuality and identity. Yet, there has not been much scholarship that centres on such obvious queer adaptions. Though much has been said and discussed about Jarman's film, which explicitly brings out queer politics of the play, but not much has been spoken about the RSC production. This has the dubious distinction of being the first major stage production of Edward II that clearly becomes part of contemporary queer activism. Marlowe's text, with or without historical authenticity has remained one of the most popular texts that has supported the LGBT movement in contemporary times. ➢ The Politics of Power in Edward II King Edward II's association with homosexuality probably emerges from the idea that Kantorowicz (a German-American historian of medieval political and intellectual history and art) formulated in his book The King's Two Bodies. In this book it is highlighted that contemporary legal thinking associated much of the governance of a kingdom with the king's private and public bodies. Edward II's association with homosexuality can probably be understood as Arvind Thomas expresses in the article 'Land, Law and Desire in Marlowe's Edward II' if 'looked for in the play's explicit staging of the confusion over the relations between the king's two bodies by both the king and his supporters, on the one hand, and the rebellious barons, on the other'. While homosexuality is not entirely specified with any specific homoerotic suggestions but meaning takes over an obvious shape when the sexual preference affects the political. It all happens when the homoerotic affection between Edward and his favourites cause unexpected disturbance in the functioning of his relations between 'him as a natural body and a divine body'. Therefore, it could imply that homosexuality might have less problematic association with transgression of sexuality as much it is to do with the transgression of law. According to the late medieval English political ideology, the king had a dual personality: the king was born human, but he attained divinity through his high birth. Hence, part of his 'human' nature, made him a victim of error, death and decay. However, as divine reincarnation
the king was 'timeless, incorruptible and infallible'. Due to his human birth, the king is 'subject to positive law' while his graceful birth makes him rise above legal aspects. Since the 14th century, especially with Edward I taking over the throne 'the relations between the king's human and divine bodies began to be cast in the form of a reciprocal relationship between the king and the Crown'. Kantorowicz in his seminal work The King's Two Bodies points out that, though contemporary lawyers imagine the king and throne as certainly different from the other, they did believe that both of them are inseparable. Thus, suggesting that the throne and the rights and duties associated with it are personified by the king. However, after the demise of the king, the throne instantly aligns itself to the human body of the next legitimate ruler of the kingdom. This argument has put forward the legal belief that the crown could never be detached from the human body of the king. By the time Edward II ascended the throne, many historians have pointed out that a further addition to the relations between the king's two bodies and his authorial prowess had taken place. Another key term 'the rights of the realm' came into existence. The Crown was not just a symbolic representation of the divine prowess and capabilities of a king but it also, meant to symbolize the absolute rights of the kingdom that the king takes over after his coronation. Edward II from the very beginning highlights this confusion over the two bodies of the king in the form 'of a concerted disordering of the tripartite relations between king, Crown, and realm'. In the very first scene, we come across the decentralization of royal prerogatives that takes place between King Edward II for his special friend Gaveston. Moreover, Edward II without discussing or consulting with his courtiers proposes Gaveston (of French origin) to 'come ... and share the kingdom with thy dearest friend'. Again, Edward bestows on Gaveston three different titles quickly without paying heed to the consequences: 'Lord High Chamberlain ... Earl of Cornwall, King and Lord of Man.' Edward goes on to arm his friend with discretionary and executive powers on his friend: 'Thou shalt have a guard ... Go to my treasury ... Receive my seal ... save or condemn and in our name command whatso thy mind affects or fancy likes". However, Edward II takes a number of risks in order to favour Gaveston which angers the earls and unites them in rebellion. For instance, Gaveston is responsible for the deteriorating relationship between the king and his subjects. As if to underline this obvious political
discontent, towards the close of the first scene Mortimer (junior) makes it more than clear that it is not: [Edward's] wanton humour [that] grieves ...one so basely born [Gaveston]/ Should by his sovereign favour grow so pert and riot it with treasure
of the realm / While soldiers mutiny for want of pay.

With Edward II's treasury taking special care of Gaveston instead of the army or kingdom the land becomes increasingly vulnerable to foreign attacks. Thus, Mortimer (junior) blames Gaveston of turning 'a robber of king's renown'. People like the Earl of Kent start introspecting and judging the rebel lords' actions as politically illegitimate. The new king (Edward III) in his desire to put an end to the 'unnatural' or 'monstrous' actions do not act on his own. He takes into account the suggestions of his council. The play characterizes Edward III's first action as evolving from a team effort ... 'the king and the peers act in unison to repair the rupture between king, Crown and the realm, and in doing so, expunge once and for all any further suggestions of sodomy'. ➢ Society in Edward II Christopher Marlowe in Edward II brings out several social conventions that were prevalent during the early modern period. He focuses on class, laws, accepted sexual practises and alternate gender roles. Drama produced during this period, especially one with a comedy element, was full of homoerotic innuendos. Moreover, the actors who played female roles were also male, which apart from encouraging cross-dressing, caused a stir among many religious groups and insisted on prohibiting theatre and encouraged the followers to do the same. Moreover, laws of the period determined which social class would adhere to which type of fabric. However, these legal parlances were highly disregarded in the theatre space. Actors of low origin dressed up as royals, which caught the attention of many upper-class citizens in the wrong way. Many British citizens, especially the nobility of the period laid emphasis on class distinction. Many were feelingly threatened by the sudden rise of mercantile middle class in social mobility.

In Edward II Christopher Marlowe highlights the way in which Renaissance society decided to place people in hierarchy especially in connection to their social standing which was defined by birth. Moreover, anything outside the traditional social conventions was identified as 'unnatural'. Both Gaveston's and Spencer's desire for more power and prosperity is explicitly expressed through words and metaphors of unnatural behaviour. Nonetheless, Marlowe takes the conventional route and ends the play so that every character who has in some way decided to upturn the social mobility is severely punished for his actions. Yet with the death of Mortimer, Junior (one who had been vocal enough to maintain social conventions) Marlowe takes poetic liberty in registering his own anguish about the society which expects him to restore it to its 'natural' state. Moreover, with this ending Marlowe managed to escape punishment for writing a play which highlights the unfair practices of the Elizabethan period.

UNIT 10 BEN JONSON: THE ALCHEMIST 10.1 Introduction 10.2 Objectives 10.3 About the Author 10.3.1 Historical Background of Elizabethan Era 10.4 Critical Appreciation of The Alchemist 10.4.1 Important Passages for Explanation 10.4.2 Character Sketches 10.5 The Alchemist: A Moralist Comedy 10.5.1 The Alchemist: A Play about Possession 10.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions 10.7 Summary 10.8 Key Words 10.9 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises 10.10 Further

Readings 10.1 INTRODUCTION Ben Jonson (11 June 1572 – 6 August 1637), a Jacobean (or Elizabethan) playwright, poet and critic

is best known for the satirical plays Every Man in His Humour (1598),

Volpone, or The Foxe (1605), The Alchemist (1610), and Bartholomew Fair: A Comedy (1614) and also for his poems and masques. Jonson is considered to be the next best English dramatist, after William Shakespeare, of the Elizabethan era. In this unit, you will study Jonson play The Alchemist in detail. 10.2

OBJECTIVES After going through this unit, you will be able to: • Discuss the

life and works of

Ben Jonson • Critically analyse The Alchemist • Describe The Alchemist as moralist comedy 10.3 ABOUT THE AUTHOR Born in an Anglo-Scottish border country, Jonson's father was a clergyman who died two months before his birth. His mother remarried a master

bricklayer. After finishing his early education, Jonson was an apprentice to bricklaying as his step-father wanted him to join his profession. Thereafter, Ben Jonson went to the Netherlands, and volunteered to soldier with the English regiments of Francis Vere (1560– 1609), in Flanders. Next Jonson returned to England and worked as an actor and playwright. By 1598, with the production of Every Man in His Humour Ben Jonson established his reputation as a dramatist. In 1599, came the play Every Man out of His Humour. Ben Jonson His play Cynthia's Revels was produced by the Children of the Chapel Royal at Blackfriars Theatre in 1600. It satirized both John Marston, who Jonson believed had accused him of lustfulness and Thomas Dekker. Jonson attacked the two poets again in 1601's Poetaster. Dekker responded with Satiromastix, subtitled 'the untrussing of the humorous poet'. This 'War of the Theatres' appears to have ended with reconciliation on all sides. Of the many poets and dramatist, he participated in welcoming James I to the throne. Next, Jonson pursued a more prestigious career, writing masques for James's court. The Satyr (1603) and The Masque of Blackness (1605). The period between 1605 and 1620 may be viewed as Jonson's glory days. By 1616 he had produced all the plays on which his present reputation as a dramatist is based, including the tragedy Catiline (acted and printed 1611), which achieved limited success, and the comedies Volpone, (acted 1605 and printed in 1607), Epicoene, or the Silent Woman (1609),
The Alchemist (1610), Bartholomew Fair (1614) and The Devil is an Ass (1616).
The Alchemist and Volpone were immediately successful. Works of Jonson Apart from two tragedies, Sejanus and Catiline, which did not impress Renaissance audiences too much, Ben Jonson's dramatic works are primarily comedies. The plays of Ben Jonson are as follows: • A Tale of a Tub, comedy • The Isle of Dogs, comedy (1597, with Thomas Nashe) • The Case is Altered, comedy (1597–98; printed 1609) • Every Man in His Humour, comedy (performed 1598; printed 1601) • Every Man out of His Humour, comedy (performed 1599; printed 1600) • Cynthia's Revels (performed 1600; printed 1601) • The Poetaster, comedy (performed 1601; printed 1602)
• Sejanus His Fall, tragedy (performed 1603; printed 1605) • Eastward Ho, comedy (performed and printed 1605), a collaboration with John Marston and George Chapman • Volpone, comedy (c. 1605–06; printed 1607) • Epicoene, or the Silent Woman, comedy (performed 1609; printed 1616) • The Alchemist, comedy (performed 1610; printed 1612) • Catiline His Conspiracy, tragedy (performed and printed 1611) • Bartholomew Fair, comedy (performed 31 October 1614; printed 1631) • The Devil is an Ass, comedy (performed 1616; printed 1631) • The Staple of News, comedy (performed Feb. 1626; printed 1631) • The New Inn, or The Light Heart, comedy (licensed 19 January 1629; printed 1631) • The Magnetic Lady, or Humors Reconciled, comedy (licensed 12 October 1632; printed 1641) • The Sad Shepherd, pastoral (c. 1637, printed 1641), unfinished • Mortimer his Fall, history (printed 1641), a fragment 10.3.1 Historical Background of Elizabethan Era We have learnt some of these concepts in Unit 1. In this section, let's revisit some of those topics.
The Elizabethan era is the period associated with Queen Elizabeth I's reign (1558– 1603) and is often considered to be the golden age in history of English Literature and art. It is considered to be the height of the English Renaissance.
The Renaissance begun in fourteenth-century Italy and from there spread throughout Europe. Renaissance means rebirth. In the European context Renaissance was the rebirth of the classical (Greek and Roman) learning. Therefore, the age of renaissance saw new interest in ancient Greek and Roman classics which created a fresh vigour and vitality in the mindset of the people. The significant change that occurred during the Renaissance was that man began questioning things and tried to understand the scientific reason that culminated in events. The temper of scientific enquiry dominated the age. The Elizabethan era is the greatest age of English literature as plays and poems reached a new height in this age like never before. The prominent writers of the age are William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Christopher Marlowe, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Francis Bacon, and Walter Raleigh among others. They not only wrote plays, poems, essays but experimented with different genres and often tried intermingling genres. It was a time when theatre flourished. It was also a time when theatre severed its link from the churches and

established itself as a secular institution. Moreover, The Elizabethan era is also seen as an age of exploration and expansion. In England, the Protestant Reformation was going on which helped in creating a national mindset. This period witnessed a rapid growth in English Commerce and naval power. Though Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, literary scholars include the literature written in sixteenth and seventeenth-century to be belonging to the Elizabethan era. Often John Milton is also considered to be an Elizabethan poet. King James I ruled England from 1603 to 1625 which is termed by scholars as the Jacobean Age. Shakespeare's famous tragedies and tragicomedies, most of Ben Jonson's satiric comedies, John Donne's sermons and poetry, Webster and other dramatists' plays, Francis Bacon's didactic essays, Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy and many other famous writings were created during the era of James I's rule. Some scholars consider Ben Jonson to be a Jacobean playwright. Elizabethan theatre derived from several medieval theatre traditions, such as the Mystery plays, based on biblical themes, that formed a part of religious festivals in England and other parts of Europe during the Middle Ages, the morality plays that evolved out of the mysteries; and the plays by University Wits that attempted to recreate Greek tragedy. The Italian tradition of Commedia dell'arte as well as the elaborate masques frequently presented at court also helped in the shaping of public theatre. The City of London authorities, primarily Puritans, were generally hostile to public performances, but its hostility was overmatched by the Queen's taste for plays. Theatres sprang up in suburbs, accessible across the Thames River to city dwellers, but beyond the authority's control. All the theatres of London during the Elizabethan era had individual differences; yet their common function necessitated a similar general plan. The public theatres were three stories high and built around an open space at the centre. Usually polygonal in plan to give an overall rounded effect, the three levels of inward-facing galleries overlooked the open center, into which jutted the stage—essentially a platform surrounded on three sides by the audience, only the rear being restricted for the entrances and exits of the actors and seating for the musicians. The upper level behind the stage was used as a balcony. Elizabethan theatre did not make use of lavish scenery, instead left the stage largely bare, with a few key props. The main visual appeal on stage was costumes. Costumes were often bright in colour and visually entrancing. Costumes were expensive, hence, usually, players wore contemporary clothing regardless of the time period of the play. Occasionally, a lead
character would wear a conventional version of a more historically accurate garb, but secondary characters would nonetheless remain in contemporary clothing. Moreover, the Elizabethans did not have elaborate props for the stage. The stage was primarily bare and the backdrop of the play was left for the audience to imagine. Mostly a placard was hung on the stage doors to suggest where the scene is set. The play used to start with a flag being unfurled to suggest that the play has started. After some music, the prologue was spoken by an actor where he would give a gist of the setting of the play to make the audience understand the backdrop in which the play is about to be performed. If the play lacked a prologue then in the opening scene(s) the backdrop of the play made the audience know where the play is set. If the Royalists promoted literature and theatre, then there was a faction in England called the Puritans who had a strong dislike for theatre, as theatre was perceived by them as an immoral place. Though Queen Elizabeth herself was a great admirer and promoter of theatre, still women were not allowed to act in a play during her reign. Mostly women characters were played by boys who used to cross-dress as women in the plays. The rising Puritan movement was hostile towards theatre, and when they gained control of the city early in the English Civil War, and on 2 September 1642, they ordered the London theatres to be closed. The theatres remained closed for most of the next eighteen years, and reopened after the Restoration of the monarch in 1660. It is a matter of discussion that theatre rose to its pinnacle in an age when the opposition against it was strongest. What is also significant in Jonson is not only the realistic element, but also the notion of humour which had a significant role to play in his comedies. What we figure out is that almost each of Jonson's characters is endowed with a whim or affectation – some ludicrous exaggeration in manner, speech or dress which becomes the subject of comedy. Jonson based his theory of Comedy of Humours on the physiology of the times when it was thought that a person is regulated by a harmonious blend of the humours engendered in the liver, heart and spleen. The various humours were blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. These four humours should be balanced in the case of a normal person; but if any of these gets imbalanced then it may lead to a folly, or an affectation or an imbalance in the person's character. In Jonsonian comedies what we see, each of his characters suffers from a peculiar habit or tendency whether in their way of speaking or dressing or a singular trait which has grown to a point of abnormality.

As against the norms of the Romantic Comedy, Ben Jonson invented a new genre called the Comedy of Humours where the main objective along with evoking laughter was to also correct their vices. Ben Jonson specifically writes in the Prologue of Every Man in His Humour that his comedies deal with vices and not with crimes. Jonson was a strict follower of the classical norms primarily that of the three unities set by the Greek playwrights (as mentioned earlier in the features of Classical comedies). Moreover he was against the Romantic Comedies which provided a relief from everyday reality by situating the play in a dream like atmosphere as in Shakespeare's Mid Summer Night's Dream. Jonson based his comedies on actual conditions of life of the people of the age. Suppose if one makes a comparison between Shakespeare's As You Like It and Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humour, one will be able to discern that while Shakespeare's play is set in the fanciful world of the forest of Arden, Jonson's play is set in the everyday reality of the then England. This aspect of Jonson's plays – the everyday reality – makes them more realistic and is a great way to understand the socio-political and cultural scenario of the age. Emile Legouis significantly makes a comparison between Jonson and Shakespeare and says that 'In one sense, he (Jonson) was more original than Shakespeare. Shakespeare accepts the conditions of the stage of his time; he was aware of its shortcomings, but he reconciles himself to them with a smile. His relation with the public remains sympathetic. Jonson, however, is angry and in an arrogant opposition to the Elizabethan stage, and sets up his own tastes, ideas and theories, all derived from the ancients, against the popular taste. He also makes sarcastic references to his public. Thus, while Shakespeare passively follows the course of the stream, Jonson throws his huge bulk against it.' This opinion of Emile Legouis is significant in understanding Jonson's contribution to the English stage and theatre; though there are divided opinions about the comment as the light in which Shakespeare has been portrayed in the comment is not completely true. Shakespeare also stood against the prevailing conditions of theatre of the Elizabethan era but reacted in a different way. 10.4

CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE ALCHEMIST The Alchemist tells the story of how a trio of cheats practices fraud on a number of trusting people who are easily taken in the false promises and assurances made by the cheats. The play is, in fact, a satire on greed, hoarding, and sensuality. Only one man resists the temptations offered by the cheats, while all the others, who come to meet them, fall prey to their tricks and their cheating. In the end, the cheats are exposed and, while two of them have to flee to save themselves from arrest by the police, the third manages to save himself and, in fact, emerges victorious. The play opens in the house of a man called Lovewit in London. As the plague has been raging in the city, Lovewit has gone away to his country home, leaving his London house in the charge of a butler, Jeremy. Jeremy, wanting to make the best use of his master's absence, enters into a partnership with two persons, a man and a woman. The man, called Subtle, pretends to be an alchemist, claiming that he can produce the philosopher's stone or the elixir which would have the power to transform base metals into gold, which would be able to cure all kinds of diseases, and which would perform other wonders also. The woman, called Dol Common, is actually a prostitute, but she poses to be a respectable woman and a helper of the alchemist. Jeremy, the butler, functions as an assistant to the alchemist, his duty being to blow upon the coals in the furnace, because Subtle has set up a laboratory in one of the rooms of the house and has equipped it with some apparatus and some materials to show that he is busy manufacturing the philosopher's stone with which his clients would be able to work wonders. Jeremy sometimes disguises himself as an army captain and goes about in search of credulous clients whom he invites to Subtle's laboratory in order to rob them of as much money as possible by giving them false assurances regarding the power of the philosopher's stone to satisfy all their wishes and desires. Subtle is well versed in the language of the pseudo-science called alchemy, and he can talk at length about the principle on which this science is based. Indeed, he is capable of impressing his clients by his use of technical words and phrases relating to the science of alchemy, and he has even taught Jeremy the butler how to use those technical words and phrases. The various clients who come to Subtle's establishment include Dapper, Drugger, Mammon, two Anabaptists called Ananias and Tribulation, Kastril and his widowed sister, Dame Pliant. Each of these clients has to pay a price for his or her naivety and greed because each of them wants to become rich through the philosopher's stone and each of them blindly believes in Subtle's claims about his power to produce the philosopher's stone. Dapper is a lawyer's clerk who wants that the alchemist should provide him with a familiar or an attendant spirit who might enable him to win money at horse-races, at card-parties, and at dice-parties. Dapper would like to give up his real profession and to become a whole-time gambler in order to win money and become a wealthy man. Subtle, aided by Face, assures Dapper that his wish would be fulfilled. Subtle invents the myth that Dapper is a nephew of the Queen of Fairies, that the Queen of Fairies would bless Dapper with her grace, and that Subtle would even arrange an interview between Dapper and the Queen of Fairies. Face's

duties include coaxing the clients to pay an adequate fee to the alchemist for the favour that would be done to them. Accordingly, Dapper is made to pay enough money to Subtle. Dapper is then sent away with instructions to sharpen all his sense with the use of vinegar. When Dapper pays his next visit, he is blindfolded and told that the Queen of Fairies has sent some of her subordinates to collect from Dapper whatever valuables and cash he happens to carry on his persons. Dapper complies with the directive which, according to the doctor (namely Subtle), the Queen of Fairies has sent to Dapper, and is in this way relieved of all his valuables. Thereafter Dapper is gagged and then stowed away in the toilet to wait for a visit from the Queen of Fairies. Finally, Dol disguises herself as the Queen of Fairies and showers her blessings upon Dapper. Dapper goes away, fully satisfied. At the end Dapper finds himself poorer than before, having been robbed of his money and valuables. Drugger is by profession a tobacconist who is going to build a new shop and wants the doctor's advice as to where he should install the door and the shelves, and where he should put the boxes and the pots, so that he can achieve prosperity in his business. Subtle prophesizes a bright future for Drugger. Subtle now claims that he is also well versed in the science of palmistry and astrology, and in face-reading as well. He looks at the lines on Drugger's forehead and says that a ship, which is coming from the Persian Gulf, will bring large quantities of various commodities which will yield enormous profits to Drugger. Subtle then gives the needful instructions to Drugger regarding the location of the door at his new shop and the location of the shelves. He also suggests to Drugger a method by which he can attract numerous customers to his shop. At a suggestion by Face, Drugger gives enough money to the doctor as his fee. Face also suggests that Drugger should bring a damask suit for the doctor when he comes next time. On his next visit, Drugger brings some tobacco for the doctor and speaks about a young man by the name of Kastril who has come from the countryside the town with his widowed sister, Dame Pliant. Face asks Drugger to bring both the young man and his sister to the doctor who would teach Kastril the art of quarrelling and who would teach Kastril's sister, Dame Pliant, how to become a lady of fashion and how to get remarried. On the next occasion, Drugger not only brings a damask suit for the doctor, but also Kastril and his sister, Dame Pliant. Subtle is able to create a good impression upon both Kastril and Dame Pliant. Subtle gives a lesson to Kastril in the art of quarrelling, because in those days the gallant young men of the city knew how to quarrel and how promptly to withdraw from the quarrel if the quarrel if took a turn unfavourable to them. Subtle is also able, on this occasion, to kiss Dame Pliant several times. A little later Face is also able to kiss the rich young widow. It is now Face's desire to obtain Dame Pliant as a wife for himself,

though he gives Drugger the impression that he would arrange matters in such a way that Dame Pliant would get ready to marry Drugger. Later, Dame Pliant is introduced to a Spanish Don, who is in reality an Englishman by the name of Surly, and who has disguised himself as a rich Spaniard with the object of discovering what goes on at this alchemist's establishment, and then reporting the matter to the police. It is now possible for the Spanish Don (or Surly) to seduce Dame Pliant but, being an honest man, he refrains from doing so and proposes marriage to her. In the long run, however, he is unable to get the widow as a wife for himself because Face so manages affairs that she has no choice but to marry Face's master, Lovewit, when Lovewit returns suddenly and unexpectedly to his London house where the cheats have been carrying on their operations. Poor Drugger is nowhere in the picture so far as Dame Pliant is concerned; and even the recipes suggested by Subtle to him for becoming rich are fake. Sir Epicure Mammon is another client of Subtle's. He comes to Subtle in the company of a friend called Surly (who has been already mentioned above). Mammon had been told by Subtle that the philosopher's stone would be ready for him on a particular day; and, accordingly, Mammon comes on the fixed day to obtain the philosopher's stone with which Mammon hopes to work wonders. Mammon tells Surly that, through the philosopher's stone, he would become fabulously rich, and that he would equal the ancient King Solomon in wealth. At the same time, Mammon would like to enjoy endless sensual pleasures by means of the philosopher's stone. He would maintain a regular harem of wives and concubines, as many in number as King Solomon had. Thus, Mammon wants not only to acquire unlimited wealth but also to enjoy endless sexual pleasure. With the philosopher's stone he would become so strong so as to be able to perform sexual intercourse with fifty women in one night. At the same time, Mammon is not entirely a selfish man. He wants to make even the beggars and paupers rich; he wants to cure the sufferers of all the diseases from which they happen to be suffering and he would like to establish hospitals and other charitable institutions. Mammon is fully convinced that Subtle would produce the philosopher's stone and hand it over to him on the appointed day. At the same time, Mammon, having caught a glimpse of Dol, feels sexually attracted by her, and he urges Face (whom he addresses as 'Lungs' because one of Face's duties is to blow upon the coals in the furnace) to procure that woman for his sexual gratification. Face obliges Mammon by procuring Dol for him, asking Mammon at the same time not to let Subtle know that Dol has been supplied to him for his sexual pleasure. However, Dol, being herself a member of the group of cheats, knows the role which she has to play. At a signal from Face, Dol pretends that she has got a fit of madness, whereupon

Mammon's love-making comes to an end. There is now an explosion in the laboratory, and Face reports that the whole alchemical process has been disrupted and that everything in the laboratory has gone up in the smoke. Subtle, finding Mammon in Dol's company, now declares that it is because of Mammon's sinful indulgence in sensual pleasure that the alchemical process has collapsed. Subtle reminds Mammon that one of the conditions for the success of the alchemical process was that those conducting the process should be pious men and that the premises where the alchemical process is conducted should be treated as a sacred premises. Mammon, by indulging in sensuality and by trying to use Dol for his sexual gratification, has violated the sanctity of the premises and is responsible for the explosion which has brought the whole alchemical process to a halt. Thus, Subtle is able to put the whole blame for the failure of his experiment on Mammon. The philosopher's stone was in any case a myth, but Subtle is now able to hold Mammon responsible for his own incapacity to place the promised philosopher's stone in Mammon's hands. Mammon, who has already paid a lot of money to Subtle in the hope of getting the philosopher's stone, has now to go away disappointed, and also feeling ashamed of his sinful conduct. Face asks him to repent for his sinful action, and also to donate a sum of one hundred pounds to a mental hospital. Of course, this donation would also go into the pockets of the cheats. Kastril is told by Face that the doctor (Subtle) is a competent man who knows many arts and possesses many skills. Kastril has come to London from the countryside in order to learn city manners and especially the art of quarrelling in which he receives some lessons from Subtle. Kastril also wants this widowed sister, Dame Pliant, should get married to somebody not below the status of a knight. Face and Subtle introduce Dame Pliant to a Spanish Don (who, however, is no other than Mammon's friend, Surly). They ask her to submit to the Spanish Don's love-making and, when she refuses, she is bullied into submission by her brother Kastril who feels happy at the prospect of a rich Spanish Don's marrying his sister. Alone with Dame Pliant, the Spanish Don (or Surly) tells her that she has fallen into the hands of cheats (namely Subtle, Face, and Dol). Instead of seducing her, he proposes marriage to her; and she says that she would think over his proposal. Surly, who is a friend of Mammon's, is a complete disbeliever so far as the science of alchemy is concerned. He refuses to believe in the existence of the elixir or the philosopher's stone which can convert base metals into gold, which can restore youth to the aged, and which can cure people of all their diseases. When Subtle expounds to him the theory of alchemy and the scientific principle underlying it, Surly refuses to believe Subtle's exposition. Surly then comes

back here, this time in the disguise of a Spanish Don, his object being to discover the secret activities of the gang of cheats and to report the matter to the police for necessary action against these frauds. Subtle and Face, thinking Surly to be a real Spanish Don, introduce Dame Pliant to him for him for his sexual gratification because Dol, who was the one to be really supplied to him, is at this time busy with Mammon. Surly is an honest man and he, instead of seducing Dame Pliant, reveals to her his real identity and tells her that she has fallen into the hands of a group of crooks. He then proposes marriage to her, and she says that she would think over his proposal. A little later, Subtle, wanting to rob Surly of whatever he has got on his person, tries to search Surly's pockets, but gets a beating from Surly, Surly's real identify now becomes known to the cheats who, however, are able to drive him away from the premises with the help of their clients including Kastril, Drugger, and Ananias. Ananias and Tribulation are two Anabaptists who come to Subtle on behalf of the brethren at Amsterdam in connection with Subtle's promise that he would provide the brethren with the philosopher's stone which would not only make the Anabaptists rich but would enable them to extend their sphere of influence and their authority over their followers. Subtle has already received a substantial sum of money from the brethren at Amsterdam, but now he demands more money from Ananias and Tribulation who have come on behalf of the brethren. Subtle paints a very rosy picture of how the Anabaptists would be able to flourish and to enhance their prestige and power through the philosopher's stone which he would soon place at their disposal. The Anabaptists pay more money to Subtle, and they are also prevailed upon to buy from Subtle a large quantity of metallic articles which Mammon had sent to Subtle for being converted into gold, but which are described by Subtle to the Anabaptists as being the goods belonging to certain orphans. Subtle pretends that the proceeds from the sale of these goods would go to the orphans. In his speeches to Ananias and Tribulation, Subtle cleverly pokes fun at the hypocrisy and hollowness of the Anabaptists. He reminds them of the various malpractices and crooked devices in which the Anabaptists indulge, and thus exposes the falsity of their claims to piety and religious zeal. He also offers to cast Dutch dollars for the Anabaptists, and the Anabaptists feel glad at this offer because it means that they would come into the possession of unlimited wealth. Thus, the greed and the hypocrisy of the Anabaptists are fully revealed to us. Of course, in the long run, the Anabaptists, like the other clients of Subtle, get nothing, but find themselves poorer by whatever amount of money they have paid to Subtle. When the three cheats are still actively at work, Lovewit, the master of the house, where the cheating operations have been going on, returns to his house suddenly. Face now finds himself in a very piquant situation because the neighbours, who crowd around Lovewit, inform him that many visitors have been coming to his house during his absence and that they had observed a lot of activity here. Lovewit finds the doors of his house shut. Then Face appears before his master and pretends that he kept the house shut for over a month because the house had been visited by the plague. Face has now shaved himself and has appeared before his master as Jeremy the butler. He is no longer wearing a captain's uniform, and he is no longer wearing the clothes which he used to wear as 'Lungs'. The various persons who had been cheated and robbed of their money by Subtle and Face, have now spoken to one another, and they have all becomes aware that the so-called alchemist-cum-doctor is merely an impostor and a fraud. They all collect at Lovewit's house and ask where the doctor is, and where Lungs is. Face is standing there with his master, but the ex-clients of Subtle cannot recognize him because he has shaved off the beard which he was keeping as a captain, and because he is now wearing a butler's livery. From inside the house come the voices of Dapper and Subtle, but Face tries to mislead his master by saving that these are the voices not of human beings but of the spirits of the air. However, Lovewit now finds something fishy about the whole thing, and calls upon his butler to tell him the truth or be prepared for the consequences. Face now privately makes a full and complete confession to Lovewit of what had been going on in Lovewit's house and the role which he (Face) had been playing. He begs his master's forgiveness, saying that he (Face) would, in return, do something for his master which the master would greatly appreciate. Lovewit thereupon pardons his butler, while the butler so manages the situation as to have Dame Plaint, the rich young widow, married to Lovewit. Lovewit feels very glad to have acquired a young wife who would also bring him a rich dowry. When now the ex-clients of Subtle clamour for action being him taken against the impostors, Lovewit asks them to search his house and find out where the imposters are. Face has, in the meantime, already sent Subtle and Dol away through the back door without, however, allowing them to take even the slightest part of the accumulated booty including the cash which had been collected from the clients. The groups of ex-clients are unable to trace the impostors, and so they all feel dismayed. When Surely learns that the young widow has got married to Lovewit, he feels that his honesty has done him no good because somebody else has acquired the widow as his wife. Thus, the ultimate winners in this whole enterprises are Face (or Jeremy the butler) and his master Lovewit, while Surly, the only honest man in the whole lot of characters in the play, has to go away without getting any reward whatsoever.

10.4.1 Important Passages for Explanation (i) 'But I shall _____ artillery Yard.' Reference to context: These lines, are from a speech by Face. The lines appear in the very opening scene when Face and Subtle are quarrelling with each other. Explanation: Face says that he would like to remind Subtle of what kind of man Subtle originally was. Face says that he had met Subtle at an inn called Pie Corner, situated near Smithfield (in London). Accordingly to Face, Subtle could not even afford to buy food for himself at that time. Subtle, in those days, used to try to satisfy his hunger merely by inhaling the smell of the cooked foods available at the eating-stalls. Subtle was at that time a pitiable, constipated fellow, with his nose looking pinched by the horn-spectacles which he wore. The complexion of his face has been made dark like that of an Italian by his habitually applying to his face a cosmetic-lotion meant to cure venereal diseases and skin diseases. His face was in those days dotted with black spots and pimples which looked like the grains of gunpowder exploded by gunners conducting the firing-practice at the training-ground close to the Tower (in London). Thus, according to Face, Subtle presented in those days a most wretched and miserable sight. (ii) 'What makes _____ good spirit.' Reference to context: These linesare spoken by Tribulation, an Anabaptist pastor, to his deacon, Ananias. Ananias has given his superior adverse negative report about Subtle because Subtle had demanded more money from Ananias, and because Subtle had also spoken to Ananias in very harsh and severe terms. Tribulation tries to soothe the feelings of Ananias by saying that even wicked men like Subtle can be used to promote holy causes. Explanation: Tribulation asks Ananias what it is that makes the Devil so wicked. Satan is the enemy of all mankind, and he is so devilish only because he is constantly surrounded by the fires of hell and because he is always busy in boiling sulphur and arsenic. Tribulation means that much of Subtle's wickedness is also due to the fact that he has to spend most of his time close to the heat of his furnace. Tribulation suggests that he and Ananias should make allowances for the dominant personal characteristics of an individual, and that they should make allowances for the forces which stimulate a man's natural disposition. Tribulation therefore wants that Ananias takes a lenient view of Subtle's misbehaviour. It is possible, says Tribulation, that, when Subtle's experimentation is over and the philosopher's stone has been obtained, Subtle's very heat of anger may change into a religious passion. It is possible that Subtle may then
support the beautiful discipline of the Anabaptists against the Church of Rome which, according to Tribulation, is so dirty and fifty that it may be compared to a woman's under-garment which is stained with her menstrual discharge. Tribulation therefore wants that he and Ananias should wait for the time when Subtle would be converted to the Anabaptist faith, and when the spirit of true piety would be awakened in Subtle's heart. (iii) 'That master _____ crack it too.' Reference to context: These lines are spoken by Lovewit. Lovewit, having joined hands with his butler Jeremy (who has been calling himself Face), and having driven away all the ex- clients of Subtle, makes this speech to justify his complete forgiveness of his butler who, along with Subtle and Dol, had been indulging in criminal activities to cheat people. Explanation: Lovewit says that he has received, through the efforts of his butler, such happiness as will result from his marriage with a wealthy widow. He says that he would prove himself to be very ungrateful if he were not to adopt a somewhat lenient attitude towards his witty servant, and not promote his servant's prospects in life, even though by this leniency and this forgiveness he would bring a little dishonour to himself. Then, addressing the audience in the theatre, Lovewit says that, if he has gone beyond an old man's solemnity or violated the strict code of conduct (by forgiving Jeremy), the audience should make allowances for him in view of the fact that he has got a young wife and a witty servant both of whom can render many services to him. Sometimes, says Lovewit, ancient truths have to be stretched and even ignored. Sometimes, he says, it becomes necessary to deviate from the strict standards of honourable conduct, and even to fly in the face of such conduct. 10.4.2 Character Sketches 1. Subtle The play opens with a quarrel between Subtle and Face. This quarrel reveals Subtle's capacity for verbal attack and sarcasm equal to that of Face. In fact, the two men are well-matched in this respect. Subtle threatens to throw chemical water on Face's silk garments and thus mar all that the tailor has made for him. Face claims that he had picked up Subtle at a time when the latter was starving and had set him up as a practicing alchemist. Subtle replies that the house where his laboratory has been set up belongs, after all, not to Face but to Face's master and that when he (Subtle) had set up his laboratory here, there was no living being here except Face and the rats. He accuses Face of selling for personal profit the provisions which his

master had intended to give away in charity to the poor. Subtle claims that he had taken Face out of dung at a time when no living creature wanted to keep company with Face except a spider. Subtle goes on to say that he had made Face fit for decent company and taught him oaths and the art of quarrelling, as well as instructed him in the technique of cheating at horse-races, at cockfights, at cards, and at dice. Eventually, of course, the two men make up at the intervention of Dol. Subtle is as ingenious, witty, and as inventive as Face is. He has as quick and as intelligent as Face, who is supposed to be his assistant in the alchemical process. We clearly see these qualities in the manner in which Subtle deals with Dapper and then with Drugger. At first Subtle pretends to be reluctant to provide Dapper with a familiar or an attendant spirit as he would not like to endanger his art and his livelihood by providing Dapper with a familiar. Ultimately, however, Subtle agrees to comply with Dapper's request, and Subtle says that Dapper is a lucky man because he is loved by the Queen of Fairies. Subtle offers similar hopes to Drugger, though his technique in this case is different. Subtle here claims that he is an adept in palmistry, astrology, and in the art of reading faces. Looking at the lines on Drugger's forehead, he says that he can see a certain star there. Drugger's long ears and certain spots in his teeth show that Drugger is a very fortunate man, says Subtle. He then goes on to explain palmistry to Drugger as well. Subtle tries to convince a doubting Surly of his alchemical powers by giving certain instructions to Face in language that is highly technical, and then goes on to expound the theory of alchemy, providing a scientific basis for it. People who believed in alchemy were also aware of its religious aspect. It was generally believed that only a man especially favoured by God could hope to discover the secret of alchemy, and that such a man must be completely free from the contaminating influence of worldliness. Accordingly, Subtle here pretends to be a very pious man, a noble soul who spends his time in prayer and fasting. Subtle shows his capacity to make eloquent and persuasive speeches when both Ananias and Tribulation come to him on behalf of the Anabaptists in Amsterdam. He describes in detail the advantages which would accrue to the Anabaptists from the philosopher's stone which, he says, he is going to place in their hands very soon. These speeches by Subtle show not only his command of the language and his powers of logical argumentation; but also his capacity to mock at and ridicule the hollowness and hypocrisy of the Puritans. Subtle is, indeed, a many-sided genius, though his genius is of the evil kind. When Kastril says that he would like to learn the art of quarrelling as practiced by 'the angry boys' of the city, Face tells him that the doctor (namely Subtle) is an adept in the art of teaching this art to anyone who wishes to learn it. Indeed, Subtle can handle any kind of man, and any situation in which he finds himself. He is a versatile manipulator. When Kastril comes to Subtle, Subtle gives him a lesson in the art of quarrelling. When Surly comes in the disguise of a Spanish Don, both Subtle and Face find themselves outwitted by the Spanish Don. This is the one occasion in the course of the play when Subtle meets more than his match. However, in the end Subtle is outwitted by Face. Both Subtle and Dol have to flee from the house when Lovewit returns without being allowed to carry any part of the accumulated booty with them. 2. Face or Jeremy the Butler Face appears in various guises in the course of the play. He is actually Jeremy the butler, but he becomes Captain Face and, at the same time, he functions as an assistant to the alchemist, Subtle, and in that capacity he is called 'Lungs' by Mammon, one of Subtle's clients. The quarrel between Subtle and Face in the beginning of the play, with each indulging in scathing criticism of the other and each denouncing the other proves that Face is a match for Subtle and seems, in fact, to have the better of that man. It is Face who persuaded Dapper to call on Subtle, the alchemist. The next client called Abel Drugger who, by profession, is a tobacconist is also introduced to Subtle by Face. Face points out to Subtle that it is only because of his (Face's) efforts that clients come to Subtle. Face asserts that he has to spend lot of money in going about, gathering information about potential clients, and prevailing upon them to visit Subtle's establishment. The speech which Face makes on this occasion, emphasizing the importance of the role which he is performing, is undoubtedly a convincing one. By the time Mammon arrives on the scene, Face, we find, has picked up all the vocabulary relating to the pseudoscience of alchemy. Indeed, he shows a remarkable memory in this

context, and uses technical words and phrases without stumbling or stammering at any point. When, for instance, Subtle asks him if he had dissolved certain materials in their own menstrual (or liquid) and Face replies like an expert. By getting some money from Mammon as a bribe for procuring Dol for the sexual gratification of the man, Face functions not only as Lungs but also as a pimp. When the Spanish Don reveals his true identity as Surly, Face experiences embarrassment, but he is able to tide over the difficult situation by cleverly enlisting the support of Drugger, Kastril, and others, all of whom then drive away Surly from the premises. Thus even in this situated Face emerges triumphant. Indeed, he shows himself to be a skilful manipulator. Face has an excellent command of the language, and can speak in a most persuasive and impressive manner. This is evident in the ways in which he speaks to Dol about the Spanish Don Indeed, it is surprising that a mere household servant should be able to speak in such a manner, using all kinds of similes and metaphors. He does not employ the expression 'private parts', but refers to Dol's private parts as her 'drum' and as her 'virginal' and he asks her to tickle the Spanish Don with her mother-tongue, to 'firk like a flounder', and to 'Kiss-like a scallop'. Face prevails upon Dame Pliant to yield to the amorous advances of the Spanish Don Although Dame Pliant has a prejudice against Spaniards, yet Face is able to overcome her prejudice, of course with the active support of her brother, Kastril, who forces her to submit. When Lovewit returns to his London house suddenly and unexpectedly, Face finds himself in a most difficult situation, and yet he comes out triumphant on thisoccasion also. At first he tries to throw dust into Lovewit's eyes by saying that he had kept the house shut for over a month because it had been visited by the plague. When voices are heard from inside the house, Face again tries to throw dust into his master's eyes by saying that these are the voices not of human beings but of the spirits of the air. Eventually, however, he makes, in private, a full and complete confession to his master and comes to an understanding with him. Face says that he would so manage the whole situation that the young, rich, and beautiful widow would be married to Lovewit. Lovewit having been bribed by Face in this manner, forgives Face for all the criminal activities in which face had been indulging during Lovewit's absence. Face drives away both Subtle and Dol by telling them that, if they do not instantly flee from this house, they would be taken into custody by the police. Subtle and Dol have no choice but to flee instantly, taking with them not the slightest bit of the booty.

Face is one of the two principal gainers at the end of the play, the other gainer being Lovewit. All other characters, with two exceptions, namely Kastril and Dame Pliant, have been cheated, and defrauded of their money and their goods. Face not only escapes scot-free at the end but manages to retain his master's favour; and some of the accumulated booty would also doubtlessly be bestowed upon him by the master. At the same time it must be admitted that he possesses some positive qualities too, such as wit, ingenuity, inventiveness, and an excellent command of the language. On the basis of these positive qualities, which are shared in equal measure by Subtle, some critics have tried to justify the victory which Face wins at the end over all those who have come to know his reality and who now want to have him punished. It has been said by these critics that a man who possesses such a fertile wit and such a quick intelligence deserves a lenient treatment at the hands of the author of the play; but we do not feel convinced by this reasoning. A cheat and a fraud as Face is, he should definitely have been subjected to some sort of punishment in the interests of legal, moral and poetic justice. 3. Dol Common Dol Common is a member of the trio who have set up the alchemical. Both Subtle and Dol are however out witted by Face who has come to an understanding with his master and who tells them that they must leave the house immediately if they wish to escape being arrested by the police, saying further that they must leave the entire booty behind and must not take the slightest part of it. Both Subtle and Dol feel shocked by Face's tactics but flee from the house in the greatest possible haste in order to save themselves from the police. 10.5 THE ALCHEMIST: A MORALIST COMEDY In the prologue to Every Man in His Humour, Jonson had written that the aim of his comedy was to 'sport with human follies, not with crimes'. It was his object to expose human follies to laughter and, by this means, to rid people of those follies. Now, there is no doubt that comedy has always had a corrective purpose and that, although comedy is primarily intended to entertain an audience, the moral purpose is never lost sight of by the author. Comedy leads an audience to try to shed their follies and absurdities by making them laugh at those follies and absurdities. These observations are certainly valid to a large extent in the case of The Alchemist. While TheAlchemist provides plenty of fun and laughter, yet its moral aspect cannot be

ignored. The moral purpose behind the play becomes evident when we examine the ultimate fate of the various characters. In the case of Subtle, Face, and Dol, the author has depicted not just follies or absurdities but crimes. All these three persons are real criminals who deceive and cheat their clients and rob them of as much money as then can. The chief criminal is, of course, Subtle who claims that he is an alchemist capable of manufacturing the elixir or the philosopher's stone which can diseases. Ultimately, Subtle is completely outwitted by Face and has to flee from Lovewits' house without being able to take away with him the slightest bit of the accumulated booty. Although Subtle's punishment is not very severe, yet it is not light also, because he would now be reduced to the same straitened circumstances in which he was when he entered into a partnership with Face. Thus the fate of this villain is a lesson for all those who try to make money by crooked methods. Dol shares Subtle's fate and she also gets nothing from the accumulated booty. Only Face among these three villains escapes scot-free. In his case the requirements of poetic justice have not been met. In fact, in his case the requirements of poetic justice have been flouted in a most outrageous manner, and this certainly diminishes the moral impact of the play. Face's villainy is undeniable. He is an active partner in the frauds which are practised by Subtle and he, in fact, is the man who entangles victims for Subtle. He betrays his ex-partners and drives them away from the house without allowing them to take even a little bit of the booty. And yet this man emerges triumphant at the end. As Jeremy the butler, he becomes a favourite of his master. Here the requirements of poetic justice have been thrown to the winds. Here it would seem that Jonson has lost sight of his stern moral purpose. The establishment of Face in the master's favour at the end greatly weakens the moral effect of the play. The moral purpose behind The Alchemist also becomes evident from the way in which the various clients of Subtle find themselves to be the victims of his fraud. All these clients prove themselves to be fools and gulls. But they are punished not just for their folly or lack of intelligence. They are all morally flawed characters. Their ruling passion is avarice or greed, and they must therefore be punished for this vice. All these men are punished severely for their greed, their credulity, and their stupidity. Among the people duped are also Kastril and his sister Dame Pliant. However, they are not avaricious; and therefore they neither deserve nor receive any punishment. Thus, in all these cases, the requirements of poetic justice have fully been met. In view of all this we may assert that The Alchemist is a moralist-comedy with teeth in it. It bites deep into many vices and follies, and generates in a thoughtful audience a much more serious interest than mere entertainment will provide.

Another case which shows the failure of poetic justice is that of Surly. Surly is an honest man. He has seen through the fraud being practised by Subtle; and he is determined to bring the man to justice. He gets an opportunity to seduce Dame Pliant but he refrains from doing so. He behaves most honourably towards her and, instead of seducing her or deceiving her, proposes marriage to her. At the end, however, this honest man has to go away empty- handled. He feels very bitter to find that he has suffered because of his 'foolish vice of honesty'. Now, to deprive Surly of what was his due, certainly offends our ideas of moral justice. In this particular case, then, we find that virtue is not always rewarded just as vice is not always punished. Lovewit, who appears in the play only towards the end, is perhaps the best winner in the play. He shows a want of integrity when he enters into a pact with his butler whom he completely forgives for all his dishonest deeds because the butler offers the young, rich, and beautiful widow to him in marriage. Lovewit receives a rich prize without having earned it. He admits that he has departed from an old man's gravity or strict rules; but he declares that a young wife and a good brain (which his butler has got) justify this departure. However, we do not feel convinced by this logic. In view of all this we must agree with the critic who says that 'the distribution of rewards and punishments in this play has the randomness of life, not the neatness of poetic justice.' The view of another critic also deserves consideration. According to this critic, the gulls show a cross-section of society led by greed and lust to folly and loss. The nobleman, the countryman, the little clerk, the churchman, the small shopkeeper; Jonson has cast his net widely over society to include all these. Morally the scope of the play is equally wide. Their faults include greed and lust; excess; triviality; coarseness, thick-headedness; false ambition; credulity; feeble submissiveness; hypocrisy; double-think; extortion; and silliness. But these different vices achieve unity and purpose from the motive which is common to all the gulls, the motive being an obsessive desire for easy money. Thus the play depicts a whole society, ruthlessly individualistic and acquisitive. This society is ultimately deluded and impoverished by its own false values. The moral of the play thus becomes obvious. At the same time this critic has a word to say in praise of the conspirators. According to this critic, the conspirators are certainly wicked and evil but they have something positive about their characters. The trio of conspirators display a wit and an ingenuity indicative of a creative force whereby they dupe their victims by promising to give them all that they want, whether it is a meeting with the Queen of Fairies or success in their businesses. Jonson's own creative joy is with his

entertainers, and that is why he lets them off lightly at the end. 10.5.1 The Alchemist: A Play about Possession Although the real theme of The Alchemist may be described an avarice and lust, alchemy figures largely and prominently in the play that it deserves the first and foremost consideration. The very title shows the importance of alchemy in the scheme of the play. The entire action of the play proceeds on the basis of a general belief among the people of the time that alchemy was a true science and that Subtle, who has set up an establishment to produce and supply the philosopher's stone to his clients, was a genuine alchemist. The belief in alchemy underlies the entire action of the play. Alchemy, however, is essentially a vehicle in this play. The real centre of interest lies elsewhere. Jonson is using the particular subject of alchemy in this play as the means to another end. Jonson saw himself as a social critic whose business it was to strip the 'ragged follies' of the time naked as at their birth.

The various clients of Subtle look upon Lovewit's house as a gold mine. Dapper, Mammon, Drugger, and Tribulation are by nature very different characters, but in their folly and greed they are possessed by a common passion. Those who visit Lovewit's house are possessed by the single idea of gain, and this is their 'humour.' All the characters named above are dominated by avarice or greed. Alchemy is accepted

by all of them as a genuine science capable of producing the philosopher's stone which will make each of them rich and wealthy.

Dapper, a lawyer's clerk, wishes to give up his profession and become a whole-time gambler with the

sole aim of acquiring riches. Drugger is a tobacconist who wants directions from the alchemist as to the construction of his shop and the arrangement of the shelves in his shop. Furthermore, he wants a sign of good luck, a 'thriving sign' which is duly given to him. He also wants Subtle to strikeout his unlucky days from the calendar so that he should not do any business on those days. Not satisfied with all this, Drugger would like to get married to the widow, Dame Plaint. Mammon's ambition to become rich is the most fantastic. He wants to equal King Solomon in wealth. Nor are the Anabaptists free from this taint of avarice. The conspirators themselves are symbols of greed and avarice.

Their fraudulent activities have been prompted by the desire for money,

and whatever they do in the course of the play is motivated by this desire. The action of the play consists of a series of episodes in which the clients of the alchemist are shown as asking for wealth, being assured of wealth, and being robbed of whatever wealth they already possess.

Thus it is wealth and the longing for wealth which dominates the play. It is through these seekers after wealth that Jonson depicts a society or a civilization at a particular state of development. The rise of capitalism had put before men's eyes exciting prospects of private enrichment by private enterprise. The jostle and thrust of competition, which is inevitable in any sphere of power, became particularly fierce in London of the early seventeenth century. For centuries, the basis of power had been in possession of land and rank; now money became the basis of power. At the time this play was written, London had become increasingly a place where individuals made money in order to cut a figure and in order to obtain influence and so make more money. Jonson was the great chronicler of this development; and this play shows Jonson in that role. Avarice is, however, not the only theme of the play. There is at least, one character whose lust equals his desire to become fabulously rich. Indeed, Mammon's lust is beyond the power of words to describe. He wants to maintain a harem of wives, mistresses, and concubines equal in number to those kept by the ancient King Solomon. When Dol is introduced to him, he is so overcome by his lustful desire for her that he begins to pay glowing tributes to her beauty and her graces. Mammon is completely blinded by his lust. Thus lust too is one of themes of this play. The Alchemist gives us an insight into human nature in general. This play is concerned fundamentally with the nature of man. All those person who come to Subtle are credulous. They desire wealth, and in the process of their efforts to acquire it, they would believe anything. They also believe that the philosopher's stone would not only serve them as a means of acquiring wealth but also extend their influence and prestige in the community. Thus credulity and gullibility are also themes in the play. Then there is the theme of vanity, which is symbolized chiefly by Kastril. He tries to show off about his wealth and the fact that he would not marry his sister to a lower ranking man than a knight. He keeps asking for praise about how well he quarrelled or how well he had learned to smoke tobacco. Ananias too is a vain fellow, as is clear from the way he regards Subtle as a heathen and evil man and believes himself to be a pious and saintly person though in actual fact he is as dishonest and hypocritical as Subtle is. Characterization Jonson's wide and penetrating observation of manners, whether of city or of court, is one of his obvious merits, as is his ingenious and systematic construction of plots. But the great

excellence of both his tragedies and his comedies is their description of character. Each person is awarded the illustration of one trait or humour, to exaggerate his satire into farce. Jonson makes an over-use of the long monologue after the fashion of the classical models or the English drama, because of its clearness, its richness of humour, and its dramatic honesty. He is at his best in that type of comedy in which everything else comes second to the dramatic unfolding of character. Jonson gifted each of his characters with some particular quirk or mannerism, some ridiculous exaggeration of manner, speech, or dress; and he pushed forward this single odd trait to such an extent that all others might be lost sight of. In The Alchemist most of the characters are under the influence of avarice or greed which therefore constitutes the humour of each one of them. Difference between Jonson's Method and Shakespeare's Method The fixed, narrow limits of Jonson's characterization, were very different to the practice of contemporary dramatists who gave their characters full play, developing them spaciously and endowing them with complexity and the faculty of growth. These other dramatists made oddity the characteristic only of their secondary characters. Jonson bestows humours on all his characters and especially on the principal characters. Even where Shakespeare shows a character under the influence of a master passion he does so in a different way from Jonson's. Shakespeare studies the master passion of jealousy in his Othello, but he does so with much more surprise, variety, and free play of life than does Jonson in his study of the master passion of greed in The Alchemist. Jonson exhibits one character after another as a logician presents the various parts of his argument. In other words, he always, or nearly always, lets us see the machinery. However, what he loses in spontaneity, he gains in intellectual unity and in massiveness of purpose. Characters as Caricatures Jonson was, deceiving himself when he thought that he had depicted real men in his plays. He noticed only obvious individual peculiarities or the violent actions of exceptional persons. He showed an almost total disregard of fundamental feelings common to mankind, and his ignorance of love. He thus never got near to nature in the classical meaning of the word. To find in his plays a character who is merely a man or a woman is almost impossible. In his later comedies, Jonson's satirical attitude becomes stronger. Several characters in these plays are caricatures. The portraits exaggerate the odd behaviour and extravagance of the characters
depicted. Shakespeare's characters are more complex, and their motives are more varied so that they are capable of surprising us. They are, in this sense, more like real people, Jonson's characters, on the other hand, are not portraits but caricatures. They are simplified and exaggerated, but just for this reason they are clearly recognizable and alienated from our sympathy. For instance, we feel little sympathy for the characters in The Alchemist because we know from the start that they are not human. The characters in this play are both super- human and sub-human. They are superhuman in the extent and intensity of their passion, and they are sub-human in their singleness and limitation, and in the absence of any redeeming qualities. Almost all the characters in The Alchemist are possessed by one and the same humour, which is an obsessive desire for money, though individual characters have certain other humours or interest also. Mammon, for instance, would like to use his money to gratify his unlimited sexual desire. Furthermore, Mammon is distinguished from the other characters by his generosity of mind. He would like to dispense the elixir as a medicine freely to those who are suffering from any diseases. In fact, he would search various areas for those suffering from various diseases would cure them with the elixir. He also speaks of establishing hospitals and other institutions of public welfare. Thus in his case money is not an end in itself but a means to other ends. He is also distinguished from the other characters by his falling in love with Dol whom he thinks to be a lord's sister, subject to fits of madness. He becomes poetic in her company and pays glowing compliments to her beauty and charms. He is further distinguished from the other characters by the learned manner in which he talks about the wonders which the philosopher's stone can work. He cites several classical myths in support of his argument. According to him, all these myths are allegorical accounts of the miracles which were worked by the philosopher's stone. The Anabaptists want money as a means to power. The ambitions of Drugger are even humbler to start with than those of Dapper. He simply wants more customers at his tobacco-shop. He aims at ensuring a thriving trade, though a cure for the worms which afflict him would also be welcome. But within the same day his imagination moves to an ambition not previously entertained. Why should he not marry his neighbour, the wealthy Dame Pliant, and so attain a lifestyle surpassing that of any mere tobacconist, however successful? This pattern of cunningly enlarged aspiration, developed initially with Dapper and Drugger, repeats itself with all except one of Subtle's other customers. Subtle, Face, and Dol are distinguished from the dupes by their skill, ingenuity, wit, and

freedom from illusion, though they too are driven by the same desire for wealth. They share also the common view that the ends are important, not the means. They have a business agreement to cheat outsiders, but this does not prevent them from cheating one another. The two chief conspirators, Subtle and Face, are also clearly differentiated from each other. Subtle is the (bogus) alchemist, while Face is only 'Lungs'. Subtle stays at home, conducting the alchemical experiment, while face roams abroad in order to rope in customers. Besides, Face serves as a propagandist for Subtle. It would not look proper for Subtle to praise himself, and therefore Face performs the duty of describing to the customers the wonders which Subtle can perform. Eventually, Face shows himself to be smarter than Subtle. Subtle had decided to deprive Face of the latter's share of the booty, but it is Face who deprives both Subtle and Dol of their share. In fact, Face manipulates the whole situation in such a way that
Subtle and Dol have to flee from the house in
the greatest possible hurry in order to escape police action against them. Kastril is clearly distinguishable from all the other characters. He is a rustic gentleman, a gentleman who has newly come to London. He is hardly twenty one. He has full control over his widowed sister. He is a man of some fifteen hundred pounds a year. He has come to London in order to learn how to quarrel and how to live by his wits. He has already started smoking tobacco, and he would now like to receive lessons in quarrelling from Subtle. Although he is not governed by a passion for money, he does desire status. He is not crazy after money as he is well provided for. All that he now aims at is sophistication and his sister's marriage to a knight. Surly too is clearly distinguishable from the other characters. In the beginning he is described as a gamester, which perhaps implies that he is a gambler. However, we find him to be a very sensible and rational kind of man. He is intelligent enough not to believe in alchemy or in the philosopher's stone. He is given an opportunity to seduce Dame Pliant, but he shows himself to be too respectable to do any such evil deed. He reveals his real identity to Dame Pliant to whom he then proposes marriage. Eventually, even he is cheated of his hope of marrying the widow. We feel sorry for him because the one man who really deserved a reward has been deprived of it. One limitation of The Alchemist as a comedy of humours is the lack of development in the characters. The characters remain the same from beginning to end.

10.6

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS 1. Benson's play Cynthia's Revels was produced by the Children of the Chapel Royal at Blackfriars Theatre in 1600. 2. The two tragedies written by Jonson are Sejanus and Catiline. 3. The Alchemist tells the story of how a trio of cheats practices fraud on a number of trusting people who are easily taken in the false promises and assurances made by the cheats. 4. Dapper is a lawyer's clerk who wants that the alchemist should provide him with a familiar or an attendant spirit who might enable him to win money at horse-races, at card-parties, and at dice-parties. 10.7 SUMMARY • Ben Jonson (11 June 1572 – 6 August 1637), was a Jacobean (or Elizabethan) playwright, poet and critic. • Jonson
is best known for the satirical plays Every Man in His Humour (1598),
Volpone, or The Foxe (1605), The Alchemist (1610), and Bartholomew Fair: A Comedy (1614) and also for his poems and masques. • Jonson is considered to be the next best English dramatist, after William Shakespeare, of the Elizabethan era. • Jonson's play Cynthia's Revels was produced by the Children of the Chapel Royal at Blackfriars Theatre in 1600. • The Elizabethan era is the period associated with Queen Elizabeth I's reign (1558– 1603) and is often considered to be the golden age in history of English Literature and art. It is considered to be the height of the English Renaissance. • Elizabethan theatre derived from several medieval theatre traditions, such as the Mystery plays, based on biblical themes, that formed a part of religious festivals in England and other parts of Europe during the Middle Ages. • Elizabethan theatre did not make use of lavish scenery, instead left the stage largely bare, with a few key props. The main visual appeal on stage was costumes. The stage was primarily bare so the backdrop of the play was left for the audience to imagine. • If the Royalists promoted literature and theatre, then there was a faction in England called the Puritans who had a strong dislike for theatre. • What is significant in the works of Jonson is not only the realistic element, but also the notion of humour which had a significant role to play in his comedies. • The Alchemist tells the story of how a trio of cheats practices fraud on a number of trusting people who are easily taken in the false promises and assurances made by the

cheats. The play is, in fact, a satire on greed, hoarding, and sensuality. • In the prologue to Every Man in His Humour, Jonson had written that the aim of his comedy was to 'sport with human follies, not with crimes'. It was his object to expose human follies to laughter and, by this means, to rid people of those follies. • Comedy leads an audience to try to shed their follies and absurdities by making them laugh at those follies and absurdities. These observations are certainly valid to a large extent in the case of The Alchemist. • Jonson is using the particular subject of alchemy in this play The Alchemist as the means to another end. Jonson saw himself as a social critic whose business it was to strip the 'ragged follies' of the time naked as at their birth. •

At the time The Alchemist play was written, London had become increasingly a place where individuals made money in order to cut a figure and in order to obtain influence and so make more money. • The Alchemist gives us an insight into human nature in general. This play is concerned fundamentally with the nature of man. • Jonson makes an over-use of the long monologue after the fashion of the classical models or the English drama, because of its clearness, its richness of humour, and its dramatic honesty. • Jonson was, deceiving himself when he thought that he had depicted real men in his plays. He noticed only obvious individual peculiarities or the violent actions of exceptional persons. • Jonson showed an almost total disregard of fundamental feelings common to mankind, and his ignorance of love. He thus never got near to nature in the classical meaning of the word. • One limitation of The Alchemist as a comedy of humours is the lack of development in the characters. The characters remain the same from beginning to end. 10.8 KEY WORDS • Avarice: It refers to extreme greed for wealth or material gain. • Alchemy: It refers to medieval forerunner of chemistry, concerned with the transmutation of matter, in particular with attempts to convert base metals into gold or find a universal elixir. • Gullibility: It is a failure of social intelligence in which a person is easily tricked or manipulated into an ill-advised course of action. • Credulity: It is a tendency to be too ready to believe that something is real or true.

10.9

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES Short Answer Questions 1. Write a short note on the life and works of Ben Jonson. 2. Give a historical background of Elizabethan era. 3. Who is Drugger? What was his profession? 4. How is The Alchemist a play about possession? 5. Write a note on characters as caricatures in Jonson's play. 6.

Who produced Cynthia's Revels? 7. Name the two tragedies written by Johnson. 8.

What is the plot of The Alchemist? 9. Who is Dapper?

Long Answer Questions 1. Give detailed character sketches of major characters in The Alchemist. 2. Discuss any two important passages from the play The Alchemist. 3. Assess Ben Jonson's The Alchemist as a moralist comedy. 4. What is the difference between Jonson's method and Shakespeare's method? 10.10 FURTHER READINGS • Pope, D.W.G. 2013. Adventures Into the Past: Elizabethan Era. Indiana: Xlibris Corporation. • Forgeng, Jeffrey L. 2009. Daily Life in Elizabethan England, 2nd Edition. Greenwood: ABC-CLIO. • Jonson, Ben. 2012. Volpone and The Alchemist: Dover Thrift Editions. North Chelmsford, Massachusetts: Courier Corporation.

UNIT 11 THOMAS DEKKER: THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY 11.1 Introduction 11.2 Objectives 11.3 About the Author 11.4 Critical Appreciation of The Shoemaker's Holiday 14.4.1 Structure of the Play 14.5 Summary 14.6 Key Words 14.7 Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises 14.8 Further Readings 11.1 Introduction In this unit, you will study about the life and works of Thomas Dekker. The unit further provides a critical analysis of Dekker's play The Shoemaker's Holiday. Thomas Dekker (c. 1572 – 25 August 1632) was an English Elizabethan dramatist and pamphleteer, a versatile and prolific writer, whose career spanned several decades and brought him into contact with many of the period's most famous dramatists. 11.2

Objectives After going through this unit, you will be able to: • Discuss the life and works of

Thomas Dekker • Describe the structure of Dekkers play The Shoemaker's Holiday • Critically analyse the play The Shoemaker's Holiday 11.3 About the Author Thomas Dekker was an Englishman. It is believed that he was probably of Dutch origin. But all of his plays carry with them the spirit of the English life. The Shoemaker's Holiday is definitely one of those special plays which shows the easy interesting blend of history and ordinary life of London. The plot revolves around noble men, artisans, young lovers, merchants and even introduces a king. The way Thomas Dekker has dealt with the plot made the play extremely successful when it was performed during his period. The drama manages to hit the right chord among the people because of the patriotic flavour it served. This specific play was performed by Lord Admiral's Men as a counter narrative to the history plays that were performed by Lord Chamberlain's Men (a company that relied on the writings of
William Shakespeare). The inspiration for Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday is a story The Gentle Craft (1597-1598). This story was written by Thomas Deloney. 11.4 Critical Appreciation of The Shoemaker's Holiday The first performance of the play took place in the court of Queen Elizabeth. It was a period when London was experiencing a transition especially in the state of theatre. People were slowly rejecting the romantic style of work that were composed by the predecessors like Robert Greene, John Lyly et al. For the contemporary audience this kind of play now appeared superficial as well as escapist in nature. But it was also a time, which was yet to experience the realistic comedies of Ben Jonson or even the dark plays of William Shakespeare. As a document of history, and then embodiment of the spirit of London, The Shoemaker's Holiday is a fantastic piece of literature that highlights the nuances of the transitional period of which it was a representative work. Thomas Dekker in this play blends in an appropriate amount of realism as well as romanticism. This also is a highlighting feature of the play because both of the genre is appropriately assimilated in the play. For the contemporary theatre lovers, The Shoemaker's Holiday where's the best romantic comedy they could have asked for. Yet the undercurrent of realism that the audience witnessed through the play also marked a significant aspect of translation that the theatre was going to experience in a few years' time. The Shoemaker's Holiday is brims with a tone of exuberance. This is probably an indication that the youthful nature of the playwright gets translated into him text despite the grim reality that he was projecting to the work. Many critics believe that even though enjoyed a long life and also composed many other dramas, but this was his best. Thomas Dekker, is believed to have collaborated in creating more than 30 plays during his lifetime. But his life was not very disciplined, records suggest that he frequented the prison because he was forever in debt. The realistic note in The Shoemaker's Holiday is most explicit in the street scenes as well as when the Shoemakers appear on the stage. It is also an indication of the kind of impact, Dekker leaves on stage despite his young age. Is it taking a cue from this work, the playwright continued experimenting with realism in theatre; and the honest whore (1604 - 1605) is the best example of realism that the playwright created for his audience. Like it has been already mentioned Thomas Dekker in his play uses two different elements. In a logical scenario this kind of contradictory elements being placed together in a work of

art is expected to bring in conflict of aesthetics. But credit goes to, Dekker for building a seamlessly woven story whose magic is still pronounced. The first element that is apparent in the play is a dose of good humour. It speaks about enjoying life without worrying about the pleasure it has to offer without hesitation. The other element is the introduction of suffering and pain that human life undergoes especially on their journey to death; Thomas Dekker had managed to put in this aspect of every life without romanticizing or glorifying it. An integral idea that Thomas Dekker has used as a base to project these different elements into the play is by using the idea that light is used for highlighting the prominence of darkness. But the play per se is not a collage of diverse elements put together. The idea that stitched together with the empathetic perspective that the playwright has to offer. This is why one does not find it difficult to view a comedy situation alongside and an extremely serious court case of the period. Some of the best prose pieces composed by Dekker give an insight into his literary inspiration. The details of debtors' prison can be found in Lanthorne and Candle-light as well as Dekker his Dreame. On the other hand, The Wonderfull Yeare, provides a deep insight into the plague that troubled London city (this is also a book that influenced Daniel Defoe's Journal of the Plague Year). And then we have The Guls Hornebooke; this book provided a satirical perspective to the people who were used to the comedy of manners. Thomas Dekker and his work are identified by the sympathetic outlook and an inherent desire to understand the situation without being judgmental about them. It is believed that his own troubled life smeared with poverty, frequent visit to prison, imprisonment etc. would have been the reason for him expressing himself in such sweet manner. Even as we analyse the later works of Thomas Dekker we can clearly see that compassion is an element which is forever apparent in his work. For example, if we consider The Witch of Edmonton (a dark play) which is based on the trial system of the contemporary times, we see that Mother Sawyer who is a convicted witch (like many other women) turns out to be a rebel by the end of the play. Jeffrey Burton Russel in Witchcraft in the Middle Ages (1972) says, "Witchcraft was . . . the strongest possible religious expression of social discontent". Through Mother Sawyer and her rebellion against a community which was both stupid and cruel, Thomas Dekker along with his team brings in compassion for the poor lady, an emotion that would not have been considered appropriate to be associated with someone who has been branded as witch in the contemporary times. Yet the sense of sympathy is fundamentally very
Thomas Dekker. Going back to the play, the rebellion actually ends up complicating the matter further by arousing the suspicion Mother Sawyer's neighbour, gaining her more hatred from the community and finally leading to her own degeneration of physical and mental health. Mother Sawyer 's shattered dreams are and obvious revelation that did not hesitate to bring out the actual circumstances that result in doing in the lives of people and criticizing the society which plays a significant role in making this happen. Even though Thomas Dekker and his criticism of the society is extremely obvious in almost all of his works, in an ironical situation The Shoemaker's Holiday is many a times criticized for being one of the ' happy' dramas about London city and is considered to be nothing more than that. It is identified as a city comedy or a citizen comedy which meant please the audience. But nurturing this kind of view about the play is only an incomplete understanding of the work. Moreover, one cannot ignore that, that the people who went to attend theatre in London city were better educated and reflected better sense of understanding. Without a doubt, one can identify elements of citizen comedy in the play The Shoemaker's Holiday. How can one not find some? After all the play is about Rowland Lacy, the Aristocrat, Rowland Lacy, who disguises himself as a shoe maker with the purpose of marrying a girl who belong to the middle class. But seen from this perspective one might have to dismiss the Merry Wives of Windsor as nothing more than a story that talks about gratification of the middle class and their taste. After all, both Merry Wives of Windsor and The Shoemaker's Holiday share a number of similarities including the reference to Henry V. Thomas Dekker in The Shoemaker's Holiday makes changes and addition to the original plot that he had borrowed to not make his composition only a simple entertaining text but also the critique of the contemporary society. Close reading of Deloney's The Gentle Craft, will suggest that he was hostile towards the immigrants and this was the common impression that most of the Londoners carried. One could witness protestant Refugees across the London city who were posing a serious threat to the local population especially in terms of job achievement. On the other hand, the Dutch people were already challenging the commercial aspect of England's economy. In the play by Deloney the hatred for the 'outsiders' finally come to an end when the foreigners and their deceitfulness are exposed while the English people and their virtue triumphs. The xenophobia is replaced with the protestant fraternity.

Despite all the comical moments that Thomas Dekker provides in The Shoemaker's Holiday he also makes an appeal to treat the refugees as humans. You also are used for a political Alliance that would bring protestants together with the European Catholic forces, an idea that was close to the heart of the Earl of Essex. Despite his good intentions, Thomas Dekker at no point of time turn into a fanatic. He does not turn into someone who has the power to dictate that one group is superior than the other and has the power to accomplish whatever they wish at any cost. In the days of Thomas Dekker, it was believed that citizen comedies and nothing more than near entertainment. But the playwright gives citizen comedy an distinguished dimension bye decorating it with values of humaness that is reflected in his characters; even though the play is about reality and Aristocrats yet he saves the common man from suffering in the world and that suggests that the world is a good place to live as long as one could manifest human sympathy and treat everyone with compassion and love. Thomas Dekker in his The Shoemaker's Holiday brings in some interesting subplots which make it different as well as better than the original. The two major subplots that are included in the drama a romantic in nature and deal with the idea of love that is lost and then again it is found. The first subplot is about Ralph Damport, who is the journeyman of Eyre. He is conscripted into the Army and Sony leaves for France to fight for England in the war. Upon his returning from the war, you figured out that his wife Jane has left him (as she thinks he is dead) and leaves in a different section of London. He or she is being courted by another gentleman called Hammon. In the next subplot we have the rich and Aristocrat Roland Lacy disguising himself as a Shoemaker of the Dutch descent so that he does not have to go to the war and Ken romance with Roland Lacy (a beautiful lady home Roland's father disapproves of). Thomas Dekker in the dedicatory epistle mentions the play is "a merry conceited comedy" where "nothing is proposed but mirth". But we all know that we know that Beneath this surface of comedy lies a series of insightful information about London. The social, economic as well as political London that is mentioned in the play is that of 1598 - 1600, the period during which the play was written as well as produced. One of the most important aspect that the drama highlights is the rise of capitalism. This is reflected through Eyre's dramatic elevation in the social position where he becomes Lord Mayor and his personal wealth makes him the part of upwardly mobile middle class of England. The middle class at that point was the most fertile section of the society who had the financial opportunities to explore and had the scope to expand themselves socially. As we read the text we realize that most of the major

characters in the play are engaged in buying and selling of product. Eyre as we know makes is fortune by bringing lots of foreign products and selling it in London at a higher cost; thus, bringing him enormous profit. To be with Rose, Lacy keeps bribing people so that he can by himself time to be with his lady. Hammon, on the other hand, tries to buy Jane from Ralph and the money offered was gold worth £20. Along with capitalism and other important aspect that is highlighted in the play is the development of guilds. We can see the establishment of early trade unions each set under the backdrop of similar mother tongue, group identity or mythology or patron saint. The language used in the Play simply highlights the intense knowledge that Thomas Dekker possessed of the working-class community in London letters for example look at the sentence: "Hark you, shoemaker," Firk asks Lacy, 'have you all your tools? A good rubbing-pin, a good stopper, a good dresser, your four sorts of awls, and your two balls of wax, your paring knife, your hand and thumb-leathers, and good Saint Hugh's bones to smooth your work?' the world that Thomas Dekker is portraying here is a place where everyone is proud of his or her work. And they take unexpected pride in accomplishing whatever they are good at. For instance, we get to hear: "This shoe, I durst be sworn, / Once covered the instep of my Jane. / This is her size, her breadth. Thus, trod my love. / These true-love knots I pricked. I hold my life, / By this old shoe I shall find out my wife". Another hallmark of The Shoemaker's Holiday is the inclusion of rich and exotic language, which appears most prominently in Eyre's vocabulary which is extremely imaginative alliterative as well as rhetorical. We also have the pseudo - Dutch language that Lacy uses; we get to hear the courtly and fashionable discourse that Hammon reliance upon while Firk keeps talking about obscenities as well as erotic possibilities with the usage of words like tongue, tightness etc. By understanding the size and breadth of the feet of Jane, Ralph actually manage to map the size of her soul and not just her feet. The Cinderella motif which appears in the play through the comfortable footwear episode ends with a perfect fit expect to be successful. This is how Jane finally decides to reject Hammon, who does not reflect the similar standards of morality and ethical behaviour that Ralph as well as the shoemaker's brotherhood who belong to the Shoemaker guild display. The play tightly focuses on the commercialism and the emergence of industrial guild. This is precisely why the play take place another place but in London; a place that give the opportunity to explore the real life as well as provide beautiful scenic background to the characters as well as to the events that appear in the. When Eyre and his group move around landscapes people get to witness the popular places like St. Paul's Church, Leaden Hall, Watling Street, the Guildhall, Tower Street and many search similar locations. Inclusion of such popular places was a smart strategy because the audience immediately
manage to identify with the location. To the audience who belong to the city of London the play felt more at home because of the setting it took recourse to. The urban setting that the play demonstrates makes The Shoemaker's Holiday one of the precursor to the popular and influential literary genre, Jacobean City comedy. Aplay that has the word 'holiday' in the title will indeed speak something about 'holiday' aspect. We get to witness how three different plots " move from Union to wondering to joyful reunion at the conclusion". We also come across a few scapegoat kinds of characters who display mean-spirited antagonism. This is also something which is exploited to the best extent to provide comic relief. We see characters wearing rich and fine clothing which indicate their social as well as financial effluence. But the most interesting aspect probably would be the amoral nature of the setting in which the play is set up. But a final analysis will also say that The Shoemaker's Holiday not just talks about the contemporary London but also gives any insight into the person who wrote the drama. Thomas Dekker was a very popular playwright of the period but unfortunately you were not a rich man. Unlike William Shakespeare, who was financially better off being a shareholder in his own theatrical company Thomas Dekker remained a playwright who moved on from one job to another, from one company to another as and when his services were required. It might come as a surprise to many modern readers that Thomas Dekker earned merely £3 for his work. The Shoemaker's Holiday at the end of the day is a compelling piece of social propaganda. Characters The king of England: Plays a very minor role in the pay. he appears only at the end of the action and he is expected to pardon the faithful lovers. He rewards those who actually deserve honour and takes the chance to spread his wisdom as well as his mercy across the kingdom. Sir Hugh Lacy: He is identified as the Earl of Lincoln. he is a member of the aristocracy. he also happens to be the uncle of Roland Lacy. he disapproves of the marriage between Roland and Rose. The grounds of his disapproval revolved around class hierarchy. He goes to any length to stop the marriage. That is why he has his nephew sent into the army which was set to leave for a war in France. Roland Lacy: He is the nephew of Sir Hugh Lacy. he was in love with Rose. He pretends to

leave with the army but returns with a disguise as Hans Meulter, a Dutch shoemaker. This gives him an opportunity to court her. Soon Roland and Rose triumph over all the obstacles and finally marry each other and help unite the two classes. Askew: He is cousin of Roland Lacy. he is also part of the army. After Roland decides to leave the army and disguise himself and stay in England, he falls upon Askew for help. Dodger: A servant who worked for Sir Hugh Lacy. Sir Roger Oatley: He is identified as the lord mayor of London for most part of the play . During the play he loses his position to Simon Eyre as he becomes rich and powerful through his business. Roger Oatley is Rose's father who initially only mildly objects to her marriage to Roland. But within his heart he secretly hoped for the marriage to materialize so that he can have access to a higher section of the society. But when Rose proposes to tie the knot with Roland who is then disguised as Hans, Sir Roger is disappointed and vehemently raises objection. It is for the same reason that Sir Hugh Lacy had raised his dissatisfaction - the class issues. But neither Sir Hugh nor Sir Roger could stop the marriage in the end. Rose Oatley: She is the daughter of Sir Roger Oatley. Rose is extremely in love with Roland. By the end of the play she and Roland are married. This brings in joys for the working class while earns the blessing of the king. Sybil: maid of Rose. Hammon: A gentleman from London. while hunting he accidently meets Jane and instantly fell in love with her. He and Jane both develop a belief that her husband, Ralph, might have succumb to the war. That is why they plan to wed. But Ralph (who was still alive) returns from France at the nick of the time to stop the wedding materialize. Warner: He is Hammon's brother-in-law. he is as good as Hammon in most things, which his love for him. After meeting Sybil, the maid of Rose, he falls in love. Scott: Sir Roger Oatley's friend. Simon Eyre: A middle-class shoemaker who is happy by nature as well as lucky by fortune.

Unexpectedly (one can give credit to the exceptional luck) he rises in the social ladder to the position of lord mayor of London. Margary Eyre: She is wife of Simon Eyre. She is made to be the butt of many lower-class joke. Most of these jokes she rightly deserves because of her pretentiousness that arises from her ego as she rises in her status from being the wife of an ordinary shoemaker to the wife of the lord mayor. Roger: He is nicknamed as Hodge. he happens to be the foreman in Eyre's cobbler shop. Ralph Damport: He is a journeyman in Eyre's cobbler shop. He is made to go to war; despite the fact that he was recently married to Jane. War leaves him wounded. He returns to London at the right time to get informed that his wife (who presumes him to be dead) is all set to marry Hammon. Asking his fellow workers to help, he manages to stop the marriage; thus, showing the spirit as well as the strength of the tradesmen. Jane: She is Ralph's wife. She has a very much middle-class upbringing. She happens to be a loving wife. She turns her attention to Hammon only after she is absolutely confirmed that her husband is no more. Firk: A journeyman who works in Simon Eyre's cobbler shop. 11.4.1 Structure of the Play The structure of The Shoemaker's Holiday is extremely interesting. Thomas Dekker display as his mastery in the art of construction of structure. The subplots in the play are inter woven skillfully and harmoniously. The romantic young man Rowland and the young shoemaker Ralph are not the heroes of the play as one would assume. Instead, we find that Simon Eyre is the real hero of the play. It is obvious that the merry Shoemaker helps stitch both the subplots in the play. The Shoemaker's Holiday has been often identified as the citizen play and as the romance of the working class this is because of the way Thomas Dekker decides to project the Shoemaker. He looks at the ordinary people from a very different perspective which has no resemblance to the way his contemporary writers were portraying the common man. Most of the writer of the period look down upon the common people and always use them as object of ridicule. They are supposed to be fickle minded who did not have the power to take proper judgement and were often described as irrational. This is a very typical

description of a common man which one can find in many Elizabethan plays. On the other hand, Thomas Dekker, decided to give a very faithful depiction of the artisans - the Shoemakers - about whom he was writing. He does not make them the object of ridicule neither tries to highlight their loopholes; instead he decides to highlight their talent and exceptional qualities. But of course, keeping the comic vein intact he does make fun of the pretentious as well as the boastful life they live. But he balances it by showcasing some of the enduring qualities. Thomas Dekker suggests that the shoemakers are hardworking people and they do not like to live on charity instead they would prefer to earn their own bread through hard work and honest work. The shoemaker's always carry with them a sense of professional dignity. They are always truthful, and they never cheat on anyone. And just like people of other profession they are happy and cheerful people who love to have fun and enjoy your holiday. They like to live the in their own way following their own philosophy. As a play The Shoemaker's Holiday mirrors the feelings that people nurtured about the trading plan during the Elizabethan age. The traders were expected to be hopelessly materialistic while being devoid of any kind of self-respect who could do anything for the sake of money. Just like the men the women were also supposed to be of frivolous nature who could do anything for the sake of pleasure. Thomas Dekker takes the realistic view of the class that he is writing about in his work. He believed that since the trader class enjoyed material prosperity that brought with it a natural environment which help in creating an atmosphere of goodwill and celebration. The play as it is probably being not responsible for exercising the eternal charm, showcases the abundance of joy of life that is reflected in Elizabethan London life. The play makes display much more interesting. In a very smart and compelling way the play says what most of the literature of the period failed to say that dignity of labour is same for everybody and everyone has a right to rise in the social ladder. One of the most prominent features of Elizabethan comedy is the appearance of relatable characters through people as well as the scenes in which they appear. Thomas Dekker who is considered to be a realistic in the same way as Ben Johnson, in The Shoemaker's Holiday tries to write a realistic comedy. It provides a very true and faithful picture of the citizens of London. In fact, The Shoemaker's Holiday is a valuable contribution to the genre of domestic comedy beach throws light on the everyday life of the common people who worked on the margins of the London. Many critics consider Thomas Dekker to be somewhat similar to Charles Dickens in his depiction of the everyday ordinariness of the people.

11.5

SUMMARY • Thomas Dekker was an Englishman. It is believed that he was probably of Dutch origin. But all of his plays carry with them the spirit of the English life. • The way Thomas Dekker has dealt with the plot made the play extremely successful when it was performed during his period. • The inspiration for Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday is a story The Gentle Craft (1597- 1598). This story was written by Thomas Deloney. • The first performance of The Shoemaker's Holiday took place in the court of Queen Elizabeth. It was a period when London was experiencing a transition especially in the state of theatre. • The Shoemaker's Holiday is a fantastic piece of literature that highlights the nuances of the transitional period of which it was a representative work. • Thomas Dekker in The Shoemaker's Holiday blends in an appropriate amount of realism as well as romanticism. • The realistic note in The Shoemaker's Holiday is most explicit in the street scenes as well as when the Shoemakers appear on the stage. • Even as we analyse the later works of Thomas Dekker we can clearly see that compassion is an element which is forever apparent in his work. • Even though Thomas Dekker and his criticism of the society is extremely obvious in almost all of his works, in an ironical situation The Shoemaker's Holiday is many a times criticized for being one of the ' happy' dramas about London city and is considered to be nothing more than that. • Thomas Dekker in The Shoemaker's Holiday makes changes and addition to the original plot that he had borrowed to not make his composition only a simple entertaining text but also the critique of the contemporary society. • The Shoemaker's Holiday not just talks about the contemporary London but also gives any insight into the person who wrote the drama. • The structure of The Shoemaker's Holiday is extremely interesting. Thomas Dekker display as his mastery in the art of construction of structure. That to subplots in the play are inter woven skillfully and harmoniously. • As a play The Shoemaker's Holiday mirrors the feelings that people nurtured about the trading plan during the Elizabethan age. • Many critics consider Thomas Dekker to be somewhat similar to Charles Dickens in his depiction of the everyday ordinariness of the people.

11.6 KEY WORDS • Drama: It is a play for theatre, radio, or television. • Alliteration: It refers to the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. • Romanticism: It refers to a movement in the arts and literature which originated in the late 18th century, emphasizing inspiration, subjectivity, and the primacy of the individual. 11.7

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES Short Answer Questions 1. Write a short note on

Thomas Dekker. 2. Give a brief background of The Shoemaker's Holiday. 3. Discuss the structure of the play The Shoemaker's Holiday. Long Answer Question 1. Give a detailed analysis of Thomas Dekker's play The Shoemaker's Holiday. 2. Describe the major characters in The Shoemaker's Holiday and mention their role. 3.
The inspiration for Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday is a story The Gentle Craft (1597- 1598). This story was written by Thomas Deloney. 4. The first performance of The Shoemaker's Holiday took place in the court of Queen Elizabeth. 5. The realistic note in The Shoemaker's Holiday is most explicit in the street scenes as well as when the Shoemakers appear on the stage. 6.
What was the inspiration for
Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday? 7. Where did the first performance of The Shoemaker's Holiday take place? 11.8 FURTHER READINGS • Pope, D.W.G. 2013. Adventures Into the Past: Elizabethan Era. Indiana: Xlibris Corporation. • Forgeng, Jeffrey L. 2009. Daily Life in Elizabethan England, 2nd Edition. Greenwood: ABC-CLIO. • Adler, Doris Ray. 1983. Thomas Dekker: A Reference Guide. Boston: G.K. Hall. • Dekker, Thomas. 1999. The Shoemaker's Holiday: Thomas Dekker. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
UNIT 12 THOMAS MORE: UTOPIA BOOK I & II 12.1 Introduction 12.2 Objectives 12.3 About the Author 12.4 Critical Appreciation of Utopia Book I & II 12.5 Summary of Book Two (First Half) 12.6 Summary of Book Two (Second Half) 12.7 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions 12.8 Summary 12.9 Key Words 12.10 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises 12.11 Further
Readings 12.1 Introduction Sir Thomas More wrote Utopia in 1516. The work was written in Latin and it was published in Louvain (present-day Belgium). Utopia is a work of satire, indirectly criticizing Europe's political corruption and religious hypocrisy. In depicting Utopia, More steps outside the bounds of orthodox Catholicism, but More's ultimate goal is to indicate areas of improvement for Christian society. Is an ideal state possible? Utopia means 'no place' but sounds like 'good place.' Utopia exposes the absurdities and evils of More's society by depicting an alternative. 12.2
Objectives After going through this unit, you will be able to: ➢ Discuss the
social conditions when Utopia was written ➢ Explain More's concept of an ideal society ➢ Describe the society of Utopia 12.3 About The Author Sir Thomas More was born in London on 7 February 1477. His father, Sir John More, was a barrister (lawyer) and later became a judge. As a young child, More went to St. Anthony's School, and at the age of 13, Thomas More became a page for John Morton the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England. Morton was impressed with More's intelligence and he arranged for the young man to study at Oxford. More attended Oxford University from 1492-1494, studying Latin, Greek, French, History, and mathematics. During early adulthood, More seriously considered entering the priesthood. For about four years, More actually resided in a monastery. In the end, More did not become a priest and he returned to law. More first married Jane Colte who died in 1511 after giving birth to four children. After Jane's death, More married Alice Middleton, a woman who was seven years older than him. In 1516, Utopia is published in Latin and this is More's most successful work. In 1532, More resigned from his position as Chancellor of England because he disagreed with Henry VIII's elevation to a position as head of the church in England. More was imprisoned in the infamous Tower of London and accused of treason. He was executed in 1535. Events That Influenced the Writing of Utopia The period from fourteenth till sixteenth century was a glorious time for Europe. It was the reformation of many old ideas and the formation of new. This was called the Renaissance. The Renaissance brought many changes to Europe. The economy was greatly boosted by all the new explorations. The flourishing economy helped to inspire new developments in art and literature. And from that many new beliefs were formed. Humanism, one of the new beliefs which was formed during the Renaissance, said that people should read the works of the greats and focus on writing, and the arts, Humanists believed that they were equal with the ancient Greek and Roman writers and philosopher. As new scientific discoveries were made many of the churches theories were beginning to be questioned. Some of the new scientific discoveries consisted of theories that went against the church beliefs. One theory which was proven true was about the Earth revolving around the sum. This was contrary to the church's view that everything revolved around the Earth. As the church began to be questioned more and more, new religions were formed. The major religion that was formed during the Renaissance was the Protestant religion. The Protestant religion began to spread throughout Europe. At one point of time the official Church of England was a Protestant Church. By the early sixteenth century, the church and state had become inextricably intertwined. The spiritual yearnings of the people, combined with a worsening economic situation, and an

increasing popular resentment of church officials as immoral and corrupt, paved the way for sweeping changes. Under Louis XIV's reign, France found economic stability and an effective government free from Church inference. Dictatorship evolved into constitutionals, a few steps closer to democracy. Following this was the significant break from the Church of England made by the Puritans, who pioneered the brutal landscape of the North American continent, where freedom of religion, expression and lifestyle are legally protected. More was a devout Catholic and was opposed the principle of the Anglican Church and the King of England's role as the head of the Church (replacing the pope in Rome). More's Utopia implies that Utopians are better than some Christians. Utopia is a type of New Jerusalem, a perfect place on earth. More uses the New World theme to get his philosophical points across. He is less interested in New World politics and more interested in offering Utopia as an indirect critique of the Catholic European societies (England mainly, but also France, the Italian city-states, and other areas to a lesser extent). More opposed the vast properties of the wealthy English aristocracy, the monopoly of London's guilds and merchants, and the burdensome oppression of the work through the imposition of unjust laws. More's work has left a lasting impact on subsequent political thought and literature. The Greek word Utopia translates as 'no place' or 'nowhere', but in modern parlance, a Utopia is a good place, an ideal place (eutopia). The term 'utopia' has gained more significance than More's original work. Utopia has inspired a diverse group of political thinkers. 12.4

CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF UTOPIA BOOK I & II Throughout Utopia, More alludes to the scholarly and traditional literature of his period, also referencing earlier Greek and Latin works. Almost immediately, Utopia presents itself in a book whose form is different from other works. The full title of the work attests to this. 'On the best form on a Commonwealth and on the New Island of Utopia; a Truly Precious Book No Less Profitable than Delightful by the most Distinguished and Learned Gentleman Thomas More, Citizen and Undersheriff of the Illustrious City of London.' This book includes several things: it presents philosophy as well as descriptions about a foreign place. It poses as history but it is also a fictional adventure-story. Finally, parts of Utopia read much like a story with a moral aiming to improve the reader with a moral education by giving examples illustrated in stories.

Just as Utopia is a complex of styles. The introduction is a 'pastiche' (collage) of different literary forms including the poem, the pictogram and the epistle. Each of these serves a distinct narrative purpose. The first poem is a six line stanza by Utopia's poet laureate. This poem creates a pun on the word Utopia as opposite to eutopia. Utopia actually means no-place, a fantasy. Eutopia means a good place. The poem describes Utopia as a eutopia and compares it to 'Plato's state' 'In one sense, Utopia is also a response to Plato's work, The Republic. More presents his own political philosophy, though in a very vague way. A quatrain written about Utopus (the general who founded the state which he named after him) follows the sextet. Neither poem bears any significant resemblance to the established lyrical forms of More's society. Indeed, the poem is translated into prose. The poem tells us that Utopia was an island state founded by the general Utopus. It has subsequently become a 'philosophical state.' The image of the island parallels More's Britain. Unlike its neighbours on the continental mainland, the island is militarily secure enough to forge its own identity and isolated enough to become a unique idealistic state. Moreover, the security of the island makes it safe for the citizens to do business and participate in the trade and exchange of ideas. According to the poem Utopia eagerly shares its ideas and adopts the best practices of other societies. More's letter to Peter Giles combines actual people with fictional characters. This is what we would expect, considering the mix of fictional and non-fictional genres incorporated with the work. More has made himself into a character. Peter Giles is an actual friend of More's and Giles assists in the publication of Utopia. Neither More nor Giles had a friend named Raphael Hythloday. The New World remains, in 1516 largely unexplored by Europeans, but there was no 'Utopia' nor had More travelled to any distant lands. In the letter (the 'epistle') to Giles, More is actually writing to the reader indirectly. Details that Giles would already know are supplied to give the reader context. This is a form of apostrophe because the speaker is addressing his intended audience indirectly. The themes of truth and virtue are very important in Utopia. Narrative accuracy certainly involves issues of truth, but the definition of truth depends upon what sort of narrative is being written: in the same way that we can judge the philosophy of the Utopians as true or false, we can judge the philosophy of Utopia as true or false. If Utopia is read as a travelogue (description of a real

place), we would look to see whether its descriptions were true (i.e. accurate). On the other hand, as a work of history, Utopia would be true if it were 'objective.' And if we are reading Utopia as a fictional work, an adventure story or fantasy, 'truth' is more a matter of consistency and believability. Do the characters sound like themselves? Is that how Utopians would really act. The idea of public service is another major theme of this work. More is the under-sheriff of London and he served in several other roles before he dies. Giles is a clerk for the city of Antwerp. Raphael Hythloday presents ideas regarding the individual's obligations to society. To the extent that Utopia was written to enhance the public debate on the 'ideal' state, the book is an act of public service. Finally, the idea of travel to the 'New World' is an obvious theme of Utopia. We cannot travel to Utopia because it is far away and the journey is dangerous. The next best thing is to receive an account of the New World from Hythloday and this is what More faithfully presents to us. There were plenty of travelogues and 'accounts of the Indies', mostly false, on the market during More's era. Utopia borrows the idea of the New World, but More does not argue that Utopia is actually a location somewhere in the actual New World. Summary of Book One In Book One, Thomas More describes the circumstances surrounding his trip to Flanders where he has the privilege of meeting Raphael Hythloday. This first part of Utopia chronicles the early conversation between More, Peter Giles, and Hythloday. The three men discuss a wide range of civil, religious and philosophical issues. Hythloday is a rebel and disbeliever on certain issues but he is a skilled speaker. Both More and Giles think there is considerable merit in much of what Hythloday has to say. Book Two is the continuation of the conversation during which Hythloday explains the details of Utopia in full. More visited Flanders as an ambassador of Henry VIII. Alongside a man named Cuthbert Tunstall, More toured the cities of Bruges, Brussels, and Antwerp (all in present-day Belgium). Once in Antwerp, More finds his friend Giles. After attending a Mass at the Church of St. Mary, Giles introduces Thomas More to Raphael Hythloday. Raphael is not a native Utopian: he is Portuguese. Peter explains that Raphael accompanied Amerigo Vespucci on a voyage to the New World but Raphael remained overseas when Vespucci returned to Europe. Hythloday and his companions enjoyed their continued travels and afterwards, they were reconnected
with a fleet of Portuguese ships near the island of Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka, due south of India). Hythloday made his way home with these sailors. Apparently, Hythloday's visit to Utopia occurred in between his voluntary separation from Vespucci and his arrival at Ceylon. After this rather lengthy introduction, Hythloday and More exchange greetings and the three men continue their discussion in the garden attached to More's lodging place. When he visited various regions, Raphael befriended the native inhabitants and gained their sincere friendship and trust. According to Raphael, the equatorial regions are excessively hot and there are monsters in the New World. When one continues further south, however, the climate becomes temperate again; populous cities and commercial areas emerge. Because Raphael's comparative analysis of the regions is so precise and intelligent, Peter suggests that Raphael become an advisor or counsellor for a king. Raphael rejects the idea and celebrates the degree of freedom that he currently enjoys, freedom he would forfeit should he enter politics. Raphael further argues that the other royal counselors would become jealous and would create unbearable complications. More agrees with Giles, but Raphael is resolute in his belief that he could ultimately do little in a political position. Hythloday mentions that he has travelled extensively through Europe, encountering 'arrogant, absurd, and captious judgments once even in England.' More is eager to hear Hythloday's impressions of England because the traveller has spent several months there. Hythloday also spent some time with the Cardinal Archbishop of Canterbury, Rev. Father John Morton (an acquaintance of More's). The traveller recounts a dinner conversation with Morton and several of Morton's assistants: Hythloday focuses more on political issues and less on the usual traveller's cultural interest. It is not long before Hythloday is engaged in a spirited albeit respectful debate on British legal practices. Hythloday learns of 'the rigorous justice applied to thieves in England' changing. He argues that the punishment is too harsh and unjustly severe for such a small crime. He also says that the punishment will not deter thieves if they are poor and have no other way to make a living. The Cardinal argues that the thieves could have become tradesmen or farmers but Raphael disputes that there are many wounded veterans of the King's wars who can no longer become farmers or learn a new trade. The government provides no avenue of opportunity for these veterans. Raphael also argues that the British noble class enforces a system of economic efficiency. Nobles keep their tenants in poverty and reserve much of the land for non-agrarian purposes (private gardens, hunting grounds). Raphael also mentions that once a noble lord has died, the lord's retainers often become armed beggars and thieves. Raphael continues his argument with a lawyer and

their debate touches upon the military valour of retainers, England's 'sheep' problem, and the moral hazard of merchants who seek to develop monopolies. The Cardinal finally interrupts Raphael and stops him from rambling. The Cardinal returns to the original topic (capital punishment) and asks what punishment Raphael would propose in place of hanging thieves. Raphael argues that Christianity has evolved from 'the law of Moses' to the 'new law of mercy' and that killing one another is forbidden. Raphael argues that murder and theft should not be punished in the same way, otherwise, a thief may be more inclined to kill, there being no additional penalty. Raphael suggests a punishment of hard labour restoring the public works (roads, bridges) and that the thieves should compensate the owner for the stolen property. The lawyer disagrees with this idea and says it would endanger the commonwealth, but the Cardinal says that it would make sense to try the idea as the present system has failed. The Cardinal's associates then applaud the idea, as the Cardinal's own. Raphael apologizes to More and Giles for his lengthy discourse only to draw attention to the fickle and jealous character of the Cardinal's associates. Raphael takes this as evidence that he would not fare well with the King's courtiers. More is pleased with Raphael's story and reminded of his own education in the Cardinal's household. Resuming his attempts to persuade Raphael to consider public service, More mentions Plato's Republic and the idea of a 'philosopher-king.' Since Raphael cannot be king, he should bring his philosophy to the court. Raphael cites the fact of common property in Utopia, as opposed to private property. This difference makes it difficult to enact Utopian policies in Britain. Raphael's final argument is that wise men, perceiving the folly of those in government, do well to stay clear of politics and 'remain in safety themselves.' Raphael does not convince More of the superiority of common property nor does the abolition of private property strike More as a good idea. Raphael reminds More that the Utopians adopted the best practices of every culture with which they came in contact. Within a short period of time, Utopians interview their guest travellers like Hythloday and learn of advances in science, nautical engineering, law and culture. At this point, More is eager to hear of the Utopians and after lunch, Raphael begins his discourse-describing Utopia. This is found in Book Two. Analysis Raphael's discourse with More and Giles is philosophical and abstract. It is also very idealized. The conversation begins in a church, continues in a garden, and pauses for lunch.

This philosophizing is a leisure activity enjoyed by three well-educated men of means. How do we reconcile this with More's confession to Giles that he has been so busy working that he has not had time to write Utopia? Indeed, More has had time to write and to invent 'Utopia.' The theme of public service appears in More and Hythloday's debate on the utility of philosophy. Is Raphael morally obligated to put his philosophy and knowledge to good use in the service of the King? Does royal service or political work even count as a worthy application of philosophy and knowledge? This thematic question applies to More's career in the broadest sense. More was a lawyer who served in a variety of roles: undersheriff, ambassador, member of the King's Council. Master of Requests, Speaker of the House of Commons, High Steward of Oxford and Cambridge, and, eventually, Lord Chancellor of England. Concurrently, More wrote a number of philosophical works besides Utopia, contributing to the discourse of his era. Thomas More wrote Utopia early in his career and this underscores the importance of More's argument with the fictional Raphael. After a life of public service, More was convicted of treason (on perjured evidence) and beheaded by the very king whom he defended fourteen years earlier in a work called ResponsioadLutherum (1523). There is a strange unintended irony in Book One. At least on one point, More's fictional character proves wiser than More himself. Raphael Hythloday is half-sage, half-fool and Book One develops both literary traditions. Raphael is clearly a man of intellect with more than a few good ideas. Nonetheless, Raphael's stories of far-off Utopia are laughably naive and innocent. His ideas for policy are unrealistic. The account of the Cardinal's dinner parallels the courts scenes later made famous in Elizabethan drama. Hythloday has some interesting ideas but he is so wordy, so verbose that the Cardinal must interrupt him. Raphael is unable to answer a raised question without first answering other unanswered peripheral questions. 'Raphael' is the name of a guardian angel. 'Hythloday' is a compound of Greek words translating to 'peddler of nonsense.' Thomas More does not intend for us to take Raphael or Utopia at face value. Book One is written in a style resembling the ancient Dialogues. In these Dialogues, intermingled real and fictional characters discussed philosophical ideas. The written work is essentially a transcript of the discussion. Raphael is so wordy that Book One hardly seems like a discussion or dialogue. It is not hard to argue that More concentrates on presenting ideas and constructing complex sentences (the original Latin work was praised as much for its syntax as for its narrative). More is less interested in telling a very good story.

Modern readers accustomed to reading novels might interpret Book One as a narrative device to build suspense. We must read through nearly half of Utopia before we reach the full description of the island. More is interested in the philosophical contemplation of European and Christian legal customs. Book one provides the context wherein More can critique the Utopian society. The abolition of private property has already become a point of contention between more and Hythloday. Conveniently, Hythloday's visit to England justifies and enables More's desire to discuss England's problems (and also pay tribute to his dearly beloved, dearly influential friend, the Cardinal Archbisop). Raphael is a fictional character and a mask. More shields himself behind Raphael and gains the safety to discuss a number of controversial ideas. Raphael presents land reform, capital punishment, and the distribution of property. On these issues, either More is silent or he takes the traditional position. More does not create Raphael as a mouthpiece for his own secret and unpopular beliefs; rather, More uses Raphael to create a discussion on issues that clearly need resolution. More may not accept Raphael's extreme and divergent opinions, but More does imply that some reform is needed. Much like the island of Utopia, Raphael's is a piece of fiction inserted in the real world. 12.5

Summary of Book Two (First Half) In the first half of Book Two, Raphael describes the natural geography of Utopia and then addresses the major cities the system of government, the social distribution of labour and responsibility, and 'how the Utopians travel.' Throughout Book Two, Hythloday praises the Utopian customs and fails to offer any negative criticism. In Utopia's introduction, the quatrain mentions that Utopia was made into an island. In book two, Hythloday explains that the General Utopus dug

through the narrow isthmus that connected Utopia to the mainland.

The neighbouring villages mocked Utopus because his ambitious project seemed doomed to fail. What Utopus and his men achieved in a relatively short period of time astonished these naysayers. The island is roughly circular in shape and its natural harbours are navigable. The straits of Utopia are dangerous with shallows and rocks. The Utopians have mapped and mastered these waters but the shallows and rocks successfully deter foreign invaders. The island has fifty-four cities sharing 'exactly the same language, customs, institutions, and laws.' The cities also have the same planned layout. Much of this is due to the civilizing influence of Utopus who

transformed a 'crude and rustic mob' into a culture of note. Amaurot, the capital city, Each city is divided into four equal districts and the marketplace occupies the centre of the city. The head of each household offers his goods and obtains whatever his household needs. There is no exchange of money and no direct exchange of goods for 'there is plenty of everything' and no reason to hoard goods or deny them to others. In the city, each block of houses has a dining hall in which the households eat together. Stewards from each hall go to the market to get food for the meals. Hence, in the cities, the Utopians eat their meals in large communal groups and not as isolated families as is the case in the countryside. As always, the Utopian seek to advance the moral education of their people especially the youth. The common dining hall features brief lectures or readings followed by discussion. Young people are seated with their elders to prevent the youth from misbehaving. In Utopia, there is no problem of travelling bands of rogues, nor is it possible for an individual to escape his civic obligations by travelling for another city. Utopians travels, they must join the labour of the resident citizens, otherwise they are not fed. Citizens must first get the permission of the magistrate to travel and husbands must have their wives' consent. Hythloday concludes that these travelling individuals remain just as profitable and useful to the state as if they never left. And 'with the eyes of everyone upon them' the Utopians have 'no wine taverns, no alehouses, no brothels, no occasion to be corrupted no hideouts, no hangouts.' Utopia believes in storing a full year's worth of provisions as reserves. The excess supply of goods is exported to foreign lands at a reasonable price and one-seventh is donated to the poor in foreign lands. Utopians import is well in Utopia's favour, as they import far less than they export. Gold and silver are held in low regard upon the island. Utopians use these 'precious metals' to decorate criminals, slaves, and children. As a result of the stigma, god and silver are not stolen or hoarded. Hence, these metals are always in great supply and are available in case of war. The Utopians follows a keen sense of virtue and rationalism. They seek to avoid the social complications of private wealth and class structure and they rely upon an education in reason, morality and religion to keep Utopians well behaved. Utopians believe the greatest pleasures to be those of the mind and not the body, and they devote much of their free times to these pleasure.

Analysis In Book two, Raphael Hytholoday develops the motif of perfection. A series of images and symbols support the notion of Utopia as a good place (and Utopians as the ideal people). Garden imagery is prevalent in Book Two, presenting an allusion to the Biblical garden of Eden. Utopians enjoy many gardens and love to garden. In symbolic terms, the Utopians enjoy a pure Eden-like life, free of many real world concerns. On a practical level, the garden imagery also reflects the agricultural skill and abundant harvests of the Utopians. The strength of the civilizations is seen in the life and vitality of its crops and vegetation. Thomas More's combination of urban and agricultural features makes Utopia a unique and modern state. The Utopian ideal fills the cities the cities with garden and surrounds each city with agricultural land. The land symbolizes Eden but there is certainly social commentary reflecting More's Britain. The Utopians have not constructed congested and dirty cities like London, nor have they devoted land to the wasteful pleasure of the nobility. More than Eden-like gardeners, the Utopians are 'stewards' of the land and they carefully preserve their resources. This connects the imagery of perfection and gardens to the themes of virtue and public services. Besides the gardens, there are other images of perfection. Utopus constructed the 'whole plan of the city' Amaurot and the Utopians sustain the zeal for urban planning and design 1760 years later. The island is circular in shape, its cities are perfectly arranged, and the cities are divided into four equal districts. For the Utopians, equality is the visual image of perfection. Cities are the same size. Houses look the same. Each city has the same number of adults. In considering Utopia as a philosophical essay and Utopia as a model civilization, we find that the theme of truth becomes very complicated. There is the question of probability. Assuming that the Utopians' beliefs are true and morally correct, how useful is the information to More's audience? Hythloday asserts that Utopian policies could improve Britain's conditions, but Utopia's condition seems unrealistically advantaged. Indeed, Utopia is described as the opposite of the real world. More than a mere 'ideal,' Utopia is a fictional society that has with the stroke of More's pen easily solved the actual problems of real societies. Utopus easily cuts through the isthmus that connects Utopia to the mainland. Here, More alludes to the Greeks' failed attempts to dig a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. This
historical episode was so well known in More's time that it became a proverbial figure of speech for failure. Utopia's capital city, Amaurot, Strongly resembles London. London has the Thames River and smaller streams called the Fleet Ditch, but these are far dirtier than Utopia's Anyder River and freshwater springs. Even more significantly, both the Anyder and the Thames flow in from the sea, with the city built on the riverbanks. London's bridge was built in between the city and the coast, restricting ships from travelling through the city. Amaurot's bridge is built further inland so that ships can sail the river into the city and through much of it, facilitating trade. Utopia is More's reflection of his own society. It is not entirely fictional or imagined. The Utopian' lifestyle also resents the theme of innovation. The Utopians discover the best practices and seek to implement them whenever possible. Like More's contemporaries, the Utopians discover new land and come into contact with new foreign ideas as a result of international commerce and trade. The Utopians have rearranged their natural landscape, creating an island. This creates a tension between God's role as creator and man's roles as innovator. By the standards of democratic capitalism, the Utopian idea of the common life is rather objectionable. Utopia reads a lot like communism. 12.6 Summary o f Book Two (Second Half) The Utopians have slaves, including prisoners of war captured in battle. The children of slaves are not held in slavery. Utopians also travel to foreign countries to purchase and enslave criminals condemned to die. Utopians who commit serious crimes are also held as slaves and they are treated most harshly. These slaves are a disgrace to the Utopians because these slaves had been given and excellent moral education, but they nonetheless became criminals. Raphael discusses a few other customs of the Utopians. They are skilled in medicine and they devote considerable time to attending to the sick. The Utopian priests also encourage euthanasia when a patient is terminally ill and suffering pain (but this can only be done if the patient consents). Raphael discusses the marriage customs of the Utopians. Women marry at the age of 20 and men marry at the age of 24. Because Utopians believe that sexual promiscuity makes it difficult for an individual to live a happily married life, premarital sex is illegal and severely punished.

Before the marriage, the intended bride and groom are presented to one another naked, so that any 'sores' or defects can be exposed and 'no one is duped or deceived.' The Utopian marriages last until death and divorces are rare, requiring the permission of the ruler. Adultery is grounds for divorce and is punished with harsh servitude. If an adulterer repeats the offense, the punishment is death. The senate has no penal code and punishments are determined on a case-by-case basis. The most serious crimes are usually punished with servitude, rather than death because the society can benefit from the prisoners' labour. If these slaves are patient and if, after a long period of labour they show that 'they regret the sin more than the punishment,' they are sometimes released. In passing judgement on a case, the attempt to commit a crime is not distinguished from the criminal act itself. A criminal is not redeemed by his inability to successfully complete the attempted act. At this point, Raphael's narrative becomes somewhat rambling and he discusses a number of issues in rapid succession. The Utopians have fools and jesters to keep them entertained, but they abhor the practice of mocking people who are crippled or disfigured. It is important to be well groomed, but the Utopians consider cosmetics to be disgraceful. In the marketplaces Utopians erect statuses of virtuous men who have done good things for the commonwealth. This serves as an inspiration for the citizens to live up to the standards established by their ancestors. Anyone who campaigns for public office disqualifies himself from holding any office at all, and lawyers are banned from Utopia. In courts, each citizen represents himself and tells his story without legal counsel. The Utopians believe this makes it easier for the judge to determine the truth in a given case. The Utopians do not make treaties with other nations because treaties are regularly broken. Utopians consider themselves friends with foreigners unless some harm has been done. Regarding war, the Utopians are peaceful, but they are not pacifists. When necessary, Utopians will fight to defend their interests as well as the interest of their allies. Both women and men are trained in regular military exercises so that the island is well protected. Utopians also go to war if one their citizens is unjustly disabled or killed in a foreign nation and the guilty persons are not handed over to the Utopian authorities. Rather than fight in wars, Utopians rely upon strategy whenever possible. They often offer large rewards for the death of the enemy rulers, intending to avoid a conflict before it begins or at the very least, sow the seeds of distrust within the enemy camp.

The Utopian often hire a nearby tribe, the Zapoletes, as mercenaries to fight in place of Utopian citizens. The Zaploletes are perversely bloodthirsty and they are eager to fight for the Utopians because the Utopians pay high wages. Often, the Zapoletes die in war and so the Utopians do not have to pay the high rewards promised. At the same time, the Utopians regard the Zapoletes as a moral curse and they are only too happy to 'enlist these wicked men in order to use them.' Utopians will only use their own citizens as a last resort and even then, only as volunteers if it is a foreign war. But if the island should be invaded, men and women in good physical health fight to protect the commonwealth. Often times, families go to the battle lines together (only the adults, of course) for the Utopians reason that the soldiers fight harder to protect one another especially in hand-to-hand combat as family members are especially protective of one another. The last major topic discussed concerns the religions of the Utopians. Throughout the various regions, there are a few sects devoted to ancestor worship or the worship of some celestial. The 'vast majority' of Utopians are monotheists who believe exclusively in one god as creator. 12.7

Answers to Check Your Progress 1. Under Louis XIV's reign, France found economic stability and an effective government free from Church inference. Dictatorship evolved into constitutionals, a few steps closer to democracy. 2. More opposed the vast properties of the wealthy English aristocracy, the monopoly of London's guilds and merchants, and the burdensome oppression of the work through the imposition of unjust laws. 3. Utopia is a mix of several things: it presents philosophy as well as a description about a foreign place. It poses as history, but it is also a fictional adventure-story. Finally, parts of Utopia read much like a story with a moral aiming to improve the reader with a moral education by giving examples illustrated in stories. 4. Styles used in the introduction of Utopia include the poem, the pictogram and the epistle, each serving their purpose of narration. 5. The word is a pun on the word Utopia as opposite to eutopia. Utopia actually means no-place, a fantasy. Eutopia means a good place. 6. According to Raphael, the equatorial regions are excessively hot and there are monsters in the New World. When one continues further south, however, the climate

becomes temperate again; populous cities and commercial areas emerge. 7. Raphael suggests a punishment of hard labour restoring the public works (roads, bridges) and that the thieves should compensate the owner of the stolen property. 8. 'Raphael' is the name of a guardian angel. 'Hythloday' is a compound of Greek words translating to 'peddler of nonsense.' Thus, we see that Thomas More does not intend for us to take Raphael or Utopia seriously. 9. Garden imagery presents an allusion to the Biblical garden of Eden. Utopians enjoy many gardens and love to garden. In symbolic terms, the Utopians enjoy a pure Eden-like life, free of many real-world concerns. On a practical level, the garden imagery also reflects the agricultural skill and abundant harvests of the Utopians. The strength of the civilizations is seen in the life and vitality of its crops and vegetation. 10. The Utopians eat their meals in large communal groups and not as isolated families as is the case in the countryside. To advance the moral education of their people especially the youth, the common dining hall features brief lectures or readings followed by discussion. Young people are seated with their elders to prevent the youth from misbehaving. 12.8 Summary • Sir Thomas More was born in London on 7 February, 1477. In 1516, Utopia is published in Latin and this is More's most successful work. • More was imprisoned in the infamous Tower of London and accused of treason. He was executed in 1535. • The period from fourteenth till sixteenth century was a glorious time for Europe. It was the reformation of many old ideas and the formation of new. This was called the Renaissance. • More's work has left a lasting impact on subsequent political thought and literature. The Greek word Utopia translates as 'no place' or 'nowhere', but in modern parlance, a Utopia is a good place, an ideal place (eutopia). • Throughout Utopia, More alludes to the scholarly and traditional literature of his period, also referencing earlier Greek and Latin works. • The idea of public service is another major theme of 'Utopia'. • Finally, the idea of travel to the 'New World' is an obvious theme of Utopia. We cannot travel to Utopia because it is far away, and the journey is dangerous. • Book One is written in a style resembling the ancient Dialogues. In these Dialogues, intermingled real and fictional characters discussed philosophical ideas. • The written work is essentially a transcript of the discussion. • More concentrates on presenting ideas and constructing complex sentences. More is less interested in telling a very good story. • In considering Utopia as a philosophical essay and Utopia as a model civilization, we find that the theme of truth becomes very complicated. There is the question of probability. • Utopia is a work of satire, indirectly criticizing Europe's political corruption and religious hypocrisy. In depicting Utopia, More steps outside the bounds of orthodox Catholicism, but More's ultimate goal is to indicate areas of improvement for Christian society. • Utopia means 'no place' but sounds like 'good place.' Utopia exposes the absurdities and evils of More's society by depicting an alternative. 12.9 Key Words ▪ Pastiche: It refers to a literary work consisting wholly or chiefly of techniques borrowed from one or more source, basically a hodge-podge of styles. • Epistle: It refers to a formal letter sent to a person or a group of people. • Quatrain: It refers to a complete poem or a verse consisting of four lines of rhyming lines. • Sextet: It refers to a musical composition written for six voices or instruments. • Isthmus: It refers to a strip of land which connects two larger land masses. • Dystopia: It refers to an imaginary place where the conditions of living are unbearable, the opposite of Utopia. • Euthanasia: It refers to a mercy killing, putting an end to someone's life in order to give them relief from pain or an illness which is incurable. 12.10

Self- Assessment Questions and Exercises Short Answer Questions 1. What are

two themes discussed in Utopia? 2. What all did Raphael find wrong with British society? 3. Does the Utopian way of life sound a lot like communism?

4. Give one example of More's modern thinking. 5.

What is Utopia the book, a mix of? 6. Which are some of the styles of writing used in the introduction of Utopia? 7. What is the word Utopia a pun on? 8. What account does Raphael give of the New World? 9. What punishment does Raphael suggest for thieves? 10. How does More indicate that we should not take Raphael too seriously? 11.

Which King abolished the power of the Church at first? 12. What was More against in the society of his time, as concerns land laws?

Long Answer Questions 1. What do we learn of the society from More's Utopia? 2. Give a detailed critical analysis of Utopia Book I & II. 12.11 Further Readings • More, Thomas, George M. Logan. 2010. Utopia: A Revised Translation, Backgrounds, Criticism. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. • Bodden, Martin. 2007. Thomas More: Utopia and the Vision of Ideal Life. Germany: GRIN Verlag. • Davis, J. C. 1983. Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516- 1700. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. • Olin, John C. 1989. Interpreting Thomas More's Utopia. New York: Fordham University Press.

Unit 13- Bacon's Essays 13.1 Introduction 13.2 Objectives 13.3 About the Author 13.3.1 The Universal Appeal of the Essays of Bacon 13.3.2 Spirit of Renaissance in Bacon's Essays 13.3.3 Bacon's Morality 13.4 Critical Appreciation 13.4.1 'Of Truth' 13.4.2 'Of Nobility' 13.4.3 'Of Ambition' 13.4.4 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation' 13.1

Introduction The essay is a composition of prose which is short. The English Essay has many forms, but there are hardly any cut and dried rules to guide and govern their writing. Sir Francis Bacon rightly suggests that there is a very close relationship between the word 'essay' and the word of the mineralogist 'assai' which explains the process employed by the mineralogist. Bacon broods over some topics of social custom or behaviour till his conclusions are reduced to well written concise statements, justifying the appropriateness of the remark. 'Brevity is the soul of wit'. It is for this reason that Bacon's essays can be called a collection of sayings, mottoes and proverbs. Bacon has the power of explaining a bare truth with the help of an appropriate image or metaphor. It is as relevant as it is important to note that although Bacon is called the father of the English Essay he did not invent the form. He should be given the credit for importing the idea from France and transplanting it into the literary soil of England. In his Essays Bacon does not appear as a scientist or a philosopher but as a man of action or in the words of Bacon himself a 'Citizen of the World'. But he is too much of an English man and a Protestant and Elizabethan-Jacobean Englishman to be more precise. Bacon was not a speculative philosopher alone. He lived in a world of action and formulated a philosophy for a man of action. Many of Bacon's essays are written for the benefit of the kings. Bacon was a very shrewd observer of Society and he had a keen insight into the nature and affairs of men. He was born in the age which was remarkable in many ways. It was a period of great importance in the history of England. He was the true son of Renaissance. The element of wonder, of enquiry, of admiration, is all found in Bacon. In this unit, we will study some selected essays of Sir Francis Bacon. 13.2 OBJECTIVES After going through this unit, you will be able to: • Discuss the life and works of Sir Francis Bacon • Assess the main characteristics of Bacon's writing • Critically analyse his essays, 'Of Truth', 'Of Nobility', 'Of Ambition', 'Of Simulation And Dissimulation' 13.3 About the Author Bacon was born on 22 January 1561 in London. It is believed that Bacon was educated at home in his early years owing to poor health (which plagued him throughout his life). He was sent to attend Trinity College at the age of twelve. Bacon's education was conducted largely in Latin and followed the medieval curriculum. His studies brought him to the belief that the methods and results of science as then practised were erroneous. To recover from debts after his father's debt, Bacon took to a career in law. Soon he came to the attention of Queen Elizabeth and this helped him to regain his financial stability. James I also showered many honours on Bacon, including knighting him. At the age of forty-five, Bacon married Alice Barnham, the fourteen- year-old daughter of a well-connected London alderman and MP. On 9 April 1626 Bacon died of pneumonia and left behind debts which would amount to three million pounds today. 13.3.1 The Universal Appeal of the Essays of Bacon

Sir Francis Bacon was a man of great resourcefulness. In considering the universal appeal of his essays this fact about Bacon has to be constantly kept in mind. His versatility encompassed his encyclopedic range of literature, mythology, history and knowledge about human nature and affairs. He gained this knowledge through personal experiences and his foreign travels. The greatness of the man can be gauged from the fact that his contribution to language and literature is considerable. He imported into English literature a new genre called the Essay (the name given by him) and therefore known as the father of the English Essay. He is still considered one of the greatest essayists in the language. His contribution to the development of modern English prose and prose style earned him yet another accolade of being termed the father of the Modern English Prose. These tributes are a confirmation of Bacon's popularity among successive generations. The essays have a special flavour which makes them popular with all classes of readers. The more we read them the more we fall under the spell of their charm and wisdom. The same essay can be read many times over without losing either its interest or utility. The subsequent readings, on the contrary, yield more wisdom and pleasure. Among the reasons for the continued popularity of his essays are their variety of themes, the wisdom contained in them, their utility in the practical life, their human interest, and above all their cunning character. Bacon was a very busy and active person. From a very early age he had cultivated the habit of jotting down notes of everything that interested or enlightened him. This habit equipped him with material on almost all topics of human interest. Bacon made use of these notes and jottings in the composition of his essays. When we look at Bacon's essays, the first thing that the

catches our attention is their wide variety of theme. He has written on lofty subjects like truth, love, friendship, death etc.; on subjects concerned with a person's conduct in society, religious and metaphysical subjects; on subjects concerned with the affairs of the state and politics; as well as essays on very common place topics such as gardens, buildings, masques and triumphs. Whatever be the topic, the essays are characterized by knowledge and critical insight and observation, wisdom and common sense and shrewd and original conclusions. Bacon's practical wisdom and approach and a convenient disregard of the moral and the virtuous is both intriguing and disturbing to a casual reader. But Bacon's essays are almost always interesting, informative and enlightening. Another remarkable feature of Bacon's essays is their human interest. His essays both interest and enlighten the readers transcending the barriers of time and countries because they are not addressed to a people of one country or one age, they are concerned with humanity at large Bacon observed the common man from a height and his observations are not in an informal manner. The tone is always moralizing. He preaches and sermonizes, cautions and advises but he does not always command respect. At times Bacon becomes more interesting (on account of his mysterious personality) than his essays, the reason being his preoccupation with the practical aspect of everything.

Bacon's essays are full of gems of wisdom, and mostly worldly wisdom. Bacon was born in an age which happened to be the meeting point of the old and the new. So while Bacon retained an interest in the abiding moral values he tempered this interest with practical wisdom which taught him to care more for the end and less for the means. Besides caution we come across practicality in his essays. His essays are a store house of practical wisdom and teachings for a person aspiring to achieve power, position and material possession in a society full of treachery, intrigue, conspiracy, flattery, etc. Bacon proposes that to be successful in an atmosphere of opposition and hostility, a person has to be unscrupulous. His morality is really intriguing and mystifying but there is not the least doubt that his counsels are useful for the common man although his essays were primarily meant for an aspiring young aristocrat who had set his eye to advance materially. Passions and emotions have no place in Bacon's scheme of things as the virtue of 'giving' also has no meaning for him. He values a thing only for what it gives. He is a utilitarian valuing the end and disregarding the means. But it should not be inferred that he was not aware of morality, virtue or values in life. He not only knew them but admired them also. But, whenever they interfered with practical situations, he ignored them. His morality and philosophy were Machiavellian and of convenience. This contradiction has baffled many but it was in his nature. He practiced it in his own life and earned from Pope the remark: 'The wisest, brightest and meanest of mankind'. And from Blake for his essays: 'Good advice for the kingdom of Satan'. Essays of Bacon, although deficient in emotional content, are rich in imagery. 13.3.2

Spirit of Renaissance in Bacon's Essays

Bacon's genius was versatile and his personality colourful. Taken as a whole,

Sir Francis

Bacon was an enigma to many of his own generation and to most of subsequent generations. Bacon was the child of the Renaissance. He was highly educated, and a thoroughbred scholar with an encyclopedic range of knowledge. He was a scientist. His love for experimentation was the cause of his death. He caught a cold while performing experiments and this resulted in his death. He was a very widely travelled man- the scholars of his age did not consider their education complete unless they had supplemented their education with foreign travels. Thus, Bacon was not only an accomplished scholar, he was also a man of great wisdom and practical experience. His knowledge and experience helped him in securing important positions. He

was a great statesman, and a true policeman, who excelled in manoeuvring and manipulation. For him no holds were barred to gain personal advantages of position and power. He rose to great heights but also paid the penalty of impropriety and immoral conduct. But in an age in which Bacon lived such jockeying for power and unscrupulous conduct were not uncommon. Although Bacon did not write a single word about himself in his essays, we can make a fairly accurate estimate of the man and his general mental make-up from them. Bacon has rightly been called a true and representative child of the Renaissance

and we shall proceed to examine the elements of Renaissance spirit from a study of his essays. Bacon's Essays Advocate a Utilitarian Attitude Towards Life

Bacon is one of the most colourful personalities of English literature, celebrated not only for his literary worth and innovative genius but also for his versatility and wisdom. Bacon was a child of the Renaissance and represents the best of both the old and new spirits. Bacon was no doubt a man of the practical world and believed in political and economic power, but he was not an atheist. He was a Protestant Christian, a follower of the Church of England but he was not a religious activist. Though religious and spiritualistic considerations left Bacon indifferent and cold, it should not be inferred that he was oblivious of the virtues and the religious and spiritualistic considerations altogether. 13.3.3 Bacon's Morality Bacon's life reveals the dichotomy of values in his personal conduct and the same duality appears in his writings. He is practical and mundane to his finger tips. Also he is rational and prudential. The predominance of intellect precludes emotional and sentimental approach. All these factors combined to make Bacon opportunistic, utilitarian and Machiavellian. The current political atmosphere was congenial to the promotion of such traits. Bacon writes chiefly for the benefit of the kings, princes and aristocrats and for the safeguarding of their interests was his avowed aim. He counsels and advocates shrewdness in order to achieve material progress and prosperity. To Bacon the means had no meaning. He was concerned with the ends. It is for this reason that we find him cold and aloof from moralistic and spiritual considerations. They do not fit into his scheme of things. He advocates secrecy to achieve success. Bacon is not ignorant of the value and nobility of virtue and virtuous conduct but as a man of great practical wisdom and sagacity he advocates the mixture of 'falsehood'.

At times Bacon waxes eloquent in praise of noble and virtuous conduct (such occasions are rare and, though). But Bacon is too worldly and practical to be swayed by the sentiment of virtuosity. He makes necessity the occasion of being moral and noble and virtuous. The following expression proves it '

This is certain, that a man that studied revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise

would heal and do well'. (

Of Revenge) Thus Bacon's morality is the morality of convenience. Bacon's Worldly Wisdom As we have already seen, practical considerations rule supreme in Bacon's scheme of things, and spiritual, moral and religious considerations take a back seat. But Bacon is a great scholar, steeped in classical learning, mythology and scriptures. His essays are full of quotations from, 'Vulgate' (the Latin Version of the Bible) and have ample references and illusions to historical and mythological occurrences mentioned in the ancient masters. We find in his essays passages which are of great significance (and where no morality or selfish interests harmful to others are

not

involved). His essay Of Studies is such a gem of pure and serene wisdom wherein he writes: 'Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability'. 'They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants that need pruning by study' 'Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find, talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider'. 'Readings make a full man; conference a ready man; and writing

a

exact man'. 'Histories make man wise; poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend'. This too is worldly wisdom, but it is not mixed with any basic instinct or degenerate and evil mundane consideration. 13.4

Critical Appreciation In this section, we will critically appreciate the different essays.

13.4.1 'Of Truth' Summary of 'Of Truth' Bacon in the essays says that it is difficult and troublesome to find Truth. When found, the Truth enforces a follow up in speech and action. It is difficult to follow it because it reveals the imperfections and emptiness of human minds on the one hand and the defects and hollowness of the nature of things on the other. It, therefore, encourages the telling of the lies. The Truth which judges itself teaches

the enquiry of truth, the knowledge of truth and the belief of truth and it is the sovereign good of human nature. The Truth is light. God first created the light of sense and last the light of reason. The Illumination of his spirit is the work of God. God first breathed light upon the face of chaos (matter) next the face of man and He continues to do so into the face of His chosen.

A man of Truth attains a serene height from where he views the errors, doubts, ignorance and misfortunes of other men. But this should not make the man of Truth proud but humble. The mind of the man of Truth moves like Heavenly spheres by Love with the support of Providence on the axis of Truth. This Truth is philosophical truth. The Truth of civil business admits to a mixture of falsehood which makes it work better and adds pleasure and utility to it. The mixture of falsehood degrades it. 'The Poet loves a lie because it gives pleasure. But the poet's lie is a shadow which passes. The Merchant loves a lie because it gives profit. The corrupt loves a lie for the sake of the lie.' Such a lie settles in the mind and adulterates it. 'It is a vice to be found false and perfidious and it covers a man with shame. A liar challenges God but is afraid to face man.' The wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith will bring God's judgement on the generation of men. Important explanations (i) 'Truth may perhaps come to the price doth ever add pleasure'. The author discusses the philosophical or theological truth of civil business in this essay. At the very outset, the essayist makes it clear that it is very difficult to tell what truth is. In
trying to explain truth Bacon contrasts it with falsehood. He says that truth is like sunlight which reveals the true nature of things. There are certain things which do not look decent in sunlight because their defects become apparent. It is for this reason that the Elizabethan entertainments, masques, mummeries and triumphs are performed after dark, using artificial light. In these lines Bacon compares truth with sunlight and falsehood with artificial lights. He says that there are certain things, like pearls, which look best when they are viewed in the natural light, i.e. of the sun. The value of the pearl lies in its purity, it has no defects or artificiality about it. On the contrary diamonds or carbuncles owe their worth to artificial treatment by artisans and they appear best by artificial and varied lights because their defects, which have been treated by workers, may remain concealed and invisible. (ii) 'Certainly it is heaven upon the poets of truth'. The essays of Bacon, besides being stuffed with moral and practical wisdom, are also gems of literature and abound in quotations which are extremely educative and enjoyable. Of Truth is one of the most quoted pieces. In this essay, the essayist says that truth enables a person to view the vain struggles, errors, doubts, misunderstandings, conflicts and ignorance of his fellow beings. But he cautions that it should not make him proud but humble. He should view these vain endeavours with pity and sympathy. The man of truth is really the chosen of God and it is a blessed state of mind to be so fortunate. To have the universal love as the motivating force, to have the help of God's will to move his mind on the axis of truth. What more can one can aspire for? The man of truth (described above) enjoys the pleasure and privileges of heaven during his life on earth itself when universal love and submission to the will of God guide and generate his actions and his reasoning and actions are based on truth. 13.4.2 'Of Nobility' The essay, 'Of nobility', is an essay of the argumentative nature and it is meant to criticize the nobility of the present times and question their contribution to the society. Francis Bacon in his essay, 'of nobility' discusses about two kinds of nobility. By the use of the word 'nobility' Bacon intends to consider meaning 'nobleness of character' as well as 'the aristocracy'. Interestingly, the essay does not actually begin with a discussion on nobility; it begins with the praise of democracy. In the first section of the essay he mostly focuses on his idea about the nobility of aristocracy'. In the essay Francis Bacon writes, 'A monarchy, where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny; as that of the Turks.' the sentence simply

implies that if one is planning to support a system where a Monarch rules than they must have a procedure to have aristocracy around to keep the balance of the system. Or else the powerful individual in the centre will not have any kind of control and he might turn into a dictator. Monarchy is a form of rule where a single individual or if family who rules the state. He give the example of Turkey where without the presence of noble class and with monarchy presiding the political arena the country was an absolute tyranny. Aristocracy not only brings a sense of balance but it also it is considered to be one of the most essential elements of a sovereign state. Yet at the same time there is no denying that while we are discussing the concept of democracy , there is hardly any need for nobility. Moreover chances are extremely slim that nobody will ever initiate a revolt against a government that is democratic in nature. One of the obvious hallmarks of democracy is that people usually do not remain united under one school of thought. But they keep preying upon the life of others. Praising Switzerland, Francis Bacon in his essay suggests that the Swiss people are good example of how they are bound together by the utility of their bonding. It is not the respect for all religion that keeps them together. In sharp contrast lies England. England is a state which is controled by monarchy, yet at the same time the best results in governing system would be seen in Low Countries. Praising this system of governance, Bacon says, in Low Countries people enjoy a sense of equality and pay taxes to the government without any discomfort. Going back to the idea of nobility, Francis Bacon says that even though aristocracy brings with it a certain kind of dignity to the monarchs yet this association is always marked by some diffusion of power. Again, nobility is able to provide spirit to the people, but this involves an exchange of wealth. The essayist opines that the best kind of nobility is the one that remains controlled under the existing sovereign power along with the power of Justice. But in the social matrix it should be represented about the common people. If the nobility is given status of this kind they will actors protective shield between the emperor as well as the common people. In this kind of arrangement, the wrath of the Monarch will first be faced by the nobility and gradually it is percolated to the common man. But Bacon is quick enough to add that no State should entertain more than the required number of nobility; because the presence of too many aristocrats will only lead the state towards poverty as well as inconvenience. After all maintaining nobility itself is very expensive, trying to keep them would turn others poor and in a situation like this wealth and owner of individuals would be of no use.

In the second part of 'Of Nobility', the essayist draws the comparison between the old nobility and the nobility of the contemporary times. Understanding the old nobility is like watching a ancient building with great structures. As we get awestruck by the beauty of the architecture of the ancient era in a similar manner one has to praise the nobility of the old times who have managed to survive all the odds that has befallen them and have transcended time. Francis Bacon firmly believes that the nobility of the antiquity focused more about acting upon the needs of the hour where as unfortunately the prime focus of the nobility of the present time is to attain power and authority. They are least concerned about the well being of the population at large. If we compare the nobility of the earlier times with the nobility of the present time we realise that both of them are equally virtuous. Despite being virtuous, the nobility of the contemporary times are no match to their ancestors in terms of Innocence. Of course, we realise that human beings have always been guided by the virtues of good and evil at the same time. Despite the prevalence of Evil it is always the goodness which wins over the evilness; and it is the power of goodness which transcends beyond time while evil comes to an end with the end of the person. Francis Bacon after criticizing the nobility of the present times, goes on to tell the readers that the nobility of the present time does not like to work; and ironically they also do not like to admire people who are used to working hard. Nothing much can be done about this kind of an attitude because Noble people are born with it and it is difficult for them to rise beyond it. The essayist feels that such kind of envious attitude is ingrained in the immunity of the nobility and they carry a natural air of enviousness because it in directly affect their honour. Francis Bacon in 'Of Nobility' uses wit and brevity to highlight his ideas. He is very direct in his approach towards his argument. Through out the essay he remains to the point and does not meander around unnecessarily. His directness of approach coupled with a systematic way of writing make this essay one of the most logically argued essays. Moreover, since the subjects that Francis Bacon chose for his essays reflected the society around him, most of the audience found them to be relatable and hence they manage to identify epigrammatic wisdom in these essays. The essay, 'Of Nobility', revolves around Francis Bacon understanding of the role of nobility in his time. He initiated by supporting democracy where he feels that nobility is of no use, and their presence might cause trouble in the business of others. But Francis Bacon feels that nobility holds a special place in a setting which is run by monarchy. The prime focus is to keep check on the monarchs and their whimsical manners. Yet at the same time, the nobility

has lost its original honour as well as its virtue because of its laziness. Ideally their role was to act as buffer and keep peace between the monarchs and the subjects. Despite the role of safety valve, they also come at an expense to the monarch; the monarchy has to share it power with them and people have to share their wealth. Francis Bacon in his essay describes how the nobles are part of the aristocratic society. They are significant positioning makes an important aid to the king. As mentioned, the citizens of the democratic countries are generally considered to be law abiding and hence they do not indulge in unexpected conspiracies and remain quiet most of the time. Switzerland and Netherlands are examples of Democratic Nation which houses numerous relations as well as states. But the main reason for these countries to flourish is the absence of the presence of nobility- a class which exercises superiority over other classes. Apart from the various advantages and disadvantages the class of nobility has on the society there are some significant impact that an individual Nobel has on his surroundings. An ancient Noble family, which has withstood the decay of time is nothing but a product of time itself. Where as on the other hand, a comparatively new Noble family he is nothing more than a product of the law itself. Francis Bacon highlights how despite the fact that nobles feel envious of others others do not feel envious of them because they seem to be naturally blessed with owner and a demeanour which draws instant obedience from the common men. Francis Bacon lived in a time which was marked by is restriction on the freedom of expression. Francis Bacon must have taken a lot of pain to compose this essay which was not just epigrammatic but was full of wisdom and truth. 13.4.3 'Of Ambition' During the period of Francis Bacon, it was believed that human body is composed of four different fluids- blood, choler or yellow bile, melancholy or black bile and phelgm. Presence of each of these elements was responsible for controlling the emotional as well as the physical condition of a human being. An excess of Yellow bile was associated with restlessness and irritability. A person with dominant signs of yellow bile would be someone would look forward for actions in his life. He was identified as a man of unquenchable ambition; and thus could not lead a passive, relaxed and contain life. Since he is a person who is aiming for the sky, he will undoubtedly come forward with interesting ideas which will be away for things newer and better. He will not hesitate to beat challenges and will do his best to solve them. With every step of success, he will try harder to reach the next level of success. He will try
and be in that League of people who are continuously challenging themselves to venture into untrodden areas. This kind of a person invariably will turn out to be a perfectionist as well as a workaholic. This person will be bubbling with ideas as well as energy. As a result of his discontent nature and panache for success he will invariably find his surroundings dull and unchallenging. But if this kind of an ambitious man is not allowed to carry out his passion and is asked to confine himself to his mediocre surroundings then this kind of a person will turn angry and his suppressed anger will eventually take the shape of rebellion. In the long run, this person with exceptional energy will lose his prowess and dynamism and will be left to be wasted. Seeing himself get wasted and unable to do anything about it will make this person develop and negative mindset. This negative mind set will eventually pave way to a phase where this ambitious man , who could have been a lot of other things, now will use the world as his enemy and start nurturing hostile feelings for people around him. On one hand, if a person who is bubbling with ambition is given an appropriate opportunity to pursue his goals without creating too much of hinderance, will succeed in his role. The person will remain engrossed in his work and hence none of the negative feelings will find a chance to enter into his mind. Just kind of a person will remain harmless, in general, to people around him. But if the same person is not allowed to develop his passion and approach his ambition and held back , then this kind of a person will gradually turn into a destructive person. His inability to reach his vision will turn into someone who is plagued by frustration and motivated by anger. Being fuelled by his internal discontent he will eventually start seeing people as wicked and at times as hideos. And this will be his perception and it might not be true per se. Soon his frustration will make him feel happy when ohers start suffering. Irrespective of who is that the receiving end, the once ambitious person, starts enjoying the misfortune of the others. It is understood that employees who developed this kind of negative mindset are, sooner or later, turn into liabilities for the organisation they are part of, and the government as well as the society at large. Francis Bacon suggests that, it is imperative that people who are born into the world of ambition should be given enough opportunity and freedom so that they can let their creativity bloom. if such kind of conducive environment can be built then the ambitious mind can be turned into an asset for the society. They will remain dedicated and focused towards their work. They will, under normal circumstances, will not turned hostile towards their

surroundings and not get angry at people in general. The organization must be clear on one ground, that if they are unable to provide freedom to a person who is ambitious by nature, then they might as well consider not getting associated with them at all; because in the long run the suppression of ambition will only lead to greater problems. The employees who are ambitious but are not allowed to express themselves in the right way will eventually bring disgrace as well and downfall for the organization they are associated with and this will not bring and happiness to any of the parties involved. The essayist, points out that there is always an added risk to employ people who are by nature extremely ambitious. Because they cannot be contained within a restricted structure for a very long time; hence for all the practical reasons these kind of ambitious persons should not be considered to be associated with unless and until there is an extreme necessity. But obviously this is not a 'rigid' rule that cannot be changed depending on the needs of the situation. Continuing with his argument, Francis Bacon is quick point out that when someone is considered for the position of commander who will be responsible for strategic results ambition cannot be a that thing for him. He cannot be disqualified for his ambitious nature. Being a commander and holding a significant position, he cannot have the luxury of displaying a laid back attitude or a content disposition. This kind of approach will impact the country in a wrong way. The commander's un-ambitious approach will be considered as his negative trait. Not having an ambition, without a doubt, will only highlight the fact that, when the situation arises, this, that might be the first one to leave the battlefield when even a whiff of defeat is felt. On the contrary, only a commander who is ambitious as well egoistic by nature will have the power to face is enemy boldly and will carry the confidence to vanquished them from the battlefield and win the war for the ruler. Francis Bacon, praising the ambitious attitude says that these kinds of people are an asset to the government especially to the people holding higher positions in the administration. Ambitious men invariably turn out to be the best option for safeguarding the personal safety of the king; and not just the ruler himself but of the all the major senior functionaries who are responsible for the wellbeing of the state. People who are ambitious more often than not, turn out to be reliable when the hold the position of Bodyguard. Being a bodyguard for someone is the position of extreme responsibility. This is a role which when one takes over is conscious of the fact when the time comes he might have to sacrifice his own life. The role of a bodyguard revolves around saving the life of his employer and following the Call of Duty if certain
danger looms over the employer the Bodyguard will be expected to either avert the danger or give his own life in his effort to save the life of his employer. For a bodyguard the most sacrosanct aspect of his role is to take care of his employer. The essayist compares such dedication to a blind folded dove. Dove is considered to be a small robust bird who has potentiality to soar to unexpected heights in the sky without bothering about the distance it is covering or worrying about the diminishing energy. But at some point the bird that's too exhausted and falls into the ground. An Ambitious bodyguard too goes to extreme lengths to prove his loyalty towards his master and does is best who save the life of he is employer. Francis Bacon brings in the reference of the gallant and the ambitious warrior Sejanus, who ruled as the emperor of Rome. Sejanus was discharging the role of the king in absence of the actual emperor, Tiberious. Tiberious for certain reasons was staying in a distant island. After a point, being informed by people who mattered in his council, Tiberious began to believe that Sejanus was conspiring against him and was planning to dethrone him and usurp his crown. This way Sejanus will be able to destroy Tiberious. To keep a track of the situation Tiberious decided against directly confronting Sejanus. Instead, he decided to take recourse to a complicated plan which required to create confusion in the minds of the members who were holding positions in senate. He decided to dispatch ambiguous messages to the members in the form of letter. In his letters he kept praising and deriding Sejanus alternately, thus confusing the receiver as to what opinion to form with respect to Sejanus. Sejanous, as a caretaker king, had created enough enemies within the state of Rome. It was because of his own behaviour, being brash and boastful, that people had started detesting him . To combine it, Sejanous as a ruler was a brute. Taking into account the gravity of the situation, and being a ruler with a good heart, Tiberious decides to take charge of the situation. Tiberious befriends with the valiant and ambitious Marco and asks him to help him get rid of Sejanous. Tiberious returned to his Kingdom, rome, one fine early morning, and immediately summoned Sejanous under the pretext of honouring him. Marco did not lose this golden opportunity. To complete his task, Marco to control of the mounted guards who were used to taking orders from Sejanous until then. Once the Guards were under control, Marco attacked Sejanus and killed him; after that he disposed off the body of the traitor in the river, unceremoniously. Francis Bacon highlights that if a person like Marco did not exist then Tiberious would have found it extremely difficult to annihilate the growing powers of

Sejanous. That is why it is important for people holding important positions- Kings, leaders, generals - to remain surrounded by people who are naturally ambitious. Despite favouring powers and might of the ambitious people Francis Bacon decides to share a word of caution. He is of the opinion that if ambitious men are employed in responsible positions then they must be kept under strict vigilance either obviously or indirectly. This kind of control is important because if these men are not restricted in their actions then there is a strong possibility of the ambitious men going against them those who are their benefactor and employers. But again, not all ambitious men pose similar kind of threat. Francis Bacon explains, if the ambitious man who is offering his services as a guard to some important person (head of the state, king etc), happens to be from the lower section of the society then they seem to pose comparatively less danger to the ruling class. But if these ambitious
man in charge
of protecting significant people happened to be from the aristocratic class then the chances were very high that they might be in a conflicting position with the people who occupy the power in a state. Going by the appearance, it was understood that ambitious men who displayed ill-mannered and rough appearance were expected to remain more loyal then their counterparts who might appear to be popular and polished. In a similar fashion, men who are recruited newly invariably remain lesser of a threat than someone who has been around for a very long time and knows the ways and means of the situation around. Being around for a long time, these men have access to information which are confidential and time sensitive. Depending on their equation with their master the might feel tempted to use these significant knowledge against their employers and jeopardise their position. History is filled with example, how in every age Kings, head of the states, men of importance have their own men around themselves. They would employ someone for their own protection if they knew the person, trusted him and relied on his judgement during a situation of crisis. Many people criticize this system. According to them, this is not a fair policy and relies on the foundation of nepotism. But according to Bacon this is a smart policy. A decision like this, only helps in keeping pretentious people and their scheming minds happy in their respective positions and they do not get to intervene in major decisions where the intervention could have brought disaster to the state. Again, some ambitious people who are dissatisfied with their employers can overthrow the employers when the time is right. That is why it is important to keep the ambitious guards in good humour.

Needless to say, a person who is chosen to take care of the king or someone equally important, in the long run, can either remain loyal to him or turn against him. The position of the guard will be strictly decided by is proximity to the person he is serving. In the hindsight, a guard's Association with his master might or might not impact the interest of the state or the king. But an ambitious person with latent hostility towards his master at any point of time has a potentiality to rebel against his master which might have a larger impact in the overall political scenario. Since it is imperative to have a few ambitious people in the circle for ones own benefit, it is important to take a note of the over zealous attitude. And to keep this over zealous attitude in control the employer must employ someone who is better or equally talented as this ambitious person in a position which is parallel to his. Francis Bacon further adds that this is not a full proof solution. How can we know that these two ambitious men holding similar roles will not come together and hatch a plot against the king himself. In a different situation these two might have a fallout, and this can worsen things beyond control. Their antagonistic attitude towards each other has the potentiality to create disharmony and undesirable situation which will have a direct impact on the master. For such a situation to not take place, it is desirable to appoint some high-level officials or ministers or counsellors who will be expected to possess sound sense of judgement and will help in building coherence as well as stability in the state. To keep your balance in the administrative setup a king or a Prince or an employer should I take care to hire someone who is ambitious but has an upbringing which is inferior two those who occupy significant positions in the inner circle of the court, for the well being of the state. Even though at the surface level these employees might not appear sophisticated enough to walk alongside the members who belong to the inner circle of the court yet their presence only helps in balancing the presence after overtly ambitious employees who are also in possession of greedy and wicked mind. In this essay, Francis Bacon exhibits his ability to observe things from a very close quarter and provide a neutral judgement on every situation. He says, if someone is being considered for the post of security
in charge

and advisor (a very important position) is known to have beautiful features, unpleasant persona and carries repulsive aura around him, one must consider him a potential candidate for the role. On the other hand, if the person who is being considered is someone who is in possession of a robust physic and holds a daring nature that kind of person should not be considered for the role as it might invite disastrous consequences.

If by some chance they are hints that arouse suspicion with respect to the integrity as well as loyalty of the ambitious guard, then it is advisable to take charge of the situation in the most diplomatic person. These kinds of people have the power to usurp the throne and hence it is imperative that these people are dealt with cleverly. It is important to considered that one should not take any kind of rash action against these kind of people as they are brave and intelligent and slightest of provocation has the power to explode them, which might result in something extremely nasty. Thus, it is necessary to not give them any impression that sooner Or later they might face dismissal. It is the role of the ruler to keep the disloyal ambitious men guessing by providing them with confusing situations. The ruler might decide to reward the ambitious men one day and on another day criticize them for their actions.

This

ambivalent behaviour will keep them occupied in trying to structure out a plan to understand what is running in the mind of the ruler and this way they will be distracted from the evil thoughts and their ambitious plans will suffer a setback.

Francis Bacon goes on to argue that 'ambition' as such is not a bad thing. He is the example of an ammature author who intends to out do his contemporaries by bringing out a piece which is one of its kind. In this kind of a scenario, ambition is a good thing. Again, if we consider a musician who is trying to bring innovation through his music will do a great favour to the society through his ambition. But that kind of an ambition and enthusiasm should be limited to the area of expertise. If over enthusiasm is expressed in sensitive matter like administration, affairs of the state or military understanding then it could turn fatal. And overly ambitious person could be a potential threat. After all he carries within him the power of destruction. Thus, it is important to understand that impact of ambition can vary from person to person. If a person, employs his ambition in the field of his passion then the focused approach towards success will bring him closer to his ambition. But if it is found in the nature of those who gold key position in the day to day administration and realise that the ruler values their contribution, then chances are high that ambition assimilated with pride in the position might bring him unpleasant results. It is perfectly alright to pursue excellent and fame by individuals who are indulging in actions that do not pose any threat to the mankind. These kinds of ambitions should be nurtured as well as rewarded. But in case a person feels like belittling others and bring the general mass under his control it can safely be concluded that this person and his ambition are only going to hurt the state and its people in the long run. Francis Bacon says that the word 'honour' , as understood in a general context usually brings with it the following benefits:

i. It helps in reaching it significant position in society

ii.

It helps in being closer to the king as well as those who exercising mens on the society iii. It also brings with it effluence, well being alone with prosperity. iv. But one should not forget that an ambitious man who get remains restricted in these three aspects is the person who should be encouraged and rewarded for his efforts. Any ruler who is able to judge the aspirations and power of such ambitious people is truly a wise ruler. Concluding his essay, Francis Bacon says that people who want to use their ambition for personal gain should not be appreciated. People who are ruled by their conscience and not just simply by their duty should be considered for the role. 13.4.4 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation' The following is a summary of what Bacon discusses in the essay 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation'. He argues that both simulation and dissimulation are useful but their successful use requires both intelligence and 'Strong Heart'. Dissimulation is a weak and negative policy. It means a lack of the power to judge and to take decision. Those people who lack courage and determination practice it. People of strong mind and penetration do not dither or stall. People who know what to conceal, and what, how much, to whom and when to reveal, to them dissimulation is a weakness and an obstacle. For them it is important to earn a reputation for frankness and honesty. When such people are driven by necessity to dissemble, they are not suspected of dissimulation. Bacon says there are three varieties of secrecy, the 'reserve', the 'dissimulation', and the 'simulation'. In 'reserve', the person hides his real nature of intentions from others. In 'dissimulation', which is a negative property, the person deceives others by the vagueness or indirectness of his speech or action. In 'simulation', which is a positive property, practicing 'reserve' is both a matter of policy and a matter of morality. It encourages others to confide their secrets to a person of reserved nature. Such persons win the confidence and respect of others if their actions and expressions do not betray their real thoughts and feelings. 'Dissimulation', the second variety, is necessary for concealment. With its help a person keeps those persons, who are desirous of learning their secrets, away. It is absolutely necessary for secrecy. 'Simulation', the third variety, is positively a vice and weakness of character if it is practiced habitually and consistently. It is cowardice and hence immoral. It should be practiced very rarely and discreetly.

Both simulation and dissimulation have advantages and disadvantages. They take the enemy by surprise; afford easy means of retracing steps when difficult situations make retreat necessary; and encourage the confidence of other people. The disadvantages, on the other hand, are that they destroy boldness and initiative; confuse and confound allies and friends discounting help and cooperation; and lose faith and confidence of others. A person should be cautious and reserved so as to gain the reputation for frankness but if the occasion demands he should be prepared to dissemble and, if absolutely necessary, to deceive also. Important explanations (i) 'Dissimulation is but a faint kind of policy and to do it.' These are the opening lines of the essay 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation'. This essay may be taken as typically Baconian in the sense that it reflects the essayist's characteristics of practical wisdom. Here the essayist discusses dissimulation. Literally, dissimulation means behaviour or speech to hide feelings, plans and thoughts or to give a wrong idea about them. Bacon asserts that such behaviour is a weakness and is not wisdom. Persons who are wise and courageous do not practise dissimulation because they know the occasion when they should speak the truth and they have the courage also to practise what they consider to be correct. Thus Bacon recognizes dissimulation in persons lacking wisdom and courage. (ii) 'The best composition and If there be no remedy.' While concluding the discussion, the author considers the advantages and disadvantages of simulation and dissimulation. At the end Bacon says that it is best a person should use his talents and qualities in such a manner as to gain a reputation for frankness and honest dealings, a habit of remaining reserved and aloof, practicing dissimulation when the occasion demands, and he should be prepared to even pretend and deceive if it is absolutely necessary and if there is no alternative. Thus, we see the Bacon's morality admits of no moral scruples. He does not hesitate to advise and advocate deception for personal gains. It is for this reason that Bacon's essays are considered the sermons on social conduct for personal gains.

13.5

SUMMARY • Bacon was born on 22 January 1561 in London. It is believed that Bacon was educated at home in his early years owing to poor health (which plagued him throughout his life). Bacon's education was conducted largely in Latin and followed the medieval curriculum. • Bacon came to the attention of Queen Elizabeth and this helped him to regain his financial stability. James I also showered many honours on Bacon, including knighting him. On 9 April 1626 Bacon died of pneumonia and left behind debts which would amount to three million pounds today. • Sir Francis Bacon was a man of great resourcefulness.

He imported into English literature a new genre called the Essay (the name given by him) and therefore known as the father of the English Essay. • Bacon's contribution to the development of modern English prose and prose style earned him yet another accolade of being termed the father of the Modern English Prose. •

When we look at Bacon's essays, the first thing that the catches our attention is their wide variety of theme. He has written on subjects like truth, love, friendship, death, religious and metaphysical subjects etc. • Bacon's essays are full of gems of wisdom, and mostly worldly wisdom. Bacon was born in an age which happened to be the meeting point of the old and the new. • Bacon's essays are a store house of practical wisdom and teachings for a person aspiring to achieve power, position and material possession. • Bacon was the child of the Renaissance. His knowledge and experience helped him in securing important positions. • Bacon's life reveals the dichotomy of values in his personal conduct and the same duality appears in his writings. He is practical and mundane to his finger tips. • To Bacon the means had no meaning. He was concerned with the ends. Bacon's morality is the morality of convenience. • In Bacon's work 'Of Truth', Bacon says the Truth which judges itself teaches the enquiry of truth, the knowledge of truth and the belief of truth and it is the sovereign good of human nature. • The essay, 'Of Nobility' , is an essay of the argumentative nature and it is meant to criticize the nobility of the present times and question their contribution to the society. 'Nobility' means 'nobleness of character' as well as 'the aristocracy'. • In the second part of 'Of Nobility' the essayist draws the comparison between the old nobility and the nobility of the contemporary times. Understanding the old nobility is like watching a ancient building with great structures. • Francis Bacon in the essay 'Of Nobility' after criticizing the nobility of the present times, goes on to tell the readers that the nobility of the present time does not like to work; and ironically they also do not like to admire people who are used to working hard. • During the period of Francis Bacon, it was believed that human body is composed of four different fluids- blood, choler or yellow bile, melancholy or black bile and phelgm. • In 'Of Ambition', an ambitious man is not allowed to carry out his passion and his asked to confine himself to his mediocre surroundings then this kind of a person will turn angry and his suppressed anger will eventually take the shape of rebellion. • Bacon says in the essay 'Of Ambition' if a person who is bubbling with ambition is given an appropriate opportunity to pursue his goals without creating too much of hinderance, he will succeed in his role. • Francis Bacon in the essay 'Of Ambition' is quick point out that when someone is considered for the position of commander who will be responsible for strategic results ambition cannot be a that thing for him. He cannot be disqualified for his ambitious nature. • Despite favouring powers and might of the ambitious people Francis Bacon decides to share a word of caution. He is of the opinion that if ambitious men are employed in responsible positions then they must be kept under strict Vigilance either obviously or indirectly. • Francis Bacon goes on to argue that 'ambition' as such is not a bad thing. It is perfectly alright to pursue excellent and fame by individuals who are indulging in actions that do not pose any threat to the mankind. • In the essay 'Of Simulation and Dissimulation' Bacon defines the terms and cautions about its use. 13.6 KEY WORDS • Renaissance: The revival of European art and literature under the influence of classical models in the 14th–16th centuries. • Aristocracy: The highest class in certain societies, typically comprising people of noble birth holding hereditary titles and offices. • Dissimulation: Concealment of one's thoughts, feelings, or character; pretence.

13.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND Short Answer Questions 1. Write a brief note explaining the universal appeal of Bacon's essays. 2. Write a short note on Bacon's morality and worldly wisdom. 3. Briefly-examine Bacon's essay 'of ambition'. Long Answer Questions 1. Explain how the spirit of Renaissance is reflected in Bacon's essays. 2. Give the summary and critical analysis of Bacon's essays 'of nobility' and 'of truth'. 3. Discuss in detail the interpretation of Bacon's essay 'of Simulation and Dissimulation'. 13.8 FURTHER READINGS

• Anderson, F. H. 1962. Francis Bacon: His Career and His Thought. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press. • Vickers, Brian. 1978. Francis Bacon. Harlow, UK: Longman Group. • Rossi, Paolo. 1968. Francis Bacon: from Magic to Science. Trans. Sacha Rabinovitch. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. • Gaukroger, Stephen. 2001. Francis Bacon and the Transformation of Earlymodern Philosophy. U.K.: Cambridge University Press. • Fish, Stanley E. 1972. 'The Experience of Bacon's Essays.' In Self-Consuming Artifacts. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

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Unit 5 : Spenser: The Faerie Queene Book1 (Part 2) 5.1. Introduction 5.2. Objectives 5.3. Summary and Critical commentary of The Faerie Queene Book 1 5.3.1. Book 1, Cantos I& II 5.3.2. Book 1, Cantos III, IV & V 5.3.3. Book 1, Cantos VI, VII & VIII 5.3.4. Book 1, Cantos IX & X 5.3.5. Book 1, Cantos XI & XII 5.4. Major characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1

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UNIT 2 SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS 18, 55, 65 Structure 2.0 Objectives 2.1 Introduction 2.2 Shakespeare as a Poet 2.3 The Shakespearean Sonnet 2.4 Themes and Concerns of the Sonnets 2.5 Sonnet 18 2.5.1 Explanation 2.6 Sonnet 55 2.6.1 Explanation 2.7 Sonnet 65 2.7.1

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Unit 1- Introduction to Early English Poetry 1.1 Introduction 1.2 The Anglo-Saxon Invasion 1.3 Anglo Saxon Literature – an Overview 1.3.1 Major Extant Works of the Anglo Saxon Period 1.4 Origin of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.1 Characteristics of Anglo Saxon Poetry 1.4.2 Some Important Anglo Saxon Works 1.4.3 Some Famous Anglo Saxon Poets 1.5 The Coming of the Normans 1.5.1 The Norman Conquest 1.5.2 The Shift of Language 1.6 The Norman Literature 1.7. Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.1 Characteristics of Anglo Norman Poetry 1.7.2 Some Important Anglo Norman Works 1.7.3 Some Famous Anglo Norman Writers 1.8 Let Us Sum Up 1.9 Answers to Check Your Progress 1.10 References 1.11 Suggested Reading 1.1

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6/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	72 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	72 WORDS

will cover the time span from the collapse of the Roman Empire to the Norman period. It will discuss a brief history of the Anglo Saxon and the Norman periods. The characteristics of the Anglo Saxon and Norman literature, in particular poetry will also be explained in this unit. You will also read about some of the earliest extant works of English poetry like Beowulf, Waldere, Widsith and Deor. 1.2

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The Anglo-Saxon Invasion The history of early English poetry can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period. The Anglo Saxons invaders came from Germania to Britain in the latter part of the fifth century A.D and eventually established their kingdom in the British Isle. The Anglo Saxons belonged to a group of Teutonic peoples mainly consisting of three related tribes namely the Angles, Saxons and the Juts. From this group the Angles came to Britain from the region of Angeln, a district located in Schelswig Holstein, Germany, the Saxons from the North German plain and the Juts from Jutland in modern Denmark. After reaching the shores of Britain, the Angles established their kingdom in the East, North and Midlands, the Saxons in the South and South West of the country and the Juts in Kent which is in the South East part of the country. As these three tribes were related, a similarity can be witnessed in their language, culture and mode of life. Before the coming of the Anglo Saxons, Britain was inhabited by the native Brythons (now spelled Britons) and the Celt who were driven out from the eastern, central and southern portions of the country and confined to the area we today know as Wales. Besides Wales Celts were also pushed to areas such as the present day Scotland, Cornwall, Brittany and Ireland. As the native Britons had little to offer in the field of literature and it can be safely considered that the arrival of the Anglo Saxons signaled the beginning of the English language and literature. After the conquest, the area inhabited came to be known as “Angles land” which over a period of time became England. This group of Teutonic peoples spoke closely related Germanic languages which developed into a new language called “Angle-ish”, which over a period of time came to be known as English. However, the Anglo Saxon literature did not begin with books but with spoken verse and incantations. The purpose of these verses was to pass along the tribal history, folk lores, heroic tales and values to an audience who could not read. The literature of that time is written in what we today know as Old English or the Anglo Saxon English. 1.3 Anglo Saxon Literature- An Overview A large number of Anglo Saxon manuscripts survive till date. In all there are about 400 surviving manuscripts mainly from the 9th to the 11th centuries. These are written in both Latin and vernacular languages. Out of these 400 manuscripts, 189 are major works while the remaining ones are less recognized. 1.3.1 Major Extant Works of Anglo-Saxon Period The following are some of the major surviving manuscripts of the Anglo Saxon poetry: 1. The Janius manuscript, also known as the Caedmon

manuscript, which is an illustrated poetic anthology. 2. The Exeter Book, also an anthology, located in the Exeter Cathedral since it was donated to the Cathedral in the 11th century. 3. The Vercelli Book, a combination of poetry and prose; 4. The Nowell Codex, also a combination of poetry and prose. Not all of the texts of Anglo-Saxon period can be called works of literature and most of them are anonymous. The above-mentioned manuscripts consist of miscellaneous forms of writings including both prose and poetic works. However, as this unit focuses on Early English Poetry, we will be focusing on Old English Poetry only. 1.4 Origin of Anglo Saxon Poetry The early Anglo-Saxon poetry was oral and was recited on various ceremonies. The performers were usually professional gleemen who recited for hours and, in some instances, even for days. These poems were usually recited with the accompaniment of a harp. The poems followed a set pattern which made them easier to memorize. Only about 30,000 lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry still survive. There are three types of Anglo-Saxon poetry, one being heroic poetry, which tells of the achievements of warriors involved in great battles, the second elegiac which lament the death of one's kith and kin and the third Christian, which was written after Christianity returned to the British Isles after the conversion of these Germanic tribes into Christianity partly by Irish and partly by continental missionaries. The Anglo-Saxon conquest led to the establishment of monasteries which became centres of a literary culture. However, there are other divisions into which Anglo Saxon poetry can be classified further. This will take up later in this section. The Anglo Saxons left behind no poetic rule. Everything we know about the poetry of this period is based on modern analysis. 1.4.1 Characteristics of Anglo Saxon Poetry Now let us study some characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon poetry based on modern analysis, as the Anglo-Saxons did not leave behind any rules for writing poetry and everything we know about the Anglo-Saxon poetry is based on this modern analysis. ➢ Oral form: Most of the Anglo-Saxon poetry is oral as the ballads and popular folk lore were circulated by word of mouth from generation to another. The Anglo-Saxon scops or gleemen who were professional minstrel went about wondering from village to village or from tribe to tribe, chanting to the harp, the popular ballads and their own compositions. The poems followed a set formula of composition which made it easier for the minstrels to memorize. A formal rigid pattern of word stresses gave the lyrics a terse, sing-song effect. ➢ Alliteration: Old English poetry is alliterative in nature. Alliteration is the occurrence of the same letter or

sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. For instance, in the first line of Beowulf "Hwaet ! We Gar-Dena | in gear-dagum" (meaning "Lo! We ...of the Spear Danes in days of yore"), the stressed words Gar-Dena and gear- dagum alliterate on the consonant "G". ➢ Head Rhyme: Head Rhyme means making words begin with the same sound (this may sometimes also be referred to as alliteration.) ➢ Caesura: Old English poetry is also commonly marked by the German caesura or pause. In addition to setting pace for the line the caesura also grouped each line. ➢ Stress: In Anglo Saxon poetry, stress is usually placed on a syllable containing a long vowel. Words such as God, King and proper nouns are often stressed. It is very rare that a stressed syllable is a preposition or pronoun. The words that are lower in hierarchy are usually unstressed and are short. ➢ Melancholy: Melancholy is one of the chief characteristics of the Old English verse. Even when a poem deals with a heroic theme set in harsh atmosphere, there is always a note of melancholy. ➢ Simile: A simile is a figure of speech that compares two dissimilar things by using a key word such as like or as. By comparing dissimilar things, the writer of a simile shocks the reader into appreciation of the qualities of the things being compared. The epic Beowulf contains many similes. ➢ Metaphor: A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing is spoken of as though it were something else. For example in the Anglo Saxon poem, The Wanderer, "battle" is referred to a "storm of spheres." Through this identification of dissimilar things, a comparison is suggested or implied. In the above given simile, it shows how the Anglo Saxons viewed battle as something that was unpredictable, chaotic and violent in nature. ➢ Kenning: Another important feature of the Anglo Saxon poetry is kenning. Kenning is a figure of speech in the form of a compound (usually two words, hyphenated) that employ a figurative language in place of a more concrete single-word noun. For example, "sea" becomes "whale-road" and "body" is called "life house"; Beowulf in oe " bee-wolf" or "bee-hunter", is a kenning for "bear". 1.4.2 Some Important Anglo Saxon Poetic Works Pagan Poetry: Anglo Saxon poetry has a good body of poetic work. Some of the important poetic works are Beowulf, Widsith and Seafearers. Beowulf: Beowulf is the earliest known English epic, written in Old English. The written version is of 10th century, but the origin of the poem can be traced back to the 7th century. Beowulf tells the story of the legendary pagan hero Beowulf. The story is of Scandinavian origin which tells the exploits of a pagan warrior, renowned for his courage, strength and dignity. It is essentially a warrior's story in which the struggle of

Beowulf with a monster named Grendel is given. Grendel for a long time had been raiding the banqueting hall of King Hrothgar of Jutland. Beowulf, the Prince of Sweden, sails from Sweden to help King Hrothgar. He fights Grendel and slays him and later his evil mother too. When Beowulf returns home, he is proclaimed the king of Geats. Later his kingdom is invaded by a fiery dragon whom Beowulf manages to slay. However, he receives a lethal wound in fight and succumbs to his injuries. Beowulf has achieved national epic status on the same level as Illiad and is of interest to historians, anthropologists, literary critics and literature students all over the world. Besides Beowulf, there is a large body of Anglo Saxon verse. There are great poems like some fragments of The Flight of Finnsburh, Waldere, Widsith and Deor. Elegiac Poetry: Related to the heroic tales are a number of short poems from the Exeter Book which are described as “elegies” or “wisdom poetry”. These are lyrical and Boethian in their description of the ups and downs of life. The Ruin is gloomy in mood and tells of the decay of the once glorious city of Roman Britain. The Wandereris a poem in which an older man talks about an attack that happened in his youth, where his close friends and kin were also killed. The memories of this slaughter remain with him all throughout his life. The Seafarer, another important work of the Anglo-Saxon poetry, tells the exploits of a somber old seafarer whis away from home on the sea and the only hope of redemption is the joy of heaven. Besides these, Alfred the Great, the West Saxon king, wrote a wisdom poem over the course of his reign based on the philosophy of Boethius called the Lays of Boethius. Christian Poetry: Christian poetry can further be categorised as follows: Saint’s Lives- The Vercelli Book and the Exeter Book contain four long narrative poems on the lives of saints lives known as hagiographies. In Vercelli are Andreas and Elene and in Exeter are Guthlac poems A & Band Juliana. Andreas is a1722 lines long poem and it is closest of all the surviving Old English poems to Beowulf in style and tone. It tells the story of Saint Andrew and his journey to rescue Saint Matthew from the Mermedonians. Elene is the story of Saint Helena (mother of Constantine) and her discovery of the True Cross the cult of which was popular in Anglo Saxon England. Guthlacpoems A & B are two poems about the English Saint Guthlac. Juliana is the study of the virgin martyr Juliana of Nicomedia. (i) The Anglo Saxon Chronicle: Besides the above mentioned poetic works, a major work of the Anglo Saxon period is the Anglo Saxon Chronicle , a historical record in English that summarizes important annual events of the period. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle contains various heroic poems. The earliest

from The Battle of Brunanburh celebrates the victory of King Athelstan over the Scots and Norse. There are five shorter poems: capture of the Five Boroughs (942); coronation of King Edgar (973); death of King Edgar (975); death of Alfred the Great (1036); and death of King Edward the Confessor(1065) The 325 line poem, The Battle of Maldon celebrates Earl Byrhnoth and his men who fell in battle against the Vikings in 991. It is considered to be one of the finest poems of the anglo-Saxon period, but both the beginning and the end of the poem are missing and the only manuscript was also destroyed by the fire in 1731. A well known speech made by..... occurs at the end of the poem: Thou shall be the harder, the heart the keener, courage the greater, as our strength lessens. Here lies our leader all cut down, the valiant man in the dust; Always may he mourn who now thinks to turn away from this warplay. I am old, I will not go away, but I plan to lie down by the side of my lord, by the man so dearly loved. Battle of Maldon. 1.4.3 Some Famous Anglo Saxon Poets The following were some of the well-known Anglo-Saxon poets. ➢ Caedmon: Caedmon was a humble, unlearned man, who used to tend the cattle of an abbey on the Yorkshire coast. One night while he was lying down in a cowshed, he heard a voice asking him to sing. Ashamed, Caedmon refused as he could not sing. But the mysterious voice said to Caedmon that he shall sing to it. To this Caedmon asked, 'What shall I sing?' the mysterious voice replied that he should sing about the Song of Creation. Being divinely inspired, Caedmon sang and the song he sang can be considered the first piece of Christian literature to appear in Anglo Saxon England. Caedmon lived in the seventh century and is mentioned in Bede's History. ➢ Cynewulf: Cynewulf was the author of four poems: The Ascension, The Legend of Saint Juliana, Elene. All these four poems are about the discovery of the True Cross on which Christ was crucified and the Fates of the Apostles. The works show Cynewulf to be a scholar, familiar with Latin, and technically a skillful poet. Among his poems Elene and the Ascension are the most praised ones. ➢ Bede: Also referred to as Saint Bede or Venerable Bede, was an English monk at the two monasteries in the kingdom of Northumbria. His most famous work is Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum (The Ecclesiastical History of English People) I tell the story of the conversion and of the English church. This work gained him the title of "The Father of English History." Besides Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum, Bede also wrote scientific, historical and theological works, which reflect his catholic bent of mind. Bede's scientific commentaries employed allegories as a means of interpretation and his history

includes accounts of miracles. Modern historians have completed many studies on Bede's works. His life and his works have been celebrated by a series of annual scholarly lectures at St. Paul's Church, Jarrow from 1958 to the present. ➢ Alcuin of York: Alcuin was an English scholar, ecclesiastic, poet and teacher from York, Northumbria. He wrote many theological and dogmatic treatises as well as a few works on grammar and a number of poems. He became the friend and adviser of the Frankish emperor Charlemagne. Alcuin assisted Charlegmagne in making the Frankish court a centre of learning. As a result of the efforts of Alcuin and Charlemagne, the English culture developed considerably. 1.5 The Coming of the Normans The period of English history following the Norman Conquest (1066) when England was ruled by William, Duke of Normandy, and his descendants, ie William 1, 1066-87; William II 1087-1100; Henry I, 1100-1135 and Stephen, 1135-54 is known as the Norman period. The word Norman means 'Northman'. They were originally 'Norsemen' from Norway, descendants of Vikings, who had conquered the province of northern France called Normandy after them. The Normans conquered England in the year 1066 and with the coming of the Normans, the English started becoming French in their way of life. Let us now take a look at how the Normans invaded England and gradually became the masters of the island we today know as the British Isles. 1.5.1 The Norman Conquest As mentioned earlier, by the time the Normans (Northmen from Scandinavia) invaded England, they had become culturally French. Thus, the Norman Conquest was a French conquest as a result of which French aristocracy was established in the English soil. William, the Duke of Normandy, had family ties with Edward the Confessor, the English king, who promised William the throne. When Edward died in 1066, the Saxon witan - council of elders -chose Harold II as king. This angered William of Normandy. William, thereupon, led a few thousand Norman and French troops across the English Channel to claim the throne forcefully. He confronted King Harold at the Battle of Hastings near a seaside village in southern England. Harold's army was defeated and he was killed. The victorious Norman army thereafter marched towards London, ruthlessly crushing all resistance. On Christmas Day, at Westminster Abbey, William was coroneted the King of England. For the next five years, William consolidated his victory. He quelled the Anglo- Saxon forces, confiscated their lands, established Norman controlled governments at all levels, gradually establishing feudalism in England. 1.5.2 Shift of Language With the coming of the Normans, their dialect of French

became the language of England. The Normans conducted various businesses in French and Latin. In the law courts too, French was substituted for English. Saxons dealing with the Normans had to learn French. As French displaced English, it suffered heavy losses. The Classical Old English verses died out, but were later revived in very different forms, but prose, continued as sermons, were still written in English and the Anglo Saxon Chronicle was still kept in monasteries. In addition to this, Latin also emerged as an important language for the Anglo-Saxons, who had tried to desperately use the language of the conquerors, failed miserably, as a result of which Latin was employed as a compromise language. 1.7 The Norman Literature The first writing of Norman literature in England is a catalogue of the King's property, i.e. the whole of the country, as William saw himself as the proprietor of the country. Although William owned the land but he granted it to the nobles who had helped him in the conquest. Thereby, laying the foundation of Feudalism. Feudalism was a pyramid like structure, where the king was at the apex, followed by the nobility and the aristocracy and finally, the poor peasants, who worked as serfs for feudal lord sand were placed at the lowest rung of the ladder. These peasants formed the lower rung of the society. The Norman literature was quite opposed to the grim and melancholy literature of the Anglo- Saxons. The old English verse was black and white whereas the French coloured and looked at the sunnier side of life. It, however, was neither true English literature nor true French literature for the Normans who settled in England had lost touch of the French culture and language because of which the French they spoke lost its purity. Thus, a new form of language emerged which had the characteristics of both French and Old English, and it came to be known as Anglo Norman and the literature written in Anglo Norman came to be known as the Anglo-Norman literature. Furthermore, Anglo Norman may also refer to a period from 1066 to 1204, when the Duchy of Normandy and English were united in the Anglo-Norman realm. Norman literature exploits a lot of ancient Greek and Roman mythical and legendary figures, ranging from Agamemnon to Ulysses and from Aeneas, to Brutus. These great mythical and legendary figures have been portrayed in the works of three writers of the twelfth century, namely Geoffrey of Manmouth, Wace and Laymon, who wrote in Latin, French and English, respectively. Their works were set in the remote past, beginning with a founding of the nation by Brutus, the legendary great grandson of Aeneas, and ending with the Anglo Saxon conquest of the native islanders, the Britons of the fifth and the sixth centuries. 1.7 Anglo Norman

Poetry With the coming of the Normans, the language of England shifted from Old English, which by that time had moved to becoming Middle English, to French. As English was displaced by French, a lot of changes were witnessed in all walks of life and all fields of knowledge, including literature and in particular, poetry. Now let us examine some of the changes that came about in the writing of poetry. 1.7.1 Characteristics of Anglo Norman Poetry These changes also formed the chief characteristics of Norman poetry. 1. Rhymed verse: With the coming of the Normans, the French stanza forms replaced the formlessness of Anglo-Saxon poetry, for instance, rhymed verse replaced the alliterative verse and head rhyme of the Anglo-Saxon poetry. 2. Meter: As opposed to the Anglo-Saxon poetry, which was not rhythmical in pattern, the Norman poetry had a rhythmical pattern which makes considerable use of the octosyllabic couplet, meaning a couplet written in eight syllables, which they owe to the French. 3. Courtly sophisticated verse: with the coming of the Normans, the heroic verse of the Anglo Saxons was replaced by new kinds of courtly sophisticated rhymes. This was a feature of Norman England but throughout Europe, the heroic notes of the Anglo Saxon poetry soon faded away. 4. Light spirited diction: The language of the Normans was light, coloured and spirited as compared to the Anglo-Saxons' which was dull, heavy, melancholy and humourless. 5. Use of borrowed words: Anglo Norman poetry made use of borrowed words.

words were mainly borrowed from Latin and French (Latin being the parent tongue of French) After going through the characteristics of Norman literature, let us now take a look at some of the important Anglo Norman writers and trace their contribution in shaping the English literature. 1.7.2 Some Important Anglo Norman Works By and large, the medieval works were religious and didactic. Among the most famous is the allegorical poem, Le Chasteau d' Amore by Robert Grosseteste who was the Bishop of Lincoln. The poem is a euloize of the Virgin and many aspects of Christian theology. This is done through an elaborate allegory of a castle and its defenders. The lively and metrically interesting Voyage of St. Brendan, with its rich collection of marvellous adventures, is another Anglo French poem which is of literary interest even today. Other important writings include Ormulum, a translation of some of the Gospels read at Mass by the Augustine monk Orm. Ormulum consists of around 19,000 unrhymed but metrically rigid couplets which consist of homilies. Homilies are commentaries following the reading of scriptures. Orm gave the title Ormulum meaning "made by Orm" to his work. Orm also developed an idiosyncratic spelling system to guide his readers in the pronunciation of the vowels as well. He used a strict poetic meter to ensure that the reader knows which syllable needs to be stressed. Cursor Mundi is an enormous poem of about thirty thousand lines written in the last quarter of the thirteenth century. It deals with important incidents from both the Old and the New Testament. Ancrene Riwle,is a sophisticated work of great charm and accomplished style. It is a work about monastic rule given by a priest to three religious sisters who lived in a little house near a church. It was probably written by an Augustinian priest of Wigmore Abbey in North-West Herefordshire, Handlyng Synne, by Robert Mannyng, Pricke of Conscience by Richard Rolle, The Owl and the Nightingale, Pearl, Sir Gawayn and the Green Knight of anonymous authorship are some other works of this period. Another important work is a book of travel writing by a supposed fictitious writer, Sir John Mandeville. This book, which is abundant in French expressions, is appealing in many ways and seems to be a popular one. William Langland is another important writer of merit in the Old English technique. His The Vision of Piers Plowman not only attacked the abuses of the Christian Church in England but also calls upon the ordinary people to go on a relentless quest for the 'Holy Truth.' Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is one of the finest Arthurian romances of the late 14th century. It also

contains three religious poems Pearl, Patience and Purity. All these are considered to be the works of the same poet. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight tells of the exploits of Sir Gawain, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table. It is mainly about the duels between Sir Gawain and a supernatural knight, the "Green Knight." In this poem Gawain demonstrates the qualities of chivalry and loyalty but his honour is called into question by a test crafted by the lady of the castle in which most of the story takes place. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight belongs to the so called Alliterative Revival which saw the revival of the alliterative verse pattern in Old English poetry. Alliteration had been replaced by the end rhyme in Anglo Norman poetry. Sir Gawin symbolizes the first blossoming of Arthurian chivalry. 1.7.3 Some Famous Anglo Norman Writers ➢ Geoffrey of Manmouth: Geoffrey of Manmouth was probably born between 1100 to 1110 in Wales as in his Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Kings of Britain),he calls himself Galfridus Monumetensis, "Geoffreye of Manmouth", which shows his connection with Manmouth, Wales. However, much of his life was spent outside Wales, especially in Oxford, where he was a secular canon of St. George's College and wrote his Historia Regum Britanniae.The history was later translated into French by Wace and thereafter into English by Layamon. Layamon's work is in verse and it is called Brut after Brutus, the legendary grandson of Aeneas, and the mythical founder of Britain. Geoffrey began his history with a British foundation myth modeled upon Virgil's Aeneid. Geoffrey of Manmouth dedicates a considerable portion of his history to King Arthur, the legendary British leader of the late 5th and the early 6th centuries. Who according to the medieval histories and romances led the defense of Britain against the Saxon invaders. Geoffrey gives an excellent account of the victories won by Arthur both at home and abroad. ➢ Walter Map: William Map was of Welsh origin and is mainly credited with lively Latin lyrics of the Goliardic tradition. Gallards were wondering scholars , a group of clergy who wrote satirical Latin poetry. The Goliards mainly hailed from different universities of France, Germany, Spain, Italy and England and protested the growing contradictions within the church. They expressed their feelings through song, poetry and performances. Map's work, written in this tradition, is a collection of satirical poetry and known as Apocalypse of Goli. Another of his surviving work is De Nugis Curialium (Trifles of Courtiers) which is a collection of anecdotes and trivia. ➢ Wace: He was a Norman poet who was born in Jersey and brought up in mainland Normandy. He is known for his Roman de Brut, a verse history of Britain, based on Historia Regnum Britannia by

Geoffrey of Manmouth, which in turn became the basis of Layamon's Brut. ➢ Layamon or Laghamon: He was

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and priest of Worcestershire in the early 13th century. He was the author of Brut, which, as mentioned above, is an English translation of Wace's Roman de Brut. It discusses the legends of Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. His poem provides an inspiration for numerous later writers, including Sir Thomas Malory and Jorge Luis Borges, and had an impact on the development of Arthurian literature and medieval history writing in England. ➢ Marie de France: (Mary of France) was a poetess of the late 12th century who was of French origin but during her adult life lived largely in England as she mainly wrote in the Anglo Norman dialect. She is chiefly known for Lais of Marie de France. Her lais were a collection of twelve narrative poems, mostly of a few hundred lines each. Her Lais focused on glorifying the concept of courtly love through the adventures of the main character and are dedicated to the "noble king" Henry. Mary's Lais were quite popular in aristocratic circles. Besides her Lais, she also translated Aesop's Fables from Middle English into Anglo Norman French. Her fables are dedicated to "Count William" who might have been William of Mandeville or William Marshall. She also wrote Espurgatorie seint Partiz (Legend of the Purgatoty of St. Patrik, based upon a Latin text. ➢ Chretien de Troyes: He was a 12th century French poet who served at the court of Henry II. He along with Marie de France was the inventor of medieval "romances". His work on Arthurian subjects is regarded as one of the best of medieval romance in chivalry. His use of structure, particularly in Yvain, the Knight of the Lion, is considered to be a prototype of modern novel. In the words of Karl Uitti, "the inventor of modern novel", "With [Chretien's work] a new era opens in the history of European story-telling...this poem reinvents the genre we call narrative romance; in some important respects it also initiates the vernacular novel." Chretien's works were written in vernacular Old French and many of the surviving copies of his romances have been adapted into other languages. Chretien was the first writer to talk about the love affair between Queen Guinevere and Lancelot. With this we come to the end of the first phase in the history of English literature. In this unit you saw how both the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman literatures played a formative role in the nurturing of the first body of English literature. In the next unit you will read about Chaucer, who was the first important milestone in history of English literature. 1.7

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10/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 196 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 196 WORDS

LET US SUM UP In this unit you saw how the various Germanic tribes came to the British Isles and made it their home. Once these Germanic tribes had settled well, they started working on the development of their art, literature and culture and thus the first English literature blossomed in the English soil. This literature was mostly a verse literature, which mostly comprised of anonymous poetry. However, there were some brilliant prose works too. With the coming of the Normans, we saw how a change in language came about and how Anglo Saxon was gradually replaced by Anglo Norman. This unit further took up the characteristic features of Anglo Norman literature and discussed the major Anglo Norman writers and their works at length. 1.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS 1. Who were the native inhabitants of Britain? 2. Name the major extant works of the Anglo Saxon period. 3. Who is the author of The Legend of Sain Juliana? 4. What does the world Norman mean? 5. Who is the author of Historia Regum Britannia? 6. Who is considered to be the inventor of modern novel? 1.9

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11/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 41 WORDS **81%** **MATCHING TEXT** 41 WORDS

ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS A1. Brythons A2. Janius Manuscript Exeter Book Vercelli Book Nowell Codex A3. Cynewulf A4. Northman A5. Geoffrey of Manmouth A6. Chretein de Troyes 1.10

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12/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 22 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 22 WORDS

REFERENCES • Greenblatt, Stephen. Ed. Abrahms, M.H., The Norton Anthology. London: W.W. Norton & Company Ltd., 2000. Print.

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13/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	87 WORDS	96%	MATCHING TEXT	87 WORDS

sobrely, Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy, For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice, Ne was so wordly for to have office; For hym was levere have at his beddes heed, Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed, Of Aristotle and his philosophie, Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie, But al be that he was a philosopher, Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre, But al that he myghte of his freendes hente On bookes and

sobrely. 289 Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy; 290 For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice, 291 Ne was so worldly for to have office. 292 For hym was levere have at his beddes heed 293 Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reed, 294 Of aristotle and his philosophie, 295 Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie. 296 But al be that he was a philosophre, 297 Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre; 298 But al that he myghte of his freendes hente, 299 On bookes and

W https://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/CT/1:1.1?rgn=div2;view=fulltext

14/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	78 WORDS	95%	MATCHING TEXT	78 WORDS

lernynge he it spente, And bisily gan for the soules prey Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye, Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede, Noght o word spak he moore than was neede, And that was seyd in forme and reverence And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche. 2.5.4

lernynge he it spente, And bisily gan for the soules preye Of hem that yaf hym wher-with to scoleye. Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede. Noght o word spak he moore than was neede; And that was seyd in forme and reverence, And short and quyk and ful of hy senténce. Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche; And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

W https://poets.org/poem/canterbury-tales-general-prologue

15/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	212 WORDS	86%	MATCHING TEXT	212 WORDS

A FRANKELEYN was in his compaignye, Whit was his berd as is a dayesye, Of his complexioun he was sanywyn, Wel loved he by the morwe a scope in wyn. To liven in delit ws ever his wone, For he was Epicurus owene sone, That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit Was verraily felicitee parfit An householdere, and that a greet, was he: Seint Julian was he in his contree; His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon, A better envyned man was nowher noon. Withoute bake mete was never his hous, Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteuous, It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke, Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke. After the sundry sesons of the yeer, So changed he his mete and his soper Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe, And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe. Wo was his cook but if his sauce were Poynaunt and sharpe, and redy al his geere. His table dormant in his halle always, Stood redy covered al the longe day. At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire; Ful ofte tyme was

A FRANKELEYN was in his compaignye. Whit was his berd as is a dayesye; 335 Of his complexioun he was sangwyn. Wel loved he by the morwe a sope in wyn,; To lyven in delit was evere his wone, For he was Epicurus owene sone, That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit 340 Was verray felicitee parfit. An housholdere, and that a greet, was he; Seint Julian was he in his contree. His breed, his ale, was alweys after oon, A bettre envyned man was nowher noon. 345 Withoute bake mete was nevere his hous Of fissh and flessh, and that so plentevous, It snewed in his hous of mete and drynke, Of alle deyntees that men koude thynke. After the sondry sesons of the yeer, 350 So chaunged he his mete and his soper. Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in muwe, And many a breem and many a luce in stuwe. Wo was his cook, but if his sauce were Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his geere. 355 His table dormant in his halle alway Stood redy covered al the longe day. At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire; Ful ofte tyme was

W http://www.librarius.com/canttran/genpro/genpro333-362.htm

16/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	38 WORDS	44%	MATCHING TEXT	38 WORDS

lord and sire; Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire, An anlaas, and a gypser al of sild, Heeng at his girdle, whit as morne milk. A shirreve hadde he been, and a

lord and sire at court Ful ofte tyme he was knyght of the shire. He was a member of parliament many times. 357 An anlaas and a gipser al of silk A dagger and a purse all of silk 358 Heeng at his girdel, whit as morne milk. Hung at his belt, as morning milk. 359 A shirreve hadde he been, and a

W https://chaucer.fas.harvard.edu/pages/general-prologue-0

17/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	24 WORDS	78%	MATCHING TEXT	24 WORDS

London ale. He could roast and boil and broil and fry, and make a stew, and properly bake a pie. But it was

London ale. And he could roast and boil and broil and fry, And prepare a stew, and bake a tasty pie. But a it was,

W https://www.termpaperwarehouse.com/essay-on/Canterbury-Tales/237132

18/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	95 WORDS	98%	MATCHING TEXT	95 WORDS

Pardoner Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer, That streight was comen fro the court of Rome. Ful loude he soong Com hider, love, to me! This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun, Was never trompe of half so greet a soun. This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex, But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex; By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde, And therwith he his shuldres overspradde; But thynne it lay, by colpons, oon and oon; 2.5.9

Pardoner Of Rouncivale, his freend and his compeer, That streight was comen fro the court of Rome. Ful loude he soong, "Com hider, love, to me!" This Somonour bar to hym a stif burdoun; Was nevere trompe of half so greet a soun. This Pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex, But smothe it heeng as dooth a strike of flex; By ounces henge his lokkes that he hadde, And therwith he his shuldres overspradde. But thynne it lay, by colpons, oon and oon;

W https://poets.org/poem/canterbury-tales-general-prologue

19/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	109 WORDS	95%	MATCHING TEXT	109 WORDS

A Semely man Oure Hooste was with-alle For to han been a marchal in an halle. A large man he was, with eyen stepe, A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe; Boold of his speche, and wys and well y-taught, And of manhod hym lakkede right naught. Eek therto he was right a myrie man, And after soper pleyen he bigan, And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges, Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges; And seyde thus: Now, lordynges, trewely, Ye been to me right welcome, hertely; For by my trouthe, if that I shall nat lye,

A semely man Oure Hooste was with-alle For to been a marchal in an halle. A large man he was with eyen stepe, A fairer burgeys ther noon in Chepe; Boold of his speche, and wys, and well y-taught, And of manhod hym lakkede right naught. Eek thereto he was right a myrie man, And after soper pleyen he bigan, And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges, Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges; And seyde thus: "Now, lordynges, trewely, Ye been to me right welcome, hertely; For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,

W https://poets.org/poem/canterbury-tales-general-prologue

20/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	44 WORDS	98%	MATCHING TEXT	44 WORDS

saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye At ones in this herberwe as is now Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how; And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght, To doon yow ese, and it shal coste

saugh nat this yeer so myrie a compaignye At ones in this herberwe as is now. Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how; And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght, To doon yow ese, and it shal coste

W https://poets.org/poem/canterbury-tales-general-prologue

21/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	70 WORDS	97%	MATCHING TEXT	70 WORDS

Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon, Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre non, Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte, That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white, Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes. Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes, And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood; Thanne wolde he speke, and crie as he were wood. 2.5.8

Ther nas quyk-silver, lytarge, ne brymstoon, Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon, Ne oynement, that wolde clense and byte, That hym myghte helpen of his whelkes white, Nor of the knobbes sittynge on his chekes. Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes, And for to drynken strong wyn, reed as blood; Thanne wolde he speke and crie as he were wood.

W https://www.termpaperwarehouse.com/essay-on/Canterbury-Tales/237132

22/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	146 WORDS	98%	MATCHING TEXT	146 WORDS

Lines (623-636) There was a Summoner with us in that place. His face was red like fire, as an angel's face is, and he had pimples all over his face. He had narrow eyes, and he was a passionate fellow, constantly desiring sexual indulgence like a sparrow. He had black brows, which were infected with mange (or itch), and he had a shaggy beard. Children felt afraid on seeing his face. There was no quicksilver, lead oxide, brimstone, borax, white lead, cream of tartar, or any cleaning and disinfectant ointment that could cure him of his white pimples or of the lumps of flesh in his cheeks. He was very fond of garlic, onions, and also leeks. He loved to drink strong wine, red coloured like blood. After drinking he would talk and shout as if he had gone mad. Lines (669-679) With

Lines – 623-636 There was a Summoner with us in that place. His face was red like fire, as an angel's face is, and he had pimles all over his face. He had narrow eyes, and he was a passionate fellow, constantly desiring sexual indulgence like a sparrow. He had black brows, which were infected with mange (or itch), and he had a shaggy beard. Children felt afraid on seeing his face. There was no quicksilver, lead oxide, brimstone, borax, white lead, cream of tartar, or any cleaning and disinfectant ointment that could cure him of his white pimples or of the lumps of flesh in his cheeks. He was very fond of garlic, onions, and also leeks. He loved to drink strong wine, red-coloured like blood. After drinking he would talk and shout as if he had gone mad. Lines – 669-679 With

W https://smartenglishnotes.com/2020/12/05/the-prologue-to-the-canterbury-tales-summary-explanation ...

23/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	603 WORDS	99%	MATCHING TEXT	603 WORDS

Introduction This unit shall briefly discuss the life of Edmund Spenser. It will also trace the development of Spenser as a poet, focusing on his major works. You will also read about Spenser's contribution in the field of literature like Spenserian sonnet and Spenserian stanza. You will also be introduced to Spenser's opus The Faerie Queene in this unit. 4.2 Objectives In this unit you will be · Acquainted with the life and major works of Edmund Spenser • Get a glimpse of his poetic style • Trace Spenser's contribution in English poetry • Understand The Faerie Queene as an allegory 4.3 Edmund Spenser 4.3.1 Life and Works Spenser's birth date is undocumented, but a pair of autobiographical sonnets in the "Amoretti" sequence suggest the year was 1554. His family was originally from Burnley, Lancashire, but we know from Prothalamion that London was his birthplace. Spenser's origins were humble. His father was a cloth maker. Spenser received his early education at Merchant Taylor's grammar school where he acquired rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and music. After matriculating from Merchant Taylor's, Spenser joined Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1569 as a 'sizar' or a poor scholar. Spenser had to undertake many odd jobs at college in return for the education. In Cambridge, Spenser picked up languages such as French, Italians and English and also read Greek and Latin classics, pagan mythologies, divinities, ancient and contemporary philosophies at length. During Spenser's first year at Cambridge, his earliest poems were published. Three years after leaving Cambridge, in 1579, Spenser issued his first volume of poetry, the Shepheardes Calendar. In the book Spenser deliberately used archaic language, partly to pay homage to Chaucer and partly to achieve a rustic effect. With the publication of The Shepheardes Calenderit was felt at once that the poet for whom the age had been waiting had come. The Shepheardes Calendar was published at Gabriel Harvey's instance, and was dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, a good friend of Spenser. It was around that time that he married his first wife, Maccabaeus Chylde, who was the mother of his two children. Spenser was appointed secretary to the lord-deputy of Ireland in 1580, thereafter he spent most of his life in Ireland, acquiring Kilcoman Castle, an Irish estate, where he did much of his writing. Sir Walter Raleigh, a fellow colonist often visited Spenser at Kilcoman Castle. He was very much impressed seeing Spenser's The Faerie Queen and convinced him to take the first three books to Queen Elizabeth. The queen was highly impressed seeing the book and he was awarded a handsome pension of

fifty pounds a year for life. The Faerie Queen, which is an unfinished epic poem in twelve books, established Spenser's reputation as a writer. Like the Shepheardes Calender, The Faerie Queen also makes use of archaic language and combines two literary forms, the romance and the epic, into an allegory about "the twelve moral virtues." Spenser was a prolific experimenter of the verse form. His Shepheardes Calender makes use of thirteen different meters. He also adapted the Italian canzone forms for Epithalamion and Prothalamion. In The Faerie Queene he makes use of the nine- line stanza which is named the Spenserian stanza after him. Spenser can be called the pioneer of English versification and many later English poets learned the art of versification from him. It is for this reason Charles Lamb called Spenser the "poet's poet." Spenser's influence may be seen in Shelley's Revolt of Isalm, Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Keat's Eve of St. Agnes and Tennyson'

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Lotus Eaters. Besides his well-known works Shepheardes Calender and The Faerie Queene, Spenser published a volume of poems called Complaints, which was published in 1591. It is a miscellaneous collection of poems written at different periods. The volume contained The Ruins of Time; The Tears of the Muses; Virgil's Gnat; Mother Hubbard's Tale; The Ruins of Rome; Muiopotmos; Visions of the World's Vanity; Bellay's Visions; Petrarch's Visions; a pastoral called Colin Clout Comes Home Againe; his sonnet cycle, Amoretti; two wedding poems Epithalamion and Prothalamion. Epithalamion is one of the most admired poems in the English language. It was written by Spenser for his wedding to his young bride, Elizabeth Boyle, whom he courted and married after his first wife's death in 1594. The 24 stanzas of the poem correspond to the diurnal and sidereal hours. The song begins before dawn and progresses through the wedding ceremony and into the consummation night of the newlywed couple. Throughout Epithalamion, the speaker marks time by referencing the physical movements of the wedding party, the positions of the sun and other celestial bodies, and the light and darkness that fill the day. Although firmly within the classical tradition, Epithalamion takes its setting and several of its images from Ireland, where Edmund Spenser's wedding to Elizabeth Boyle actually took place and his sonnet cycle, Amoretti which also traces the courtship of the poet and his beloved. A View of the Present State of Ireland is Spenser's anonymously published apology for the repressive English regime. Another well-known work of Spenser is Astrophel, which is a pastoral lament that he wrote for Philip Sidney. In 1598 there was an uprising in Munster, Ireland where Spencer lived. The rebels burned down the house in which Spenser lived. The poet had to flee his house along with his wife but unfortunately their new-born baby is said to have died in the flames. Finally, Spenser had to return to London. He died on January 13, 1599, and is buried in what is now known as the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. 4.3.2 Poetic Style of Edmund Spenser Edmund Spenser is often remembered as the 'Poet's Poet'. In fact, Spenser's gravestone in Westminster Abbey has a quote rightly labelling him as 'The Prince of Poets of All Time...'. In Spenser's poems, we find a fine balance of rhythm and rhyme. Spenser was a connoisseur of art and a lover and physical beauty and celebrated it in his works. Thus, he captured the beauty in nature, art and human beings in his works brilliantly. His works were an embodiment of love and purity. Spenser was a prominent Renaissance poet and his poetry

reflected a Renaissance spirit with Platonic idealism. Spenser was a poet of sensuous images. However, he was an iconoclast too, who was “deeply suspicious of the power of images (material and verbal) to turn into idols.” His works are also filled with archaic words and for that reason he is often referred to as a backward -looking poet. However, as mentioned earlier, Spenser used archaic words in order to pay homage to Chaucer, of whom he was a great admirer. Spenser’s poems reflect the classical epic forms. Like the classical epics they begin with an invocation of the Muses and have an epic hero. For example, in the beginning of The Faerie Queene Book 1, Spenser invokes the Muses. It also has a hero, The Redcrosse Knight, who is the knight of Holiness. Spenser makes extensive use figures of speech, especially similes and extended metaphor in his works. One also finds various allusions of classical epics like Homer’s Illiad and Odyssey, Virgil’s Aeneid, Tasso’s Jerusalem Delivered and Aristo’s Orlando Furioso. There is symmetry in form e.g., parallels between characters such as Arthur & Lucifer, Una & Duessa, etc., and between settings- the House of Pride & the House of Holiness. In the words of David in The Norton Anthology, Spenser was “an idealist, drawn to courtesy, gentleness, and exquisite moral refinement, yet also a celebrant of English nationalism, empire, and material power...as a British epic poet and poet-prophet, he points forward to the poetry of the Romantics and especially Milton-n who himself paid homage to the “sage and serious” Senser as “a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas.” 4.4 Spenser’s Contribution in the Field of English Poetry Spenser’s contribution to the field of English poetry is immense. He had a lifelong interest in theories of poetry and he is recognized as one of the great inventors in the English verse form. His Spenserian stanza and Spenserian sonnet are especially notable. Let us now examine both these forms briefly. 4.4.1 Spenserian Stanza Edmund Spenser invented the Spenserian stanza and used it in his The Faerie Queene. The stanza consists of eight lines of iambic pentameter followed by a single alexandrine, a twelve- syllable iambic line. The final line typically has a caesura, or break, after the first three feet. The rhyme scheme of these lines is "ababbcbcc." A perfect example of the form is found the first stanza of Book I of The Faerie Queene: A gentle knight was pricking on the plaine, Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde, Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine, The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde; Yet armes till that time did he never wield: His angry steede did chide his foaming bitt, As much disdayning to the curbe to yield: Full jolly knight he seemed, and faire did sitt, As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fitt.

Critics note several earlier stanza forms as the basis for the Spenserian stanza. One widely cited source is the ottava rima. This is an Italian form that originated in thirteenth- century religious and minstrel poetry and consists of eight lines of iambic pentameter with the rhyme scheme "abababcc." A relatively modern use of the ottava rima can be found in Byron's Don Juan. Another possible source for Spenser's stanza is the "rhyme royal," a stanza of seven lines of iambic pentameter that rhymes "ababbcc." Chaucer invented this in his "Complaint unto Pity" and Shakespeare later used it in The Rape of Lucrece. But regardless of its sources, the Spenserian stanza is regarded as "one of the most remarkably original metric innovations in the history of English verse" (Preminger 807). The Spenserian stanza fell into a period of disuse in the seventeenth century, but it saw a revival with Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes," and Shelley's "The Revolt of Islam" and "Adonais." Shelley is perhaps the greatest exponent of the Spenserian stanza after Spenser himself. His grasp of the form is quite notable in this, the third stanza from "Adonais": Oh weep for Adonais-he is dead! Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep! Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep, Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep; For he is gone where all things wise and fair Descend. Oh dream not that the amorous deep Will yet restore him to the vital air; Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair . Following this revival in the period of English Romanticism, the Spenserian stanza petered out again in the mid-nineteenth century. A twentieth-century example of the Spenserian stanza is in the "Dieper Levensinkijk" by Dutch poet Willem Kloos; this is a rare example of the form written in a language other than English. 4.4.2 Spenserian Sonnet As the name suggests, the Spenserian Sonnet is named after Edmund Spenser .

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The Spenserian Sonnet inherited the tradition of the declamatory couplet of Wyatt/Surrey. However, Spenser makes use of the Sicilian quatrains to develop a metaphor, conflict, idea or question logically, with the declamatory couplet resolving it. There are three types of sonnets namely: ➢ Petrarchan or Italian sonnet ➢ Shakespearean or English sonnet ➢ Spenserian sonnet Sonnets of all types share the following characteristics: ➢ number of lines: 14 ➢ basic meter: iambic pentameter ➢ rhyme scheme: follows one of several set patterns ➢ traditional subject: love However, the different types of sonnets are set apart by the rhyme scheme. The Petrarchan or Italian sonnet form was perfected by the Italian poet Petrarch in the 14th century. It has the following characteristics: ➢ First 8 lines (octave) rhyming abbaabba ➢ Last 6 lines (sestet)with rhyming as: ❖ cd cd cd ❖ cde cde ❖ cddc ee Octave presents a problem, and sestet offers a solution. The Shakespearean or English sonnet form was perfected by Shakespeare in the 1590s. It has the following characteristics: ➢ Three quatrains (groups of four lines) rhyming abab cdcd efef ➢ One couplet (pair of lines) rhyming gg ➢ Main shift in content (meaning), as in rhyme scheme (form, structure), usually comes right after line 12. The Spenserian sonnet form was created by Edmund Spenser in the 1590s for Amoretti and used by few other poets, is a variation on the Shakespearean sonnet. The Spenserian sonnet has the following characteristics: ➢ Three quatrains (groups of four lines) rhyming ababbcbc cdcd (interlocking rhymes) ➢ One couplet (pair of lines) rhyming ee ➢ Main shift in content (meaning), as in rhyme scheme (form, structure), usually comes right after line 12. In addition to the general features of sonnets, the Spenserian Sonnet is also marked with the following characteristics: ➢ a quatrain made up of 3 Sicilian quatrains (4 lines alternating rhyme) and ending in a rhyming couplet ➢ metric, primarily iambic pentameter. ➢ rhymed, rhyme scheme ababbcbccdcdee. ➢ composed with a volta (a non physical gap) or pivot (a shifting or tilting of the main line of thought) sometime after the 2nd quatrain. The epiphany is arrived at logically. ➢ written with each quatrain developing a metaphor, conflict, idea or question, and the end declamatory couplet providing the resolution. After reading about the biography, poetic style and the contribution of Spenser in the field of English literature, let us now move on to his most ambitious book The Faerie Queene. Book 1 of the The Faerie Queene is prescribed in your syllabus but before proceeding on with the book let us take a look at allegory which is an

important device used by literary writers to tell their stories. 4.5 What is an Allegory? Allegory is a literary device, which is Greek in origin and means 'speaking in other terms'. It is a way of representing thought and experience through images, by means of which complex ideas may be simplified or abstract, spiritual or mysterious ideas and experiences may be made tangible. Allegory conveys a message to the readers by means of symbolic figures. Plato's "the Cave Allegory" has had a considerable influence on western philosophy for in the book Plato has used allegory to illustrate a very complex philosophical idea. Allegories are also found in the Hebrew Bible, in the morality play Everyman, in Chaucer's The Romance of the Rose. In the Renaissance, Spenser's The Faerie Queen employs religious, political and Platonic allegories to convey the writer's deeply felt concerns. John Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress is one of the finest allegories of English Literature. Jonathan Swift's A Tale of Tub and Gulliver's Travells are also well known allegories of early eighteenth century. Charles Dickens was another writer who made brilliant use of allegory. His A Christmas Carol makes brilliant use of allegory. Allegory has continued into modern times. 4.6 The Faerie Queen as an Allegory In his "A Letter of the Authors", Spenser states that the entire Faerie Queen is "cloudily enwrapped in allegorical devices" and that the aim of publishing The Faerie Queen was to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." It is an allegory that can be interpreted (as Spenser presumably intended) on several levels of allegory, including as praise of Queen Elizabeth 1. In a completely allegorical context, the poem follows several knights in an examination of several virtues. Spenser invites the readers to interpret the characters and adventures in the book in terms of the particular virtues and vices they come to embody. The Redcrosse knight in Book 1 is the knight of Holiness, and also saint George, the patron saint of England. Similarly, Sir Guyon in Book 2 is the knight of Temperance. In Book 3, the female knight Britomart and the knight Chastity represent chaste love leading to marriage. The protagonists of Books 4,5 and 6 represent Friendship, Justice and Courtesy. Senser's use of allegory in The Faerie Queene is not a simple one as it has various moral, historical, religious and religious tones. In the book both the Faerie Queene and Britomart are personifications of Queen Elizabeth. There is also an allusion to various events and important persons in both England and Ireland like Queen Elizabeth, her rival Mary, Queen of Scots, the Spanish Armada, the English Reformation, the religious controversies and the bitter colonial struggles against Irish rebellion. Spenser also makes use of conventional symbols and characteristic to

put forward his point. For example, throughout his life, Spenser was very acrimonious towards the Roman Catholic Church and in his early days was strongly influenced by Puritanism and remained a Protestant throughout his life. He expresses his resentment towards the Roman Catholic Church by portraying it as "a woman who wears a miter and scarlet clothes and who dwells near the river Tiber." The book also is a spiritual allegory as it presents the Christian (the Redcrosse Knight) struggling heroically against evil forces and temptations like doctrinal error, hypocricy, Seven Deadly Sins and despair, to some of which he bows down at times, but finally emerges victorious. Thus, The Faerie Queene is a fascinating story with layers of meanings to it which convey Spenser's deeply felt ideas as a poet and a nationalist. 4.7 The Faerie Queene as an Epic The Faerie Queene is a brilliant epic poem. As mentioned earlier, itis modeled on Virgil's Aeneid and like it each book is divided into twelve cantos. Book 1 of The Faerie Queene can be called complete in itself and has been called a miniature epic. The book revolves around the exploits of the protagonist Redcrosse and how he emerges victorious in the end. As mentioned earlier, The Faerie Queene begins the invocation of a muse. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a muse as the inspiring goddess of a particular poet (1136). In order to gain inspiration for the writing of his epic work, Spenser calls upon the classic authors, Virgil and Homer as his muses. Lo I the man, whose Muse whilome did maske, As time her taught, in lowly Shepheards weeds, Am now enforst a far vnfitter taske, For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds, And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds; Whose prayses hauing slept in silence long, Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds To blazon broad emongst her learned throng: Fierce warres and faithfull loves shall moralize my song. (Spenser, I.i.1) In addition to calling upon these fellow epic authors, Spenser again exemplifies the convention by inviting the muse of epic poetry, Calliope, to assist him with his task. Now O thou sacred Muse, most learned Dame, Faire ympe of Phoebus, and his aged bride, The Nourse of time, and everlasting fame, That warlike hands ennoblest with immortall name; O gently come into my feeble brest, Come gently, but not with that mighty rage, (Spenser, 1.11.5,6) After the invocation of the Muse, Spenser prepares for the journey which is an essential component of epic. Examples of this digression can be found in Virgil's The Aeneid. And likewise, Spenser continues the classic tradition in Book I with Duessa's decent to hell with hopes to bring the recently deceased Sansjoy back to life with the help of Night. Thence turning backe in silence soft they stole, And brought the

heauie corse with easie pace To yawning gulfe of deepe Auernus hole. By that same hole an entrance darke and bace With smoake and sulphure hiding all the place, Descends to hell: there creature neuer past, That backe returned without heauenly grace; But dreadfull Furies, which their chaines haue brast, And damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast. (Spenser, I.v.31) The final component to be discussed will be the epic catalogue, "whose distinctive flavour can be just as discernible as other conventions found within The Faerie Queene." However, it does not necessarily shape the storyline of any epic work, Spenser places at least seven of these encyclopaedic-type lists in the book. The first of the epic catalogues can be found in Book 1 and reminds one of specific passages in The Parliament of Fowls by Chaucer, but additionally was also similar to passages from works by Ovid, Lucan, Statius, Boccaccio and Tasso. And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led, Ioying to heare the birdes sweete harmony, Which therein shrouded from the tempest dred, Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky. Much can they prayse the trees so straight and hy, The sayling Pine, the Cedar proud and tall, The vine-prop Elme, the Poplar neuer dry, The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all, The Aspine good for staues, the Cypresse funerall. The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours And Poets sage, the Firre that weepeth still, The Willow worne of forlorne Paramours, The Eugh obedient to the benders will, The Birch for shaftes, the Sallow for the mill, The Mirrhe sweete bleeding in the bitter wound, The warlike Beech, the Ash for nothing ill, The fruitfull Oliue, and the Platane round, The caruer Holme, the Maple seeldom inward sound. (Spenser, I.i.8,9) To conclude, one must understand that Spenser was aware of all the other necessary components that are required to compose an epic poem and incorporated them in his work. David, in the Norton Anthology says, "If The Faerie Queene is thus an epic celebration of human heroism, Queen Elizabeth, the Protestant faith, and the English nation, it is also a chivalric romance, full of joustling knights and damsels in dertress, dragons, witches, enchanted trees, wicked magicians, giants, dark caves, shining castles...As a romance, Spenser's poem is designed to produce wonder, to enthrall its readers with spawling plots, marvelous adventures, heroic characters, ravishing descriptions, and esoteric mysteries." 4.8. LET US SUM UP In this unit we discussed the life and poetic style of Edmund Spenser. We also glanced at the poetic style of Spenser and saw why he is called the "poet's poet." We also took a look at Spenser's contribution in the field of English poetry with a special mention of the Spenserian stanza and the Spenserian sonnet. You were also

introduced to The Faerie Queene as an allegory and an epic poem which is important to the understanding of the poem. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS Q1. Who suggested Spenser to show the first three books of The Faerie Queen to Queen Elizabeth? Q2. Name the poem that Spenser wrote on the death of Sir Philip Sidney. Q3. Where is Spenser buried? Q4. What is the rhyme scheme used in Spenserian stanza? Q5. What is the rhyme scheme of Spenserian sonnet? Q6. Why does Spenser make use of archaic language in The Shepheardes Calender? Q7. What is the poem "epithalamion" about? Q8. Write short notes on the following: i. poetic style of Spenser ii. The Faerie Queene as an epic iii. Allegory 4.9. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS A1. Sir Walter Raleigh A2. "Astrophel" A3. Poet's Corner Westminster Abbey A4. ababbcbc A5. abab bcbc cdcd ee Note: To know the answers of Q6, Q7 and Q8, please refer to the relevant sections of the write-up. 4.10. REFERENCES • Greenblatt, Stephen. Ed. Abrahms, M.H., The Norton Anthology. London: W.W. Norton & Company Ltd., 2000. Print. • Daiches, David. Ed. A Critical History of English Literature Volume 1. New Delhi: Supernova Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd. 2010. Print. • Griffeth, Tim. Ed. The Faerie Queene Edmund Spenser. Kent. Wodsworth Editions Limited. 1999.Print. • en.wikipedia.org/wiki /Edmund_Spenser • www.tnellen.com/cybereng /lit_terms-_allegory.html/ • www.bartley.com<...<

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Poetry of Edmund Spenser

26/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 101 WORDS **99%** **MATCHING TEXT** 101 WORDS

Unit 5- SPENSER: THE FAERIE QUEENE BOOK1 (PART 2) 5.1. Introduction 5.2. Objectives 5.3. Summary and Critical commentary of The Faerie Queene Book 1 5.3.1. Book 1, Cantos I& II 5.3.2. Book 1, Cantos III, IV & V 5.3.3. Book 1, Cantos VI, VII & VIII 5.3.4. Book 1, Cantos IX & X 5.3.5. Book 1, Cantos XI & XII 5.4. Major characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1 5.5. Let Us Sum Up 5.6. Answers to Check Your Progress 5.7. References 5.8. Suggested Reading 5.1

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27/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	78 WORDS	51%	MATCHING TEXT	78 WORDS

Unit 6- SHAKESPEARE'S : SONNETS 18, 29,34 55, 65 6.1 Introduction 6.2 Objectives 6.3 Shakespeare as a Poet 6.4 The Shakespearean Sonnet 6.5 Themes and Concerns of the Sonnets 6.6 Sonnet 18 6.6.1 Summary Sonnet 18 6.7 Sonnet 29 6.7.1 Summary Sonnet 29 6.8 Sonnet 34 6.8.1 Summary Sonnet 34 6.9 Sonnet 55 6.9.1 Summary Sonnet 55 6.10 Sonnet 65 6.10.1 Summary Sonnet 65 6.11 Let Us Sum Up 6.12 Questions 6.13 Suggested Readings 6.1

UNIT 2 SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS 18, 55, 65 Structure 2.0 Objectives 2.1 Introduction 2.2 Shakespeare as a Poet 2.3 The Shakespearean Sonnet 2.4 Themes and Concerns of the Sonnets 2.5 Sonnet 18 2.5.1 Explanation 2.6 Sonnet 55 2.6.1 Explanation 2.7 Sonnet 65 2.7.1 Explanation 2.8 Let Us Sum Up 2.9 Questions 2.10 Suggested Readings 2.0

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28/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	466 WORDS	99%	MATCHING TEXT	466 WORDS

Introduction Sonnets were a popular mode of literary expression in Renaissance Europe. In England particularly, the form came into vogue through the sonnets of Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey in the early 16thcentury. The tradition was followed by Philip Sydney and Edmund Spenser. In the 1590s the private sonnet form and the public drama came of age. The former had an elitist edge while the latter thrived on mass acceptance. Shakespeare belonged to the group of middle-class writers who always wrote keeping in mind the ground realties. It is for this reason that he sought to write realistic works that consciously engaged with common feelings of the people. Even his sonnets create some space for realism. Certainly, Shakespeare was well aware of both the Italian sonnet form and the English one. As he borrowed elements from them, Shakespeare constantly experimented with them and evolved his own style in terms of structure and theme. He wasn't exactly keen on adding flow and lyricism to his sonnet and wished to add depth to an emotion or an aspect of nature. He went into the nature of the life's issues explored the hidden layers of the phenomenon. If it was summer that caught his attention (as in sonnet 18), he would devote an entire sonnet to its features and aspects. Shakespeare's collection of 154 sonnets was published in 1609 by Thomas Thorpe. The first edition of his collection bore a dedication to a certain W. H. that became the subject of much speculation. The dedication was provided not by Shakespeare but by the publisher, Thorpe. Till the eighteenth century it was believed that the sonnets were addressed to a woman who was Shakespeare's mistress. However, by the close of the century, in 1780 to be precise, a group of scholars claimed that more than a hundred sonnets had been addressed to a man. The word 'love' in Shakespeare's time was quite inclusive. It was used to address a mistress, friend or a patron. For instance, Shakespeare's Rape of Lucrece began with the author's dedication where he projected "love" for his patron that denoted regard for him. It is believed that sonnets 1 to 17 were addressed to a young man of high station. With respect to the dedication of the sonnets many conjectures have been made. According to one theory, "Mr. W.H." stood for William Herbert who became the earl of Pembroke in 1601 and was Shakespeare's patron as well. It is to him that the first folio edition of Shakespeare's works was dedicated. However, another theory is that this mysterious man was Earl of Southampton (whose initials were H.W.) to whom Shakespeare had earlier dedicated his two long poems. A

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30/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	87 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	87 WORDS

OBJECTIVES This unit would familiarize you with the tradition of sonnet writing in England and Shakespeare's experimentation with the sonnet form. We would look at the sonnets of Shakespeare specifically and view his poetic sensibility. The idea is to understand the general strains of Shakespeare's sonnets focusing on the themes and issues raised in them. The three sonnets in your course would be at the centre of this unit and we would interpret them for gaining an understanding of the many dimensions they open. 6.3

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31/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	1672 WORDS	99%	MATCHING TEXT	1672 WORDS

SHAKESPEARE AS A POET It is believed that poetry brings out the genuine self of a person since it captures feelings and emotions rooted in a person's experience. Can we say that in poems and sonnets we get a glimpse of the real Shakespeare –the living man? Shakespeare's plays often proved difficult for identifying influences in real life. This was because Shakespeare did not leave in his works any hint of an actual situation. In the sonnets, too, we see sincerity as well as artificiality working in tandem. The sonnets appear in turns genuine expression of the poet's feeling as well as stylistic poetry devoted to a patron. There is, thus, a kind of duality in Shakespeare's sonnets where the writer expresses, then hides and covers the emotion skillfully. In any case, the bard appears to be a torn sensibility—dilemma and conflict in him playing a part. He rationalizes the point in one sonnet, (as in sonnet 35), pedestalizes the subject of his sonnets elsewhere, and takes pride in his identity as a poet. This is then followed by an exhibition of his passion which later blends with regret (sonnet 152). In another moment, he becomes self- critical, or indulges in self-deception (sonnet 93). Elsewhere, the speaker in the sonnets wears the mask of madness (as in 147) and yet shows clarity of thought. Such attributes as these make Shakespeare a poet of great variety and depth—he leaves much for interpretation and offers contradictory point of views to cover the vast variety of matters he is dealing with. 6.4 THE SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET Let's look at the stanzaic structure of Shakespeare's sonnet. The Shakespearean stanza form consists of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, with the rhyme scheme--abab cdcd efef gg. The division of lines in a Shakespearean stanza, therefore, consists of three quatrains (twelve lines that rhyme alternately) and a couplet. What you get in a Shakespearean sonnet stanza is an arrangement of unaccented and accented syllables that have end-rhymes. According to the critic Paul Fussell, the English sonnet has a peculiar tendency termed the "balloon-and-pin- prick" pattern. The suggestion is that in the English sonnet there is a development of the problem (a conscious building up much like slowly inflating a balloon) which is carefully elaborated in the twelve lines of the three quatrains. This is followed by the resolution in the last, a couplet which is a witty conclusion or a quick turn-around from the dramatic description of the preceding lines. The last two lines burst the balloon as it were. While Sidney's sonnet style was fixed and full of rhymes, Shakespeare's was experimental. The latter was discovering the potential of the sonnet form capable of attaining depth as well as

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expansion. Shakespeare did not use the epistolary form popular at the time where the sonnet would be written as a letter of supplication to the beloved. The Italian sonneteer Petrarch had established a particular pattern and the poets of the time strictly adhered to it. The Petrarchan model of sonnet writing was introduced in England by Wyatt but by the time Spenser came to writing, the form had become flexible. In Shakespeare's time, more changes occurred in the form. The number of lines remained fourteen, but changes and variations were introduced within them. Thus, the English sonnet gained a specific identity in the hands of Shakespeare. Russell Fraser has observed: The metrical pattern of the 'English' sonnet (abab cdcd efef gg) is directive. Committing the poet to three coordinate quatrains, it ends with a couplet that ties this series together. If well turned, the couplet approximates the epigram ... Shakespeare blurring the pattern he inherits frequently 'elides' his quatrains, as in the Italian sonnet in which the major turn occurs after line 8. (Fraser, Russel. "Shakespeare at Sonnets".The Sewanee Review. Vol.97. No. 3 (Summer, 1989) pp408-427. 409). Thus, in Shakespeare's sonnets the shift from the quatrains to the couplet creates a disruption of meaning and alters it. There is a sharp turn in his sonnets. Owing to the brevity of the form, emotions captured in expressions are available as condensed. The sonnet becomes precise but is loaded with suggestion. In a play, the idea may be elaborated upon through dialogues and characterization, but in the sonnet, completion of the intent in fourteen lines is a must. This makes the sonnet complex and coded. 6.5 THEMES AND CONCERNS OF THE SONNETS Shakespeare's early sonnets, particularly sonnets 1-14, are of a uniform nature; they have a shared theme of marriage and familial harmony. They are meant to persuade a young man, for instance, to marry and have children so the beauty of the parents is passed on to the progeny. Some flattery and romance are involved in it. Shakespeare depicts admiration for the subject of these sonnets. The more sustained themes of the sonnets are the themes of love and time which could be observed with poignancy. It is the power that both love and time wield over human life that makes the poet interested in exploring the subject. In the early sonnets, we find different shades of love—youthful love, passionate love, mature love among others. References to love are also representative of many things—one of them could be 'true' love, romance, close friendship, regard and admiration, or transitory fascination. One might see the variations in Sonnets 29, 116 and 30, all revolving around the idea of love. Shakespeare steered clear of the conventional theme of wooing and imploring a lady. At

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the same time, the idea of love stood examined as also reaffirmed. There is a passionate engagement with the theme of love in Shakespeare—it makes the poet mad, leaving him open to guilt and revulsion, while the passion takes him towards the joys of being in the company of the beloved. If there is desire, it is accompanied by suffering. In the sonnets, moments are captured and feeling is rationalized. Shakespeare's preoccupation with time and its changing nature that he significantly brought out in his plays is also evident in his sonnet sequences. See the opening quatrain of sonnet 64: When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced The rich proud cost of outworn buried age, When sometime lofty-towers I see down razed, And brass eternal slave to mortal rage The stark changes caused by time leave the poet humbled as also aware of historical movement where individuals appear as mere actors. The critic Victor Kiernan has observed that "everyone with a pen has written about Time, but Shakespeare said far too much about it for there to be any doubt of its poignant meanings for him; and it rarely failed to inspire him. It is a salient theme of fourteen sonnets, three of them in the opening set" (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. (154)). Kiernan further notes that "eternity" is "one of its key-words",an aspect of time that "throw(s) a huge shadow on the sonnets". Another theme of the sonnets is fame. It could be seen in sonnets ranged between sonnet nos. 18 and 83. In the early sonnets, Shakespeare felt unsure about the sonnet form, as it were, and was enamoured of fame achieved by great artists and poets. However, in his heyday he was aware of his popularity. It also was the case that his interest in the idea of fame diminished with time. With respect to the famous court figures and courtly culture in Shakespeare's sonnets, Kiernan has further made an interesting observation: What may be called the official or 'court' culture was as elaborate and showy as a courtier's costume. In his sonnets as in his long poems, Shakespeare was submitting to its artificialities, its conceits and verbal capers and quibbling (e.g. no. 24, 46), devoid of any real meaning...Shakespeare may well have had fits of self-doubt. In No. 55 he is triumphant; in No. 72 he is ashamed of 'that which I bring forth', 'things nothing worth'. (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. 156) Similarly, the theme of remorse resurfaces in several of Shakespeare's sonnets. In the sonnet 152, he alludes to himself as the man breaking vows of matrimony and thus regrets his decision and suffers the pangs of guilt. There are many references to the seasons in Shakespeare's sonnets for describing the weather, the beloved or even a state of mind. He refers to

the same time, the idea of love stood examined as also reaffirmed. There is a passionate engagement with the theme of love in Shakespeare—it makes the poet mad, leaving him open to guilt and revulsion, while the passion takes him towards the joys of being in the company of the beloved. If there is desire, it is accompanied by suffering. In the sonnets, moments are captured and feeling is rationalized. Shakespeare's preoccupation with time and its changing nature that he significantly brought out in his plays is also evident in his sonnet sequences. See the opening quatrain of sonnet 64: When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced The rich proud cost of outworn buried age, When sometime lofty-towers I see down razed, And brass eternal slave to mortal rage The stark changes caused by time leave the poet humbled as also aware of historical movement where individuals appear as mere actors. The critic Victor Kiernan has observed that "everyone with a pen has written about Time, but Shakespeare said far too much about it for there to be any doubt of its poignant meanings for him; and it rarely failed to inspire him. It is a salient theme of fourteen sonnets, three of them in the opening set" (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993.(154)). 16 Kiernan further notes that "eternity" is "one of its key-words",an aspect of time that "throw(s) a huge shadow on the sonnets". Another theme of the sonnets is fame. It could be seen in sonnets ranged between sonnet nos. 18 and 83. In the early sonnets, Shakespeare felt unsure about the sonnet form, as it were, and was enamoured of fame achieved by great artists and poets. However, in his heyday he was aware of his popularity. It also was the case that his interest in the idea of fame diminished with time. With respect to the famous court figures and courtly culture in Shakespeare's sonnets, Kiernan has further made an interesting observation: What may be called the official or 'court' culture was as elaborate and showy as a courtier's costume. In his sonnets as in his long poems, Shakespeare was submitting to its artificialities, its conceits and verbal capers and quibbling (e.g. no. 24, 46), devoid of any real meaning...Shakespeare may well have had fits of self-doubt. In No. 55 he is triumphant; in No. 72 he is ashamed of 'that which I bring forth', 'things nothing worth'. (Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. 156) Similarly, the theme of remorse resurfaces in several of Shakespeare's sonnets. In the sonnet 152, he alludes to himself as the man breaking vows of matrimony and thus regrets his decision and suffers the pangs of guilt. There are many references to the seasons in Shakespeare's sonnets for describing the weather, the beloved or even a state of mind. He refers to

the “stormy gusts of winter’s day” (sonnet 13) and “never-resting time leads summer on/ To hideous winter and confounds him there” (sonnet 5) as suggestive of the many phases of life. Seasons accompanied by the natural landscape add freshness and tenderness to the experience projected in the sonnets. Shakespeare often brings in images from nature to prove a point. Natural objects, too, have a life of their own. So far as the poet is concerned, they have power over human effort. This is dwelt upon in the sonnets and the two worlds (human courts as well as cities and natural landscape) stand juxtaposed therein. As we turn attention to the specific sonnets in the course, we notice themes and attitudes of many other kinds as well. 6.6 Sonnet 18 Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate: Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, And summer’s lease hath all too short a date: Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, And often is his gold complexion dimm’d; And every fair from fair sometime declines, By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimm’d: But thy eternal summer shall not fade, Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st; Nor shall Death brag thou wander’st in his shade, When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st: So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. 6.6.1 Summary Sonnet 18 One of the

the “stormy gusts of winter’s day” (sonnet 13) and “never-resting time leads summer on/ To hideous winter and confounds him there” (sonnet 5) as suggestive of the many phases of life. Seasons accompanied by the natural landscape add freshness and tenderness to the experience projected in the sonnets. Shakespeare often brings in images from nature to prove a point. Natural objects, too, have a life of their own. So far as the poet is concerned, they have power over human effort. This is dwelt upon in the sonnets and the two worlds (human courts as well as cities and natural landscape) stand juxtaposed therein. As we turn attention to the specific sonnets in the course, we notice themes and attitudes of many other kinds as well. 2.5 SONNET 18 Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day? Thou art more lovely and more temperate: Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, And summer’s lease hath all too short a date: Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, And often is his gold complexion dimm’d; And every fair from fair sometime declines, By chance, or nature’s changing course, untrimm’d: But thy eternal summer shall not fade, Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st; Nor shall Death brag thou wander’st in his shade, When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st: So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, So long lives this, and this gives life to thee. 2.5.1 Explanation Sonnet 18 one of the

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32/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	5649 WORDS	98%	MATCHING TEXT	5649 WORDS

This unit will discuss in detail Book 1 of his most celebrated incomplete epic poem The Faerie Queen, the first half of which was published in 1590, and the second in 1596. Spenser describes The Fareie Queen as an allegory and encourages the readers to "interpret the characters and adventures in the several books in terms of the particular virtues and vices they enact or come to embody." 5.2. Objectives After going through this unit, you will be able to understand the following: • Summary and commentary on the various cantos of Book 1 • Brief sketch of the major characters of Book 1 5.3 Summary and Critical Commentary of The Faerie Queene: Book I 5.3.1 BOOK I, CANTOS I & II The Faerie Queen Book 1 tells the story of the Knight of Holiness, the Redcrosse Knight, who gets his name from the blood-red cross emblazoned on his shield, whom Gloriana, the Queen of the Faerie Land, appoints on a mission to accompany Una, on a journey to her kingdom to destroy a dragon who is destroying the land and holding Una's parents captive. Redcrosse undertakes the journey along with Una and a dwarf servant. On the way, all of a sudden, it starts raining heavily as a result of which they take refuge in a cave in the woods. Una recognizes the cave as the Den of Error and warns Redcrosse. However, Redcrosse ignores her warning and enters the cave where he is attacked by a monster that Redcrosse defeats eventually. Continuing their journey further, they meet Archimago (the "arch- magician"), who had disguised himself as an old man. He invites Red Cross and Una to spend the night in his home. In the night, Archimago conjurers up two spirits to trouble Redcrosse. One of the spirits obtains a false dream from Morpheus, the god of sleep and the other takes the shape of Una. Archimago sends the spirit impersonating Una to Redcrosse making sexual advances towards him and, when this is unsuccessful, Archimago shows Redcrosse the spirit impersonator of Una having sexual intercourse with another man. Seeing this vision, Red crosse is distressed and leaves alone the next morning. On his way he meets the old witch Duessa in the garb of Fidessa, a young and beautiful girl. Duessa is accompanied by Sansfoy, whom Redcrosse kills in a fierce battle. After slaying Sansfoy, Duessa and Redcrosse take rest under two trees. While resting, Redcrosse breaks the branch of one of the trees and is shocked when blood drips forth from it and a voice begins to cry out in pain. The tree then gives the account of its life. It tells Redcrosse that he was once a valiant knight called Fradubio who was travelling with his love Fraelissa and while they were crossing the forest how he came across

a beautiful maiden and was attracted towards her. For the sake of the fair maiden, he forsook his beloved Fraelissa. However, when the "beautiful maiden" was bathing, he realized that she was a witch who had turned Fraelissa into a tree to end Fradubio's love for her. Later when Fradubio discovered who she was, she also turned him into a tree. By telling his own life's story, Fradubio indirectly was trying to warn Redcrosse of Duessa, who in reality was the witch who was disguised as a fair maiden but Redcrosse failed to see it and continued with Duessa on his journey. Commentary Redcrosse is the hero of Book I, and in the beginning of Canto I, he is called the knight of Holiness. He undergoes many ordeals and fights fierce monsters throughout the course of the story. However, the more important purpose of The Faerie Queen is its allegory, ie the meaning behind its characters and events. The fanciful "faerie land" is in reality Spenser's homeland, England and the Faerie Queen is Queen Elizabeth. Redcrosse represents the individual Christian on the search for Holiness, who is armed with faith in Christ, with the blood Red Cross emblazoned on his shield. His companion is Una, whose name means "truth". For a Christian to be holy, he must have faith and so the plot of Book 1 mostly concerns the attempts of evildoers to separate Redcrosse from Una. Most of these villains are meant by Spenser to represent one thing in common: the Roman Catholic Church. Spenser was of the view that with the coming of the English Reformation, people embraced "true religion" (Protestantism/ Anglicanism) thus defeating the corruption that had existed in Roman Catholicism. Spenser takes up the character of Redcrosse whose task is to defeat villains who imitate the falsehood of the Roman Catholic Church. The first of these villains is Error. When Redcrosse throttles him, Spenser writes, "Her vomit full of books and papers was (I.i.20)." These papers represent Roman Catholic propaganda that was used against Queen Elizabeth and Anglicanism. Next comes Archimago, whose name means "arch-image". His name stands for extensive images used by Catholocs in their acts of worshipping. Archimago, the sorcerer, through acts of deception tries to separate Redcrosse who stood for Holiness from Una who stood for Truth many times. Once separated from Una (Truth), Redcrosse (Holiness) falls prey to falsehood. Although he is able to defeat Sansfoy (literally "without faith") but he becomes a helpless victim to the wiles of Duessa who represents the Roman Catholic Church and all its malpractices. Much of Spenser's imagery comes from a passage in the Book of Revelation, which describes the "whore of Babylon." Many Protestant readers took this Biblical passage to indicate the Catholic Church. Besides Biblical references,

the Faerie Queen has other references too.Spenser's works are loaded with references from ancient epics such as Homer's Illiad and Odyssey and Virgil's Aenied. In the tradition of the great Greek and Latin epics, Spenser opens Book I of Faerie Queen by invoking the Muses to guide his poetry. The episode of the bleeding "human tree" reminds us of a similar incident in Aeneid. However, while these ancient poets wrote to tell stories, Spenser has another purpose in mind. In the letter that introduces the Faerie Queen, he says that he followed poets like Homer, Virgil, Aristo and Tasso because they all have "ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man." Thus, Spenser intends to expand on this example by defining the qualities of a good, virtuous, Christian man. 5.3.2 BOOK1, CANTOS III, IV & V Meanwhile, Una, left alone in the forest, goes wondering in search of Redcrosse and comes across a lion who is about to attack her. However, seeing her innocent beauty decides to be her companion and protector. There, in the middle of the forest, they see a girl carrying a pot of water. The girl, deaf and dumb, gets terrified on seeing the lion and runs back home to her mother. Una and the lion too follow her as they were looking for a place to halt at night. The deaf and dumb girl was called Abessa and her mother Corceca who is blind. At first they are unwilling to let them in but the lion forces his way into their house. Later at night, Kirkrapine, a church robber and also Abessa's lover, enters the house but is killed by the lion. The next morning the lion and Una leave the house, only to be approached by Archimago in the guise of Redcrosse. Una thinks Archimago to be Redcrosse and goes with him. On the way they meet Sansloy, who seeing the red cross on Archimago's chest, mistakenly takes him for Redcrosse and challenges him to a duel to avenge the death of his brother Sansfoy, whom Red Cross had killed earlier. Sansloy injures Archimago and then removes his helmet only to discover that he is not Redcrosse. Seeing that the injured man is not Redcrosse, he spares his life and takes Una as his prize, killing the lion who tries to save her. After killing the lion, Sansloy forcefully drags Una onto his horse, riding off into the forest. The scene then shifts to Redcrosse who he is being led by Duessa into the House of Pride. On seeing the palatial house, Redcrosse is spell bound. There they are welcomed bu Lucifera, the Queen of the Palace. Lucifera shows off for the knight by calling her coach which is pulled by six beasts upon which ride her six counselors. They are: Idleness, Gluttony, Lechery, Avarice, Envy and Wrath. The six beasts along with their Queen, Queen of Pride, represent the Seven Deadly Sins. Soon this procession of the Seven Deadly Sins is interrupted by

Sansjoy, who comes to avenge the death of his brother Sansfoy. Sansjoy challenges Redcrosse to a duel. Lucifera arranges a duel between the two for the next day. Both men suffer great injuries in the duel. Just as Redcrosse is about to kill Sansjoy, a dark cloud covers Sansjoy and he suddenly disappears in it. Duessa mourns the loss of Sansjoy and goes to awaken Night. Together they recover the body of Sansjoy and she descends into hell. There they find Aesculapius, the Greek physician, who has the power to bring men back to life, a power that Jove (Jupiter) did not want mortals to enjoy. Duessa and Night persuade him to try and restore Sansjoy's life. Mean while, Redcrosse is carried back to the House of Pride where he is treated for his wounds. Meanwhile, the Dwarf makes a horrible discovery of bodies of victims of Pride and other Deadly Sins in the dungeon. He warns Redcrosse of it. On being warned by the Dwarf, Redcrosse makes an escape from there. When Duessa returns from hell, she finds that Red Cross had departed from there. Commentary The lion in the story represents natural law, which may be violent at times but is sympathetic to Christian truth. According to Christian theology, natural is a part of God's divine law and so the Christian is not an opponent of nature but acts in harmony with it. Thus the lion naturally aids Una. The two women who benefit from the booty of Kirkrapine (church robber) represent monasticism; Abessa's name suggests connection with "Abbess", the head of an abbey. Monasticism is a feature of the Catholic Church, and in Spenser's time, monasteries were accused of forcing donations from the poor for themselves. The deafness and dumbness of Abessa and Corceca's blindness show Spenser's belief that the monks, nuns, friars are ignorant of the needs of the world works as as they live in seclusion. The next character, Sansloy (literally meaning "without the law of god") functions outside the realm of divine law and kills the lion who is an embodiment of natural law. The ancient and medieval thought about sin and evil come together in the House of Pride. Lucifera, the Queen of the House of Pride, stands for Lucifer (Satan) and like Satan is full of pride. In Christian theology, Pride is the greatest of sins, and all other vices are born out of it. Pride was the cause of Satan's downfall. Like Satan, the Queen of Pride is conceited and stands in contrast with the true Queen to whom the poem is dedicated: Queen Elizabeth, who was a just queen, devoted to her country and people and who represented True Religion. Spenser uses a variety of sources in constructing his imagery. Spenser writes that the House of Pride, although lavishly built, sits on a weak foundation. This evokes the Gospel of Matthew in which Jesus preaches to his disciples that those who do not

follow His words will be likened to a foolish man who builds his house on sand. (Matthew 7.26) The architectural details of the castle, such as the surrounding walls covered by gold foil (outward beauty hiding inner weakness) are borrowed from Orlando Furioso by the Italian poet Aristo, whom Spenser admired. Besides The New Testament and Orlando Furioso, Spenser also borrows the scene in which Duessa and Night descend into hell from Virgil's Aeneid in which he describes Aeneas' travel through Hell to meet his father. 5.3.3 BOOK 1, CANTOS VI, VII & VIII Meanwhile, Sansloy attempts to seduce and rape Una in the woods, but he is scared off by a group of fauns and satyrs, (wood gods which are half human and half animals) who come to Una's aid when she cries. Seeing these weird creatures, Sansloy gets terrified and flees off. After Sansloy leaves, these creatures enamoured of Una's beauty, take her to their leader, Sylvanus, to be worshipped as goddess. Soon a knight, Satyrane, whose is born out of a satyr father and a human mother, comes by and on seeing Una comes to her rescue and helps her to escape from there. When the two are trying to get out of the woods, they come across a pilgrim who claims that he has witnessed the death of Redcrosse at the hands of a pagan knight and that he knows about the whereabouts of that knight. He leads the two to him who is Sansloy. As already mentioned above, Sanslot did not in fact kill Redcrossse but had defeated Archimago who was disguised as Redcrosse. On seeing Sansloy, Satyrane challenges him. Una recognizes Sansloy and runs away from the scene. She is followed by the pilgrim who in reality is Archimago, in another of his many disguises. Meanwhile, Duessa begins searching for Red Cross and discovers him next to a magic fountain whose waters, once drunk, results in a loss of strength. Duessa and Redcrosse are reconciled, and, after drinking the water of the magic fountain, Redcrosse loses his powers. Redcrosse is busy courting Duessa until he hears Orgoglio, a hideous giant, approaching. As Redcrosse, owing to the water of the magic fountain, had lost his powers, Orgoglio easily overpowers him, but Duessa asks him to spare the life of Redcrosse and in return agrees to become the mistress of the giant. Redcrosse survives but is thrown into Orgoglio's dungeon. Luckily, the Dwarf witnessed the fight scene between the two and sets out to help the defeated Redcross. While on his way to help Redcrosse, he sees Una who is fleeing from Sansloy. The Dwarf relates the story of Redcrosse to Una and the two then head towards Orgoglio's castle. On the way they meet a brightly dressed knight, whose armour has a diamond shield which can turn men to stones and overthrow monsters. The shield is so powerful that it

forever remains covered with a piece of cloth. Una tells the story of her life to the knight who promises to help her. The knight, though unnamed, is Prince Arthur. Arthur, along with his squire, Una and the Dwarf, approaches the castle, and the squire blows a horn whose sound is so powerful that it bursts open the castle door. Orgoglio comes running out along with Duessa who is riding a seven-headed beast, a gift received from Orgoglio. Arthur and his squire confront Orgoglio and the seven-headed beast in a fight. In the middle of the fight, the piece of cloth that had covered the shield drops from it and its dazzling surface got exposed. The glare of the shield was too strong for the eyes of Orgoglio and the seven-headed beast, allowing Arthur to kill both the monsters. Duessa attempts to escape but is held back by the squire. After the fight, Arthur goes inside the castle in search of Redcrosse, but he just finds an old servant called Ignaro who walks with his head facing backwards and who cannot answer any of Arthur's questions. Arthur takes the keys of the castle from Ignaro and starts searching for the Redcrosse knight in the rooms there. He comes across a beautifully decorated room where the altar is stained with the blood of martyrs. Then he opens another door and falls into a dungeon where he sees Redcrosse, hungry and distressed after months of imprisonment. With great difficulty they manage to come out of the dungeon and Arthur presents Redcrosse Knight to Una, and the two finally reunite. Duessa is made to strip in front of everyone so that Redcrosse can see that she is a witch. Commentary The wood gods, in spite of being good creatures who dwell in sylvan surroundings and help Una are not representatives of "pure" nature like the lion was as they are idolater of Greek and Roman mythology. When they see Una they start worshipping her, not realizing that she stands in stark contrast with idolatry. As Spenser was opposed to idolatry and the complexities of the Roman Catholic Church, so he rejects them. Satyrane, on the other hand is only a part wood god, still has the goodness of nature and helps Una. However, he does not stand for anything Christian so he cannot defeat Sansloy. Through this allegory, Spenser chooses Redcrosse to prove his loyalty to the Queen. However, as Redcrosse, who stands for holiness is separated from Una, who is an embodiment of truth, he cannot accomplish the task assigned to him. He becomes a prey to evil forces. He does not recognize the falseness of Duessa and eventually he gets caught in the jaws of death in the dungeon. The giant represents godless pride, which can overcome the weak Christian, still separated from Truth. Finally, Arthur comes as a Christ like figure as he helps to elevate Redcrosse to a higher pedestal.

However the allegory sees a change, when Redcrosse is himself transformed into a Christ like figure. The role of Arthur in the Faerie Queenis very diverse as he stands for many other things within Faerie Queen. On the first level, he is the hero of the whole poem; Spenser intends to have him appear briefly in each book, usually when things reach a nadir. The character of Arthur has deep significance for the sixteenth century audience. The Arthurian legend was well developed by Spenser's time and had turned a semi-historical fifth century king into a timeless hero. Through the figure of Arthur , Spenser makes it possible for the sixteenth century English audience to return to the extraordinary age of Arthur. In the Faerie Queen,the Catholic Church is shown to be the main enemy of the true Christian spirit. This is evident again in the battle outside Orgoglio's castle. Outside the castle, Duessa is shown riding a very strange beast, which is parallel to the scene from the Book of Revelation in which the whore of Babylon, "sits on a scarlet-coloured beast...having seven heads and ten horns." (Rev. 17.3-4) The Protestants traditionally associate the whore to the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, Duessa stands for the Roman Catholic Church and all the beasts that Redcrosse and Una confront are the evil forces within the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants felt the need of cleansing Christianity of the malpractices of the Roman Catholic Church. The conflict between the various malicious beasts and the knights is in reality the confrontation between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestantism. 5.3.4 BOOK I, CANTOS IX & X Still unaware of the brave knight's identity, Una and Redcrosse question him about his life and lineage. Arthur tells them that he does not know the identity of his parents as he grew up in Wales where he was raised by Timon, an old knight, and educated by a magician Merlin, who told him that Arthur's father was a king and that Arthur would discover his identity sometime later in future. Una then asks the knight the reason for his coming to the Faerie Land to which he replies that he was visited by the Queen of Faeries in his dream, he was captivated by her beauty, he had been searching for her in Faerie Land for the last nine months. Redcrosse and Una sympathize with him. He then leaves Una and Redcrosse to resume his search. Una and Redcrosse, likewise, resume their long-delayed journey but are soon interrupted by Sir Trevisan, a knight running along the roadside with a rope around his neck. Trevisan tells them how he was fleeing a terrible man Despair who had persuaded his companion, Sir Terwin to end his live by committing suicide. As a result of Despair's persuasion, Terwin, sick of his life, stabbed himself, but Trevisan did not get trapped and ran away from there. On hearing

Yrevisan's account, Redcrosse vows to challenge Despair. He is led by Trevisan into a dark cave where an old, gloomy man was sitting on a corner. This man was Despair. On seeing him, Redcrosse asks him to give up his persuasions. However, Despair convinces Redcrosse that his mission was noble and that he has been instrumental in liberating many people from the miseries of human existence as death ended a life full of sins. The arguments relating death that Despare gave was so convincing that Redcrosse raises his dagger to end his own life but Una intervenes at the right time and stops Redcrosse from committing this cowardly act. She tells him that it would be foolish on his part to end his own life and reminded him of Heavenly Mercy. Convinced by Una, Redcrosse escapes from the cave of Dispair. Seeing that Redcrosse was in a disturbed state of mind, Una leads him to the House of Holiness, so that he could recover well. The House of Holiness is ruled by Caelia along with her three daughters Fidelia, Sperenza and Charissa. Here Charissa gives Redcrosse lessons on good behaviour, love and righteousness. Thereafter, he is taken to a hospital where seven charitable characters like Patience, Penance, Remorse and Repentance tend to his physical ailments. All these characters provide the best of services to Redcrosse as a result of which his condition begins to improve. Charity, one of the characters residing in the House of Holiness, instructs Redcrosse on practising love instead of hatred and Mercy gives him lessons on charity. Once fully recovered, Contemplation, a wise old hermit leads him to the top of a high mountain and informs him that one day he will enter New Jerusalem as Saint George, the patron saint of England. Amazed on hearing this, Redcrosse descends downhill to continue his journey with Una to her native land. Commentary Spenser glorifies Queen Elizabeth by connecting her with King Arthur's lineage in Canto ix. Arthur tells Redcrosse and Una that he was born in western Wales, which hints his connection with the House of Tudor, Elizabeth's family. Through this Spenser suggests that Elizabeth shares the same secular power and religious authority as Arthur held. In the book, Arthur is likened to Christ. In the exchange of gifts that take place between Arthur and Redcrosse, Arthur gives Redcrosse a "few drops of liquor pure,/ Of wondrous worth and excellent,/ That any wound could heal incontinent" (I.ix.19) The liquor probably represents the Eucharist, which is a symbol of Christ giving his body and blood to the Apostles at the Last Supper and Redcrosse gives him his "Saveours Testament" (I.ix.19)- that is, the New Testament, which tells of Christ's life Christ's life on Earth. This foretells Redcrosse's eventual role as a Christ like figure, and, in

fact, a more important one than Arthur. On his journey, Redcrosse has to make yet another confrontation. This time with Despair whom the lion had confronted earlier in the form of Sansjoy. The lion could not conquer despare then and here too in its purest form, it had almost defeated Redcrosse but he had the strong support of Truth in the form of Una and the mercy of Truth is greater than the pang of despair. This is an important lesson which Redcrosse learns in the House of Holiness. The House of Holiness stands in sharp contrast to the House of Pride from Canto iv. In the House of Holiness, we meet Caelia (Heavenly); instead of a parade of vices, there is a multitude of virtues. First we meet the three daughters of Caelia, Faith, Hope and Charity, which according to St. Paul are the greatest virtues. Each one gives lessons to Redcrosse base on her virtue. The seven physicians who take care of Redcrosse are the correspond to the seven bodily vices of the House of Pride whose care rejuvenates Redcrosse as a result of which he gathers the strength to carry on with his journey. 5.3.5. BOOK 1, CANTOS XI& XII Finally, Redcrosse and Una reach her native place where they are confronted by a huge dragon. The dragon is covered with a flawless coat of scales, has a long tail with razor sharp spikes and powerful wings that can sweep off anything off its feet. Redcrosse and the dragon enter into a fierce fight that lasts for three days. Redcross appears to be no match for the dragon. Every blow given by the dragon proves too much for Redcrosse to handle. Each time the dragon knocks Redcrosse down and finally, when Redcrosse injures the dragon, in retaliation the dragon spews fire on Redcrosse, burning his armour. The heat of the armour burns Redcrosse and he writhes in pain. Then the dragon knocks him backward causing him to fall into the Well of Life which has the power to heal his wounds but the dragon thinks that Redcrosse is dead and sleeps soundly at night. Una prays all night long for the recovery of Redcrosse and in the morning, a rejuvenated Redcrosse, rises from the spring. The next day also fighting continues in which both suffer heavy losses. At last, Redcrosse cuts a deep wound in the dragon's head. Again when the dragon delivers a deathly blow, Redcrosse falls into mire where a sacred tree stands. The tree like the Well of Life had healing powers. The balm of the blessed tree boosts the knight for another day of fighting. When the dragon sees the knight alive, he is furious and vows to kill Redcrosse and finish off the battle. However, it is Redcrosse who eventually kills the dragon by piercing his throat and emerges victorious in the end. At last, the land is set free and the inhabitants celebrate their freedom and honour Redcrosse as their

hero. They also start making preparations for the marriage of Una and Redcrosse when a messenger comes with a letter stating that Redcrosse and Una cannot get married as he has already pledged his hand to another woman. Redcrosse clarifies the situation and tells them that the woman was Duessa, a witch, who only got his pledge by deceit and witchcraft. Una seconds all this and also recognizes the messenger, who is Archimago in disguise. Archimago is captured and imprisoned in a dungeon and in the end Redcrosse and Una get married. However, Redcrosse tells them that he cannot stay with Una as he has to proceed further to fulfil his duty for he is obliged to carry out his pledge of six years of service to Gloriana, the Queen of the Faerie Land. Commentary The final battle between Redcrosse and the dragon is the culmination of the allegory. It covers all the different levels of religious and political meanings that Spenser has put into the story. Redcrosse's victory represents three distinct events: Christ's victory over death and the devil in the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the victory of the individual Christian over the temptation of sin and the defeat of the Roman Catholic Church at the hands of the Protestantism and the Church of England. Redcrosse stands for both as an individual Christian as well as a champion of Protestants against Catholics. Here, in Canto xi, he is also represented as a Christ like figure because just like Christ's resurrection took place after three days, Redcrosse too defeats the dragon after struggling for three days with him. During Redcrosse's fight with the dragon, he is saved twice. Once by the Well of Life, into which he fell accidentally, and got baptized. The Tree of Life is the Eucharist, the symbol of Christ's body and blood. Both the well and the tree represent the grace that God bestowed on mankind. Through the story of Redcrosse and Una, Spenser wants to drive home the point that no matter how well a man is prepared, he is no match for sin and death without the Grace of God. Therefore, we can say that Redcrosse's victory was possible only as a result of God's grace. Finally, Redcrosse is again established as the hero of Protestantism against Catholicism in the last Canto. Even though he has conquered the dragon, his marriage to Una must be delayed; his work is not yet finished. The knight must "Backe to return to that great Faerie Queene / And her to serve six yeares in warlike wize, / Gainst that proud Paynim king (I.xii.18)." This brings the allegory back from the general to the specific and back from the purely religious to the political. We know that the Faerie Queene represents Queen Elizabeth; thus, the "proud Paynim king" whom she is fighting must be either the Pope or a Catholic king; either way, the enemy is the Roman

Church. Spenser is bringing us back to his own time where, although England now is Protestant, the Catholic Church is still powerful. Redcrosse will be united with Una only when the battle against false religion is over--we see that Duessa is still working her evil ways in defeat. And the battle, of course, will not end until the end of the world, when Christ will reveal which religion is false and which is true. 5.4 Major Characters of The Faerie Queen Book 1 ➢ Arthur: The central hero of the poem, although he does not play the most significant role in the action of the book. Arthur is in search of the Faerie Queen, whom he saw in a vision. The "real" Arthur was a king of the Britons in the 5th or 6th century A.D but the little historical information we have about him is overwhelmed by his legend. ➢ Faerie Queen (also known as Gloriana): Though she never appears in the poem, she is the focus of the poem; the castle is the ultimate goal or destination of many of the poem's characters. She represents Queen Elizabeth, among others, as discussed in the Commentary. ➢ Redcrosse: The Redcrosse Knight is the hero of Book 1; he stands for the virtues of Holiness. His real name is discovered to be George, and he ends up becoming St. George, the patron saint of England. On another level, though he is the individual Christian fighting against evil or the Protestant fighting the Catholic Church. ➢ Una: The beautiful future wife of Redcrosse, and the other major protagonist of Book 1. She is meek and humble but strong when it is necessary. She represents truth, which Redcrosse must find in order to be a true Christian. ➢ Duessa: Duessa is the opposite of Una. She represents falsehood and nearly succeeds in getting Redcrosse to leave Una. She appears beautiful but in reality is a witch. 5.5. LET US SUM UP In this unit you read the summary and critical commentary of the various cantos of Book 1. You saw how Redcrosse knight, the patron saint of Holiness is appointed by Gloriana, Queene of Faerie Land to accompany Una on a journey to her kingdom to destroy a dragon that is destroying the land and holding Una's parents captive. One their way to the kingdom of Una's parents both Redcrosse and Una undergo various hardships, a detailed account of which has been given above. In the eighth canto of of the book comes a brilliantly arrayed knight, whose armor includes a magic diamond shield with such great powers that it can turn men to stone and overthrow monsters; The knight, though unnamed, is the great Prince Arthur. He helps Redcrosse and Una in overcoming their final ordeals and plays a great role in the unification of the two. In the end with the dragon killed, the land is freed from its captivity and Redcrosse emerges as their hero. Ceremonies for the betrothal of Redcrosse and Una are

celebrated, until a messenger arrives with a letter stating that Redcrosse is engaged to Fidessa. However the messenger is recognized to be Archimago in yet another disguise. He is finally captured and thrown into a dungeon, and the betrothal of Redcrosse and Una takes place. Red Cross, however, cannot remain with Una as he has to continue with his journey as he has to fulfill his pledge of six years of service to Gloriana, the Queen of Faerie Land. Check Your Progress Q1. What does the Redcrosse knight stand for? Q2. Who is Fidessa in reality? Q3. Who is the hero of the first book of The Faerie Queene ? Q4. What does Una stand for in the book? Q5. Who is the knight who proposes to help Una ? Q6. How does the Redcrosse knight get his name? Q7. Who was Archimago? Q8. Describe the House of pride. Q9. Describe the fight scene between Orgoglio and the Redcrosse knight. Q10. How are Redcrosse and Una re-united in the end of Book 1? 5.6. Answers to Check Your Progress A1. Holiness A2. Duessa, the witch A3. Redcrosse knight A4. Truth A5. Arthur Note: To know the answers of Q6 TO Q10, please refer to the relevant

SA MAEL-506.pdf (D165205676)

tions of the write-up. 5.7. REFERENCES ➢ Griffeth, Tim. Ed. The Faerie Queene Edmund Spenser. Kent. Editions Limited. 1999.Print. ➢ otes.com.<...<

PoetryStudyGuides<FFQ

33/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	22 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	22 WORDS

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see, / So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

SA 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)

34/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS

Desiring this man’s art, and that man’s scope, With what I most enjoy contented least;

Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope With what I most enjoy contented least.”

W https://www.gutenberg.org/files/9079/9079-h/9079-h.htm

35/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	112 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	112 WORDS

Sonnet 55 Not marble, nor the gilded monuments Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime; But you shall shine more bright in these contents Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time. When wasteful war shall statues overturn, And broils rot out the work of masonry, Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn The living record of your memory. 'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterity That wear this world out to the ending doom. So, till the judgement that yourself arise, You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes. 6.9.1

SONNET 55 Not marble, nor the gilded monuments Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime; But you shall shine more bright in these contents Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time. When wasteful war shall statues overturn, And broils rot out the work of masonry, Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn The living record of your memory. 'Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterity That wear this world out to the ending doom. So, till the judgement that yourself arise, You live in this, and dwell in lover's eyes. 2.6.1

W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

36/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	15 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	15 WORDS

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments / Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime."

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime;

W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

37/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	11 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	11 WORDS

Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity / Shall you pace forth."

Gainst death, and all oblivious enmity Shall you pace forth;

W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

38/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	25 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	25 WORDS

your praise shall still find room / Even in the eyes of all posterity / That wear this world out to the ending doom."

your praise shall still find room Even in the eyes of all posterity That wear this world out to the ending doom.

W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

39/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	118 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	118 WORDS

SONNET 65 Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, But sad mortality o'ersway their power How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea, Whose action is no stronger than a flower? O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out Against the wreckful siege of battering days, When rocks impregnable are not so stout, Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays? O fearful meditation! Where, alack, Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid? Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back? Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid? O, none, unless this miracle have might, That in black ink my love may still shine bright. 6.10.1

SONNET 65 Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, But sad mortality o'ersway their power How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea, Whose action is no stronger than a flower? O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out Against the wreckful siege of battering days, When rocks impregnable are not so stout, Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays? O fearful meditation! Where, alack, Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid? Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back? Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid? O, none, unless this miracle have might, That in black ink my love may still shine bright. 2.7.1

W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

40/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	11 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	11 WORDS

the lark at break of day arising From sullen earth,

SA 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)

41/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	281 WORDS	99%	MATCHING TEXT	281 WORDS

Sonnet 29 Resenting his bad luck, the poet envies the successful art of others and rattles off an impressive catalogue of the ills and misfortunes of his life. His depression is derived from his being separated from the young man, even more so because he envisions the youth in the company of others while the poet is "all alone." Stylistically, Sonnet 29 is typically Shakespearean in its form. The first eight lines, which begin with "When," establish a conditional argument and show the poet's frustration with his craft. The last six lines, expectedly beginning in line 9 with "Yet" — similar to other sonnets' "But" — and resolving the conditional argument, present a splendid image of a morning lark that "sings hymns at heaven's gate." This image epitomizes the poet's delightful memory of his friendship with the youth and compensates for the misfortunes he has lamented. The uses of "state" unify the sonnet's three different sections: the first eight lines, lines 9 through 12, and the concluding couplet, lines 13 and 14. Additionally, the different meanings of state — as a mood and as a lot in life — contrast the poet's sense of a failed and defeated life to his exhilaration in recalling his friendship with the youth. One state, as represented in lines 2 and 14, is his state of life; the other, in line 10, is his state of mind. Ultimately, although the poet plaintively wails his "outcast state" in line 2, by the end of the sonnet he has completely reversed himself: ". . . I scorn to change my state with kings." Memories of the young man rejuvenate his spirits. 6.8

Sonnet 29 Summary Resenting his bad luck, the poet envies the successful art of others and rattles off an impressive catalogue of the ills and misfortunes of his life. His depression is derived from his being separated from the young man, even more so because he envisions the youth in the company of others while the poet is "all alone." Stylistically, Sonnet 29 is typically Shakespearean in its form. The first eight lines, which begin with "When," establish a conditional argument and show the poet's frustration with his craft. The last six lines, expectedly beginning in line 9 with "Yet" — similar to other sonnets' "But" — and resolving the conditional argument, present a splendid image of a morning lark that "sings hymns at heaven's gate." This image epitomizes the poet's delightful memory of his friendship with the youth and compensates for the misfortunes he has lamented. The uses of "state" unify the sonnet's three different sections: the first eight lines, lines 9 through 12, and the concluding couplet, lines 13 and 14. Additionally, the different meanings of state — as a mood and as a lot in life — contrast the poet's sense of a failed and defeated life to his exhilaration in recalling his friendship with the youth. One state, as represented in lines 2 and 14, is his state of life; the other, in line 10, is his state of mind. Ultimately, although the poet plaintively wails his "outcast state" in line 2, by the end of the sonnet he has completely reversed himself: ". . . I scorn to change my state with kings." Memories of the young man rejuvenate his spirits.

W https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/s/shakespeares-sonnets/summary-and-analysis/sonnet-29

42/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 237 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 237 WORDS

LET US SUM UP This unit has outlined the basic form of Shakespearean sonnet and its features. It has brought into discussion Shakespeare's inventive mind and creative genius as a poet. In this unit, a general view of the collection of the sonnets has been provided as also the themes and issues raised therein. Further, a detailed explanation of sonnets 18, 55 and 65 is offered, too. 6.12 QUESTIONS 1. Comment on the nature of time in Shakespeare's sonnets keeping in view the theme of immortality. 2. What for Shakespeare is the larger role of poetry and the poet? Explain. 3. Write a note on the Shakespearean stanza. 4. How is love projected by Shakespeare in his sonnets? 6.13 SUGGESTED READINGS 1. Fraser, Russel. "Shakespeare at Sonnets".The Sewanee Review. Vol.97. No. 3 (Summer, 1989) pp408-427. 2. Fussell, Paul. Poetic Meter and Poetic Form. USA: McGraw Hill, 1979 3. Kiernan, Victor. Shakespeare: Poet and Citizen. London: Verso, 1993. 4. Muir, Kenneth. Shakespeare's Sonnets.1979. Oxon: Routledge, 2005. 5. Rosmarin, Adena. "Interpreting Shakespeare's Sonnets". ModernLanguageAssociation. Vol. 100. No. 5 (October 1985) pp. 810-812. 6. Rowse, A.L. Ed. Shakespeare's Sonnets. London: Macmillan, 1964. 7. Schiffer, James. Shakespeare's Sonnets: Critical Essays. New York: Garland, 2000. 8. Shakespeare, William. Shakespeare's Sonnets and Other Poems. San Diego: Word Cloud Classics, 2017. 9. Wells, Stanley and Lena Cowen Orlin. Ed. Shakespeare: An Oxford Guide. New Delhi: OUP, 2003

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W https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/66103/1/Unit-2.pdf

43/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 17 WORDS **82%** **MATCHING TEXT** 17 WORDS

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea, / But sad mortality o'er-sways their power." "

SA 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)

44/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 11 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 11 WORDS

That in black ink my love may still shine bright."

SA 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)

45/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 18 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 18 WORDS

a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth--to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture- -with this end, to teach and delight."

SA MA - English - SEM 1- Chaucer and the Elizabethan Age (1).pdf (D143329215)

46/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 12 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 12 WORDS

Either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-enchanting skill of music,"

SA 013E1110-English Literature from Chaucer to 1660.pdf (D165066592)

47/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 133 WORDS **99%** **MATCHING TEXT** 133 WORDS

Astrophel and Stella tracks the development of a love affair. Over the course of the sequence of poems, the protagonist and narrator Astrophel falls in love with the beautiful Stella, a woman who is virtuous, intelligent, and his idealized partner in life. Most of the sonnets consist of Astrophel as the speaker and Stella as the recipient of his speeches. Because Astrophel is the "author" of the sonnet sequence, we can perceive his inner thoughts and emotions but not much of Stella's. Stella's thoughts and personality are revealed to us only through her actions and occasional speeches to Astrophel. The sonnet sequence would be very different if Sidney had provided a more obvious indication of Stella's feelings. As it is, we partake mainly in just one side of the romance.

SA II SEM B.A. ENG - 22DCBEN23 - THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.pdf (D143333349)

48/50	SUBMITTED TEXT	742 WORDS	99%	MATCHING TEXT	742 WORDS

Astrophel Astrophel (now called Astrophil) is the protagonist of the poem, a man modeled after Sir Philip Sidney. The name "Astrophel" comes from two Greek roots: "astr-," meaning "star," and "phil-," meaning "lover." The "phil" in the name is also a pun on Sidney's first name, Philip. Astrophel is attracted to a married woman and tries in vain to pursue her. He experiences a range of emotions. First he is filled with hope at the prospect of gaining her love, but later he is filled with despair over his inevitable failure. After being refused by her again and again, he becomes angry and defensive, but he is unable to stop himself from trying to seduce her yet again. Astrophel's actions make him a sympathetic character for many literary critics. Above all, he is driven by love, and even the worst of his actions can be rationalized through the intensity of his love. Throughout Astrophel's lamentations and his praise of Stella, the reader finds empathy with his lost cause. Astrophel's characterization, however, also can be interpreted as an expression of a code of moral conduct constructed by Sidney. Astrophel is an example of a man who lets his emotions get the better of him, something that was nearly unforgivable for an established courtier during the time when Sidney was writing the sonnet sequence. His inability to control his emotions eventually leads him to total despair and the loss of Stella forever. Astrophel's characterization also can be read as a metaphor for Christian development. His journey from hope to despair is similar to the progression of human desire in Christian terms-or even a mirroring of the fall of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Astrophel's character also has its share of comic elements. Sidney wrote his sonnet sequence in the cradle of Elizabethan comedy and appeared to share his contemporaries' enthusiasm for dramatic gestures. Although Astrophel does not try to be funny, he is comic in his very seriousness. (Perhaps he is a Quixote.) No reader can take him as seriously as he takes himself and, though he remains sympathetic throughout the text, his dramatic ups and downs and complete absorption with his love make him a comic figure. Although Astrophel appears to have been based on Sidney himself, Sidney is able to detach himself from his character in order to capture not only the desperation but also the humor of a passionate lover. • Stella Stella is the heroine of the poem and the object of Astrophel's desire. The name "Stella" comes from the Latin word meaning "star." This definition has two possible meanings in the context of the poem. In one respect, the name could suggest Stella's superiority to Astrophel. As a star, Stella is a celestial being, far beyond

the reach of a human like Astrophel. On the other hand, however, as a star, Stella is just one of a million other stars in the skies. She is not unique or, perhaps, not even worthy of Astrophel's attention. Stella corresponds to the stereotypical characterization of women in the Petrarchan tradition. Following this tradition, Stella has blond hair, black eyes, ruby lips, pearl teeth, and lily-white skin. In an unconventional twist, however, Stella is not the unapproachable ideal that appears so often in Petrarchan poetry. Instead, she is a real woman, made of flesh and blood, not necessarily a celestial star. As a result, readers can view glimpses of Stella's personality as she understands and returns Astrophel's love but eventually rejects him. Not only is she beautiful, but she also is intelligent and rational. When she begins to return Astrophel's love, she refuses to allow her emotions to overcome her reason. She recognizes that their love cannot exist and that she must guard herself. Unlike the stereotypical figures of desire in other poetry from the time, Stella is a complex character and, above all, a real woman. Corresponding to this expectation, Stella has a personal life and a background. Her past has shaped her into the woman whom Astrophel loves. Even if Stella is not Penelope Devereux herself, her personal life is still filled with all of the troubles of a normal person, rather than expressing a romantic ideal. She is trapped in a loveless and even abusive marriage, a fact that Astrophel emphasizes in Sonnet 24. The courtship between the two characters also takes place in real life, through common social circumstances. 8.4

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The first sonnet of Sidney's Astrophil and Stella introduces the theme of love as well as his critical creed. This introductory sonnet performs the double function of praising Stella as the source of all poetical invention and providing a brief essay on the proper method of writing love poetry. The poet says that his love is sincere and true, and that he is writing these sonnets so that his beloved may read them and thus come to know of his intense love for her. He hopes that the sonnets would provide her pleasure, for he has taken a great many pains in writing them. After reading these sonnets, she would understand or know how intense his love for her is. And this knowledge would make her pity him, and pity would soon make her favour or love him. Thus by gradation she would come to love him. In order to attain this end, he has painted 'the blackest face of woe', i.e., to express the intense agony and anguish caused to him by her cruelty. The poet says that he made a thorough study of other poets, especially the ancients, to find suitable words for his purpose, so that his parched up brain may be fertilized, and he may be able to write better verses, but he was disappointed. He tried to imitate others, but such imitation hampered his poetic creation. With great difficulty, he could discover a few words and expressions but such expressions and words lacked dynamic vigour, and were inadequate to express the intensity of the passion. He realized that imitation of others cannot replace invention which comes from within, from the heart and mood of the poet, and not from reading the other poets. Nature is the mother of invention, while she is only the stepmother of imitation. The ancients imitated nature and they were able to write original poetry, but the moderns start imitating the ancients and therefore they are twice removed from nature. In Sidney's view, the poet who wants to write genuine love-poetry, must go to Nature and not slavishly imitate other love poets. The poet discovered that the poetry of all others which he studied rather hampered his poetic creation than being of any help. In fact, their poetry (which was mostly imitation) drove away from his own poetic faculties and this checkmated original creation. When the poet was pregnant with passion and wanted to express his ideas, he remained helpless and suffered intense agony. His pen started playing truant and could not write; as a result, he often beat his head, so intense was his pain and frustration. His frustration and suffering were like the pangs of a woman in labour-pains, but who is not able to deliver the child. But soon he realized the truth that really great poetry results only when the poet looks within, into

his own mind, and expresses his personal emotions. His Muse advised him to look into his heart and write. His Muse is Stella, whose figure is imprinted on his heart, she is the real source of inspiration. This is the introductory sonnet, and in this sonnet, Sidney not only expresses his intense love for Stella (Penelope) but also intermingles his poetic creed so as to show how good poetry should be written. His love for Stella is sincere, but the sonnet as a whole reads like a piece of advice to the contemporary and upcoming love-poets as to how they should write. His poetic creed gets mingled up with his love for Stella, and thus lacks the purity a love poem normally shows.

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50/50 **SUBMITTED TEXT** 125 WORDS **100%** **MATCHING TEXT** 125 WORDS

The structure of the sonnet is Petrarchan, divisible into octave and sestet with a pause in between. His originality lies in the fact that he has used twelve-syllabled lines instead of the usual ten-syllabled. The rhyme scheme is abab, cdcd, efef, gg. The rhyme scheme is seemingly Shakespearean, but the octave consists of one sentence and the subject "I" comes in the fifth line. The two quatrains are interlinked to form a single whole (octave) by the use of strongly stressed participles—loving, turning, studying, etc. In the sestet he rejects imitation and lays stress on the invention. The development of thought is logical, but as a love-sonnet, it lacks the smoothness, the harmony and the melody. Thought supervenes the flow of emotions. 8.4.2

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