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Shakespearean Drama 1: Comedy and History Plays
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Module 1: Comedies
Unit 1: Shakespeare's

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Introduction William Shakespeare English playwright, poet and a professional man of theater, is regarded as the greatest dramatist in the history of English literature. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon." Shakespeare had a profound understanding of human nature and human behavior and was able to communicate this knowledge through the wide variety of characters he created in his plays. Elizabethan tragedy and comedy alike reached their true flowering in Shakespeare's works. Beyond his art, his rich style, and his complex plots, all of which surpass by far the work of other Elizabethan dramatists in the same field, and beyond his unrivaled projection of character, Shakespeare's compassionate understanding of the human lot has perpetuated his greatness and made him the most representative figure of English literature.

1.2 Objectives After going through the unit, you will be able to:

- Get familiar with the Shakespeare life and his work.
- Examine Shakespeare's use of language, stage craft and character.
- Evaluate Shakespeare as a great dramatist of the Elizabethan age.
- Develop an understanding of *The Tempest* which is considered to be one of the finest plays by Shakespeare.

1.3 Shakespeare at a Glance Shakespeare composed his plays during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, who ruled England from 1558 to 1603, and during the early part of the reign of her closest relative, James VI of Scotland, who took England's throne as James I after Elizabeth's death in 1603. During this period England saw an outpouring of poetry and drama, led by Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Christopher Marlowe, that remains unsurpassed in English literary history.

1.3.1 Early Years William Shakespeare was the son of John Shakespeare, a successful glover and alderman originally from Snitterfield, and Mary Arden, the daughter of an affluent landowning farmer. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon and baptized on 26 April 1564. His actual birthdate is unknown, but is traditionally observed on 23 April, St George's Day. This date, which can be traced back to an eighteenth-century scholar's mistake, has proved appealing because Shakespeare died on 23 April 1616. He was the third child of eight and the eldest surviving son. Although no attendance records for the period survive, most biographers agree that Shakespeare was educated at the King's New School in Stratford, a free school chartered in 1553, about a quarter of a mile from his home. Grammar schools varied in quality during the Elizabethan era, but the curriculum was dictated by law throughout England, and the school would have provided an intensive education in Latin grammar and the classics. At the age of 18, Shakespeare married the 26-year-old Anne Hathaway. Six months after the marriage, she gave birth to a daughter, Susanna, who was baptized on 26 May 1583. Twins, son Hamnet and daughter Judith, followed almost two years later and were baptized on 2 February 1585. Hamnet died of unknown causes at the age of 11 and was buried on 11 August 1596. After the birth of the twins, there are few historical traces of Shakespeare until he is mentioned as part of the London theatre scene in 1592. Because of this gap, scholars refer to the years between 1585 and 1592 as Shakespeare's "lost years". Biographers attempting to account for this period have reported many apocryphal stories. Nicholas Rowe, Shakespeare's first biographer, recounted a Stratford legend that Shakespeare fled the town for London to escape prosecution for deer poaching. Another eighteenth-century story has Shakespeare starting his theatrical career minding the horses of theatre patrons in London. John Aubrey reported that Shakespeare had been a country schoolmaster.

1.3.2 Arrival at London and Shakespeare's Theatrical Career It is not known exactly when Shakespeare began writing, but contemporary allusions and records of performances show that several of his plays were on the London stage by 1592. He was well enough known in London by then to be attacked in print by the playwright Robert Greene: "...there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger's heart wrapped in a Player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake- scene in a country." Scholars differ on the exact meaning of these words, but most agree that Greene is accusing Shakespeare of reaching above his rank in trying to match the university-educated writers, such as Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Nashe and Greene himself. The phrase parodying the line "Oh, tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide" from Shakespeare's *Henry VI, part 3*, along with the pun "Shake-scene", identifies Shakespeare as Greene's target. Greene's attack is the first recorded mention of Shakespeare's career in the theatre. Biographers suggest that his career may have begun any time from the mid-1580s to just before Greene's remarks. From 1594, Shakespeare's plays were performed only by the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a company owned by a group of players, including Shakespeare that soon became the leading playing company in London. After the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, the company was awarded a royal patent by the new king, James I, and changed its name to the King's Men. In 1599, a partnership of company members built their own theatre on the south bank of the Thames, which they called the Globe. In 1608, the partnership also took over the Blackfriars indoor theatre. Records of Shakespeare's property purchases and investments indicate that the company made him a wealthy man. In 1597, he bought the second-largest house in Stratford, New Place, and in 1605, he invested in a share of the parish tithes in Stratford. Some of Shakespeare's plays were published in quarto editions from 1594. By 1598, his name had become a selling point and began to appear on the title pages. Shakespeare continued to act in his own and other plays after his success as a playwright. The 1616 edition of Ben Jonson's *Works* names him on the cast lists for *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and *Sejanus, His Fall* (1603). The absence of his name from the 1605 cast list for Jonson's

Volpone is taken by some scholars as a sign that his acting career was nearing its end. The First Folio of 1623, however, lists Shakespeare as one of "the Principal Actors in all these Plays", some of which were first staged after Volpone, although we cannot know for certain what roles he played. In 1610, John Davies of Hereford wrote that "good Will" played "kingly" roles. In 1709, Rowe passed down a tradition that Shakespeare played the ghost of Hamlet's father. Later traditions maintain that he also played Adam in *As You Like It* and the Chorus in *Henry V*, though scholars doubt the sources of the information. Shakespeare's poetry rather than his plays reached print first: *Venus and Adonis* in 1593 and *The Rape of Lucrece* in 1594. These two fashionably erotic narrative poems were probably written to earn money as the theaters were closed from the summer of 1592 to the spring of 1594 because of plague, and Shakespeare's normal source of income was thus denied him. Even so, the two poems, along with the Sonnets, established Shakespeare's reputation as a gifted and popular poet. Shakespeare dedicated the two poems to Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Scholars disagree on whether the dedications are evidence of a close relationship between Shakespeare and Southampton. Literary dedications were designed to gain financial support from wealthy men interested in fostering the arts, and it is probable that Southampton rewarded Shakespeare for his two poems. Both poems became best-sellers—*The Rape of Lucrece* appearing in eight editions by 1632, *Venus and Adonis* in a remarkable 16 editions by 1636—and both were widely quoted and often imitated. The Sonnets were not published until 1609, but as early as 1598, a contemporary, Francis Meres, praised Shakespeare as a "mellifluous and honey-tongued" poet equal to the Roman Ovid, praising in particular his "sugared sonnets" that were circulating "among his private friends." The 154 sonnets describe the devotion of a character, often identified as the poet himself, to a young man whose beauty and virtue he praises and to a mysterious and faithless dark lady with whom the poet is infatuated. The sonnets are prized for their exploration of love in all its aspects. Sonnet 18, which begins "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day," ranks among the most famous love poems of all time.

1.3.3 Actor and Playwright Shakespeare's reputation today is, however, based primarily on the 38 plays that he wrote, modified, or collaborated on. Records of Shakespeare's plays begin to appear in 1594, when the theaters reopened with the passing of the plague that had closed them for 21 months. In December of 1594 his play *The Comedy of Errors* was performed in London during the Christmas revels at Gray's Inn, one of the London law schools. In March of the following year he received payment for two plays that had been performed during the Christmas holidays at the court of Queen Elizabeth I by his theatrical company, known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. The receipt for payment, which he signed along with two fellow actors, reveals that he had by this time achieved a prominent place in the company. He was already probably a so-called sharer, a position entitling him to a percentage of the company's profits rather than merely a salary as an actor and a playwright. In time the profits of this company and its two theaters, the Globe Theatre, which opened in 1599, and the Blackfriars, which the company took over in 1608, enabled Shakespeare to become a wealthy man. Shakespeare wrote nearly all of his plays from 1590 to 1611, when he retired to New Place. A series of history plays and joyful comedies appeared throughout the 1590s, ending with *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. At the same time as he was writing comedy, he also wrote nine history plays, treating the reigns of England's medieval kings and exploring realities of power still relevant today. The great tragedies—including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*—were written during the first decade of the 1600s. All focus on a basically decent individual who brings about his own downfall through a tragic flaw. Scholars have theorized about the reasons behind this change in Shakespeare's vision, and the switch from a focus on social aspects of human activity to the rending experience of the individual. But no one knows whether events in his own life or changes in England's circumstances triggered the shift, or whether it was just an aesthetic decision. Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, had died in 1596 at the age of 11, his father died in 1601, and England's popular monarch, Elizabeth I, died in 1603, so it is not unreasonable to think that the change in Shakespeare's genre and tone reflects some change in his own view of life prompted by these events. In his last years working as a playwright, however, Shakespeare wrote a number of plays that are often called romances or tragicomedies, plays in which the tragic facts of human existence are fully acknowledged but where reassuring patterns of reconciliation and harmony can be seen finally to shape the action. Shakespeare's plays were performed at the courts of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I more frequently than those of any other dramatist of that time. Shakespeare risked losing royal favor only once, in 1599, when his company performed "the play of the deposing and killing of King Richard II" at the request of a group of conspirators against Elizabeth. In the subsequent inquiry, Shakespeare's company was absolved of any knowing participation in the conspiracy. Although Shakespeare's plays enjoyed great popularity with the public, most people did not consider them literature. Plays were merely popular entertainments, not unlike the movies today.

1.3.4 Last Years After about 1608, Shakespeare began to write fewer plays. For most of his working life he wrote at least two plays a year; by 1608 he had slowed usually to one a year, even though the acting company continued to enjoy great success. In 1608, the King's Men, as his company was called after King James took the throne, began to perform at Blackfriars, an indoor theater that charged higher prices and drew a more sophisticated audience than the outdoor Globe. An indoor theater presented possibilities in staging and scenery that the Globe did not permit, and these can be recognized in the late plays. In 1613, a great fire destroyed the Globe Theatre during a performance of *Henry VIII*.

Although the Globe was quickly rebuilt, Shakespeare's association with it—and probably with the company—had ended. Around the time of the fire, Shakespeare retired to Stratford, where he had established his family and become a prominent citizen. Shakespeare's daughter Susanna had married John Hall, a doctor with a thriving practice in Stratford, in 1607. His younger daughter, Judith, married a Stratford winemaker, Thomas Quiney, in 1616. Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616—the month and day traditionally assigned to his birth— and was buried in Stratford's Holy Trinity Church. He had made his will the previous month, "in perfect health and memory." The cause of his death is not known, though a report from the Holy Trinity's vicar in the 1660s claims that he "died of a fever ... contracted after a night of drinking with Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, friends and fellow writers." Shakespeare left the bulk of his estate to his daughter Susanna and the sum of 300 pounds to his daughter Judith. The only specific provision for his wife was their "second-best bed with the furniture" although customary practice allowed a widow one-third of the estate. Shakespeare also left money for "the poor of Stratford," and remembered the three surviving original members of his acting company, Richard Burbage, John Heminges, and Henry Condell, with small grants to buy memorial rings. Shakespeare's wife, Anne, died on August 6, 1623. She lived long enough to see a monument to her husband erected in Holy Trinity Church, but she died just before the publication of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, the more lasting monument to his memory. Soon after her death, Susanna and John Hall moved into New Place, where they lived until their deaths, his in 1635 and hers in 1649. Their daughter, Elizabeth Hall, died childless in 1670. Judith Quiney had three sons, but none lived long enough to produce heirs, and she died in 1662. Thus, by 1670, the line of Shakespeare's descendants had reached its end. 1.4

Shakespeare's

Publications

Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime. In 1623, two friends and fellow actors of Shakespeare,

Heminges and Condell collected 36 of his plays, 18 of them never before printed, and published them in a handsome folio edition, a large book with individual pages formed by folding sheets of paper once. This edition, known as the First Folio, appeared in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death. It was prefaced with a poem by Ben Jonson, in which Shakespeare is hailed, presciently, as "not of an age, but for all time."

The First Folio divided Shakespeare's plays into three categories: comedies, histories, and tragedies. In this section we will discuss Shakespeare's drama according to the first folio. 1.4.1 Comedies Shakespeare's comedies celebrate human social life even as they expose human folly. By means that are sometimes humiliating, even painful, characters learn greater wisdom and emerge with a clearer view of reality. Some of his early comedies can be regarded as light farces in that their humor depends mainly upon complications of plot, minor foibles of the characters, and elements of physical comedy such as slapstick. The so-called joyous comedies follow the early comedies and culminate in *As You Like It*. Written about 1600, this comedy strikes a perfect balance between the worlds of the city and the country, verbal wit and physical comedy, and realism and fantasy. After 1600, Shakespeare's comedies take on a darker tone, as Shakespeare uses the comic form to explore less changeable aspects of human behavior.

All's Well That Ends Well and *Measure for Measure*

test the

ability of comedy to deal with the unsettling realities of human desire, and these plays, therefore, have usually been thought of as "problem comedies," or, at very least, as evidence that comedy in its tendency toward wish fulfillment is a problem. 1.4.2 The History Plays History plays, sometimes known as chronicle plays (after the "chronicles" from which the plots were taken), were a highly popular form of drama in Shakespeare's time. By 1623, every English monarch from William the Conqueror to Elizabeth I had been represented in a play, as the English past served as an important repository of plots for the dramatists of the burgeoning theater industry of Elizabethan England. The plays not only offered entertainment but also served many people as an important source of information about the nation's past. In 1612 English dramatist Thomas Heywood claimed that such plays "instructed such as cannot read in the discovery of all our English Chronicles." Shakespeare wrote ten plays listed in the 1623 Folio as histories and differentiated from the other categories, comedies and tragedies, by their common origin in English history. Eight of Shakespeare's history plays re-create the period in English history from 1399, when King Henry IV took the throne after deposing King Richard II, to the defeat of Richard III in battle in 1485. Henry IV was the first English king from the house of

Lancaster. The history plays cover the conflict between the houses of Lancaster and York, known as the Wars of the Roses, from 1455 to 1485. The final event is the victory of Henry VII over Richard III in 1485, ending the rule of the York dynasty and beginning the Tudor dynasty. The eight plays devoted to this period, listed in the chronological order of the kings with the dates of their composition in parentheses, are Richard II (1597?); Henry IV, Parts I and II (1597?); Henry V (1598?); Henry VI, Parts I, II, and III (1590-1592?); and Richard III (1592-1593?). As their dates indicate, Shakespeare did not write the plays in chronological order. He wrote the second half of the story first and only later returned to the events that initiated the political problems. The two remaining Shakespeare history plays are King John (1596?) and Henry VIII (1613?). King John, beginning soon after John's coronation in 1199, was seemingly reworked from an anonymous, older play on the same subject. It treats the English king's failed effort to resist the power of the Pope, a theme of obvious relevance in England after the Protestant Reformation. Henry VIII, probably co-written with English dramatist John Fletcher, is a loosely connected pageant of events in Henry's reign, ending with the prophecy of the birth of Elizabeth and her succession by King James. Shakespeare's main sources for the events of the history plays were the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577; 2nd ed. 1586, which Shakespeare used) by Raphael Holinshed and Edward Hall's *Chronicle* (1542). Although Shakespeare took situations from these and a few other historical sources, he selected only such facts as suited his dramatic purposes. Sometimes he ignored chronology and telescoped the events of years to fit his own dramatic time scheme. Above all, he used the power of his imagination and language to mold vivid and memorable characters out of the historical figures he found in his sources. The overall theme of the history plays is the importance of a stable political order, but also the heavy moral and emotional price that often must be paid for it. Shakespeare dramatized the great social upheaval that followed Henry IV's usurpation of the throne until the first Tudor king, Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, restored peace and stability. In addition to chronicling the often-violent careers of England's great kings, Shakespeare's history plays explore the extreme pressures of public life, the moral conflicts that kings and queens uniquely face, and the potential tragedy of monarchy.

1.4.3 Tragedies Shakespeare's tragedies are among the most powerful studies of human nature in all literature and appropriately stand as the greatest achievements of his dramatic artistry. Attention understandably has focused on his unforgettable tragic characters, such as Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth. Yet the plays also explore and extend the very nature of tragedy itself by discovering within it a structure that derives meaning precisely from its refusal to offer consolation or compensation for the suffering it traces.

1.4.4 Late Collaborations Although *The Tempest* probably was Shakespeare's final solo creation, he is thought to have continued to work as a collaborator on several plays, including *Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The historical drama *Henry VIII*, also known as *All Is True*, was probably written about 1613 with English dramatist John Fletcher, and first published in the 1623 Folio. It dramatizes events from Henry's reign leading to the birth of the future Queen Elizabeth I, presenting an implied history of the Reformation in a series of scenes on the fall from greatness of some characters (the Duke of Buckingham, Catherine of Aragón, and Thomas Cardinal Wolsey) and the rise of others (Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cranmer). At the end of a performance at the Globe on June 29, 1613, the theater's thatched roof caught fire and the building burned to the ground. *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, probably the last play Shakespeare wrote, was written jointly with John Fletcher about 1613. Both men's names appear on the first published edition in 1634. Scholars generally attribute to Shakespeare most of acts one and five and to Fletcher the bulk of the play's middle. The play tells of the competition of two friends, Palamon and Arcite, for the love of one woman, Emilia. She is the sister of Hippolyta, who was queen of the Amazons and wife of the Greek hero Theseus. The story is taken from *The Knight's Tale*, part of Chaucer's influential 14th-century masterpiece *The Canterbury Tales*.

1.5 Literary Qualities of the Plays Everyone loves a good story, and Shakespeare was one of the very best storytellers. Most of Shakespeare's stories have an almost universal appeal, an appeal often lacking in the plays of his contemporaries, who clung more closely to the tastes and interests of their own day. An even greater achievement is Shakespeare's creation of believable characters.

His people are not the exaggerated types or allegorical abstractions found in many other Elizabethan plays. They are instead men and women with the mingled qualities and many of the inconsistencies of life itself. The very richness of Shakespeare's language continues to delight, and it is always amazing to be reminded how many common words and phrases have their origin in Shakespeare's art. His poetic and theatrical artistry has created plays that continue to attract readers and theatergoers, and he properly remains one of our own age's most popular playwrights.

1.5.1 Shakespeare's Characters Shakespeare'

s characters emerge in his plays as distinctive human beings. Although some of the characters display elements of conventional dramatic types such as the melancholy man, the braggart soldier, the pedant, and the young lover, they are nevertheless usually individualized rather than caricatures or exaggerated types. Falstaff, for example, bears some resemblance to the braggart soldiers of 16th-century Italian comedy and to representations of the character Vice in medieval morality plays, but his vitality and inexhaustible wit make him unique. Hamlet, one of the most complex characters in all literature, is partly a picture of the ideal Renaissance man, and he also exhibits traits of the conventional melancholic character. However, his personality as a whole transcends these types, and he is so real that commentators have continued for centuries to explore his fascinating mind.

The women in Shakespeare's plays are vivid creations, each differing from the others. It is important to remember that in Shakespeare's time boy actors played the female parts. Actresses did not appear in a Shakespeare play until after the restoration of Charles II to the English throne in 1660 and the introduction of French practices such as women actors. It says much about the talent of the boy actors of his own day that Shakespeare could create such a rich array of fascinating women characters. Shakespeare was fond of portraying aggressive, witty heroines, such as Kate of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Rosaline of *Love's Labour's Lost*, and Beatrice of *Much Ado About Nothing*. However, he was equally adept at creating gentle and innocent women, such as Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Desdemona in *Othello*, and Cordelia in *King Lear*. His female characters also include the treacherous Goneril and Regan in *King Lear*, the iron-willed Lady Macbeth, and the witty and resourceful Portia in *Merchant of Venice*, the tender and loyal Juliet, and the alluring Cleopatra.

Shakespeare's comic figures are also highly varied. They include bumbling rustics such as Dogberry and Verges in *Much Ado About Nothing*, tireless punsters like the Dromios in *The Comedy of Errors*, pompous grotesques like Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost*, elegant wits like Feste in *Twelfth Night*, cynical realists like Thersites in *Troilus and Cressida*, and fools who utter nonsense that often conceals wisdom, such as Touchstone in *As You Like It* and the Fool in *King Lear*.

Shakespeare drew his characters with remarkable insight into human character. Even the wicked characters, such as Iago in *Othello*, have human traits that can elicit understanding if not compassion. Thus, Macbeth's violent end arouses pity and awe rather than scornful triumph at a criminal's just punishment for his deeds. The characters achieve uniqueness through their brilliantly individualized styles of speech. Shakespeare understands of the human soul and his mastery of language enabled him to write dialogue that makes the characters in his plays always intelligible, vital, and memorable.

1.5.2 Shakespeare's Attitudes Shakespeare'

s philosophy of life can only be deduced from the ideas and attitudes that appear frequently in his writings, and he remained always a dramatist, not a writer of philosophical or ethical tracts. Nonetheless, the tolerance of human weakness evident in the plays tends to indicate that Shakespeare was a broad-minded person with generous and balanced views. Although he never lectured his audience, sound morality is implicit in his themes and in the way he handled his material. He attached less importance to noble birth than to an individual's noble relations with other people. Despite the bawdiness of Shakespeare's language, which is characteristic of his period, he did not condone sexual license. He accepted people as they are, without condemning them, but he did not allow wickedness to triumph. The comments of Shakespeare's contemporaries suggest that he himself possessed both integrity and gentle manners. It should be remembered that even though Shakespeare was a poet "for all time," as his friend Ben Jonson said, he nevertheless was necessarily a product of his own era and shared many beliefs of the time. These beliefs are different from our own, and some of them may now seem strange and even unenlightened. Although Shakespeare anticipated many modern ideas and values, in other ways he does not rise above the ideas and values of his own time. As the history plays indicate, he accepted the idea of monarchy and had little interest in, or even concept of, participatory democracy. Although many of his women characters are assertive and independent, the plays still have them subordinate their energy to the logic of the male-dominated household. It is also likely that Shakespeare believed in ghosts and witches, as did many people of his time, including King James I.

1.5.3 Shakespeare'

s Stagecraft Shakespeare brilliantly exploited the resources of the theaters he worked in. The Globe Theatre held an audience of 2,000 to 3,000 people. Like other outdoor theaters, it had a covered, raised stage thrusting out into the audience. The audience stood around the three sides of the stage in an unroofed area called the pit. Covered galleries, where people paid more money to sit, rose beyond the pit. Performances took place only during daylight hours, and there was little use of lighting. Few props were used, and little scenery. Costumes, however, were elaborate. Language created the scene, as in this passage from

The Merchant of Venice:

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! Here we will sit, and let the sounds of music Creep in our ears:

stillness and the night Become the touches of sweet harmony. Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold.

Act V, Scene 1 1.5.4 Shakespeare's Language and Writing Style William

Shakespeare's early plays were written in the conventional style of the day, with elaborate metaphors and rhetorical phrases that didn't always align naturally with the story's plot or characters. However, Shakespeare was very innovative, adapting the traditional style to his own purposes and creating a freer flow of words. With only small degrees of variation, Shakespeare primarily used a metrical pattern consisting of lines of unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, to compose his plays. At the same time, there are passages in all the plays that deviate from this and use forms of poetry or simple prose. In Shakespeare's time English was a more flexible language than it is today. Grammar and spelling were not yet completely formalized, although scholars were beginning to urge rules to regulate them. English had begun to emerge as a significant literary language, having recently replaced Latin as the language of serious intellectual and artistic activity in England. Freed of many of the conventions and rules of modern English, Shakespeare could shape vocabulary and syntax to the demands of style. For example, he could interchange the various parts of speech, using nouns as adjectives or verbs, adjectives as adverbs, and pronouns as nouns. Such freedom gave his language an extraordinary plasticity, which enabled him to create the large number of unique and memorable characters he has left us. Shakespeare made each character singular by a distinctive and characteristic set of speech habits.

Just as important to Shakespeare's success as the suppleness of the English language was the rapid expansion of the language. New words were being coined and borrowed at an unprecedented rate in Shakespeare's time. Shakespeare himself had an unusually large vocabulary: about 23,000 different words appear in his plays and poetry, many of these words first appearing in print through his usage. During the Renaissance many new words enriched the English language, borrowed from Latin and from other European languages, and Shakespeare made full use of the new resources available to English. He also took advantage of the possibilities of his native tongue, especially the crispness and energy of the sounds of English that derives in large measure from the language's rich store of monosyllabic (one-syllable) words. The main influences on Shakespeare's style were the Bible, the

Book of Common Prayer, the homilies (sermons) that were prescribed for reading in church, the rhetorical treatises that were studied in grammar school, and the proverbial lore of common speech.

The result was that Shakespeare could draw on a stock of images and ideas that were familiar to most members of his audience. His knowledge of figures of speech and other devices enabled him to phrase his original thoughts concisely and forcefully. Clarity of expression and the use of ordinary diction partly account for the fact that many of Shakespeare's phrases have become proverbial in everyday speech, even among people who have never read the plays. It is also significant that the passages most often quoted are usually from plays written around 1600 and after, when his language became more subtle and complex. The phrases "my mind's eye," "the primrose path," and "sweets to the sweet" derive from Hamlet. Macbeth is the source of "the milk of human kindness" and "at one fell swoop." From Julius Caesar come the expressions "it was Greek to me," "ambition should be made of sterner stuff," and "the unkindest cut of all."

Shakespeare wrote many of his plays in blank verse—unrhymed poetry in iambic pentameter, a verse form in which unaccented and accented syllables alternate in lines of ten syllables. In Shakespeare's hand the verse form never becomes mechanical but is always subject to shifts of emphasis to clarify the meaning of a line and avoid the monotony of unbroken metrical regularity. Yet the five-beat pentameter line provides the norm against which the modifications are heard. Shakespeare sometimes used rhymed verse, particularly in his early plays. Rhymed couplets occur frequently at the end of a scene, punctuating the dramatic rhythm and perhaps serving as a cue to the offstage actors to enter for the next scene.

1.6 Literary Reputation Shakespeare achieved his reputation as perhaps the greatest of all dramatists after his death. Although his contemporary Ben Jonson declared him "not of an age, but for all time," early 17th-century taste found the plays of Jonson himself, or Thomas Middleton or Beaumont and Fletcher, equally worthy of praise. Shakespeare's reputation began to eclipse that of his contemporaries some 150 years after his death. He was always popular but until the mid-18th century his reputation was not, as it would become, unrivaled. Although his works were regularly staged in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, theater companies hardly treated his plays with reverence. When they performed the plays, they most often used versions rewritten for the fashions of the age, "purged"—as their adaptors maintained—of their coarseness and absurdities. These alterations could be significant. In the version of *King Lear* that dominated the stage from 1681 until 1823, Lear and his daughter Cordelia are left alive at the end, transforming a tragedy into a tragicomedy (and reproducing what the historical source material suggests about their fates). While these adaptations seem odd to us today, it was this practice of adapting Shakespeare that kept his plays in the repertory while those of Jonson, Middleton, and others remained on the shelf. Shakespeare began to assume the role of England's national poet during the first half of the 18th century. This process reached its culmination with the installation of a memorial statue in Westminster Abbey in 1741 and the celebration of a festival in 1764 to commemorate the bicentenary of his birth. During the 19th century the Romantic Movement did much to shape both Shakespeare's international reputation and the view of his achievement that has persisted ever since. Particularly important were the lectures on Shakespeare by English romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the writings of German romantic poet and dramatist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Romantic authors claimed Shakespeare as a great precursor of their own literary values. They celebrated his work as an embodiment of universal human truths and an unequalled articulation of the human condition in all its nobility and variety.

1.7 The Tempest: A Critical Introduction The *Tempest* (1611) is a tragicomedy by William Shakespeare, and probably the last play attributable to his sole authorship. The story of *The Tempest*—a storm, a shipwreck, and the adventures of the shipwrecked party on an enchanted island—was suggested to Shakespeare by reports received in London late in 1610 of the wreck of an English ship off the Bermuda Islands. The survival of the crew during a winter's sojourn in the islands provided a timely topic for a play, but little plot. Somewhere, however, in old stories and in Italian comedies Shakespeare picked up accounts of a banished prince who was also a wise magician. This prince had a fair daughter whom he contrived to marry to the son of a hostile king in order to end an old feud. Shakespeare set these characters and their story in an enchanted island after a shipwreck and the result was *The Tempest*. The plot of *The Tempest* is alone among Shakespeare's plays in observing the unity of time. The play contains something for exciting action; lovely songs; a stately masque with music and dancing; the farcical comedy of the monster Caliban, the drunken butler Stephano, and the clown Trinculo; the love story between Ferdinand and Miranda; and, controlling and directing all, the figure of the wise and benevolent magician Prospero. Such theatrical spectacles must have taxed the resources of the Blackfriars stage, the London theater where *The Tempest* was performed. Yet *The Tempest* is also a multilayered, lyrical play, containing beautiful verse, wisdom of thought, and themes of repentance and reconciliation. Above all, there is the sense of finality. The famous lines given to Prospero, beginning with the words, "Our revels now are ended," are interpreted by many to announce Shakespeare's retirement from the theater.

1.8 Major Characters After an understanding of the plot of the drama, let us now get introduced to the major characters of the play. These characters will also be discussed in detail later on as well. Prospero—The play's protagonist and father of Miranda. Twelve years before the events of the play, Prospero was the duke of Milan. His brother, Antonio, in concert with Alonso, king of Naples,

usurped him, forcing him to flee in a boat with his daughter. The honest lord Gonzalo aided Prospero in his escape. Prospero has spent his twelve years on the island refining the magic that gives him the power he needs to punish and forgive his enemies. Miranda-The daughter of Prospero, Miranda was brought to the island at an early age and has never seen any men other than her father and Caliban, though she dimly remembers being cared for by female servants as an infant. Because she has been sealed off from the world for so long, Miranda's perceptions of other people tend to be naïve and non-judgmental. She is compassionate, generous, and loyal to her father. Ariel-Prospero's spirit helper. Ariel is referred to throughout this and in most criticism as "he," but his gender and physical form is ambiguous. Rescued by Prospero from a long imprisonment at the hands of the witch Sycorax, Ariel is Prospero's servant until Prospero decides to release him. He is mischievous and ubiquitous, able to traverse the length of the island in an instant and to change shapes at will. He carries out virtually every task that Prospero needs accomplished in the play. Caliban -Another of Prospero's servants. Caliban, the son of the now-deceased witch Sycorax, acquainted Prospero with the island when Prospero arrived. Caliban believes that the island rightfully belongs to him and has been stolen by Prospero. His speech and behavior is sometimes coarse and brutal, as in his drunken scenes with Stephano and Trinculo, and sometimes eloquent and sensitive, as in his rebukes of Prospero in Act I, scene ii, and in his description of the eerie beauty of the island in). Ferdinand -Son and heir of Alonso. Ferdinand seems in some ways to be as pure and naïve as Miranda. He falls in love with her upon first sight and happily submits to servitude in order to win her father's approval. Alonso-King of Naples and father of Ferdinand. Alonso aided Antonio in unseating Prospero as Duke of Milan twelve years before. As he appears in the play, however, he is acutely aware of the consequences of all his actions. He blames his decision to marry his daughter to the Prince of Tunis on the apparent death of his son. In addition, after the magical banquet, he regrets his role in the usurping of Prospero.

Antonio -Prospero's brother. Antonio quickly demonstrates that he is power-hungry and foolish. In Act II, scene i, he persuades Sebastian to kill the sleeping Alonso. He then goes along with Sebastian's absurd story about fending off lions when Gonzalo wakes up and catches Antonio and Sebastian with their swords drawn. Sebastian -Alonso's brother. Like Antonio, he is both aggressive and cowardly. He is easily persuaded to kill his brother in Act II, Scene I, and he initiates the ridiculous story about lions when Gonzalo catches him with his sword drawn. Gonzalo -An old, honest lord, Gonzalo helped Prospero and Miranda to escape after Antonio usurped Prospero's title. Gonzalo's speeches provide an important commentary on the events of the play, as he remarks on the beauty of the island when the stranded party first lands, then on the desperation of Alonso after the magic banquet, and on the miracle of the reconciliation in Act V, scene i. Trinculo & Stephano -Trinculo, a jester, and Stephano, a drunken butler, are two minor members of the shipwrecked party. They provide a comic foil to the other, more powerful pairs of Prospero and Alonso and Antonio and Sebastian. Their drunken boasting and petty greed reflect and deflate the quarrels and power struggles of Prospero and the other noblemen. Boatswain -Appearing only in the first and last scenes, the Boatswain is vigorously good-natured. He seems competent and almost cheerful in the shipwreck scene, demanding practical help rather than weeping and praying. And he seems surprised but not stunned when he awakens from a long sleep at the end of the play. Summing Up In this unit you were given an introduction to William Shakespeare, ace dramatist and sonneteer. You further traced Shakespeare's career as an actor and a dramatist and examined his evolution as a dramatist during the major phases of his life. The unit further examined the literary qualities of Shakespeare's plays. Besides this his stage craft, language and writing style were also examined. Finally, the major characters of The Tempest like Prospero, Miranda, Ariel, Ferdinand were also discussed. Self Assessment Questions 1. Give a biographical account of Shakespeare's life in your own words. 2. Shed light on the literary qualities of Shakespeare's plays. 3. Write a short note on Shakespeare's publications.

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Unit 2: The Tempest-II 2.0 Introduction 2.1 Objectives 2.2 The Tempest: Analysis of some of the Important Scenes 2.2.1 The Tempest Act I, Scene I 2.2.2 The Tempest Act I, Scene ii 2.2.3 The Tempest Act II, Scene iii 2.2.4 The Tempest Act II, Scene iv 2.2.5 The Tempest Act III, Scene v 2.2.6 The Tempest Act III, Scene vi 2.2.7 The Tempest Act III, Scene vii 2.2.8 The Tempest Act IV, Scene I 2.2.9 The Tempest Act V, Scene i 2.3 Theme of the Play 2.3.1 The Illusion of Justice 2.3.2 The Difficulty of Distinguishing "Men" from "Monsters" 2.3.3 The Allure of Ruling a Colony 2.4 Motifs of the Play 2.4.1 Masters and Servants 2.4.2 Water and Drowning 2.4.3 Mysterious Noises 2.5 Symbols in the Play 2.5.1 The Tempest 2.5.2 The Game of Chess 2.5.3 Prospero's Books 2.0

Introduction In the last unit you read about Shakespeare and his dramatic achievements. You were also introduced to *The Tempest*, Shakespeare's finest tragic-comedy, which will be discussed in detail in the coming two units. *The Tempest* probably was written in 1610–1611 and was first performed at Court by the King's Men in the fall of 1611. It was performed again in the winter of 1612–1613 during the festivities in celebration of the marriage of King James's daughter Elizabeth.

The Tempest is most likely the last play written entirely by Shakespeare and it is remarkable for being one of only two plays by Shakespeare (the other being *Love's Labor's Lost*) whose plot is entirely original.

The play does, however, draw on travel literature of its time—most notably the accounts of a tempest off the Bermudas that separated and nearly wrecked a fleet of colonial ships sailing from Plymouth to Virginia.

The English colonial project seems to be on Shakespeare's mind throughout *The Tempest*, as almost every character, from

the

lord Gonzalo to the drunk Stephano, ponders how he would rule the island

on which the play is set

if he were its king. Shakespeare seems also to have drawn on Montaigne's essay "Of the Cannibals," which was translated into English in 1603.

Further,

the name of Prospero's servant- monster, Caliban, seems to be an anagram or derivative of "Cannibal".

Let us now discuss the play in detail. 2.1 Objectives • This unit will provide a detailed summary of some of the important scenes of the play. • Through a reading Shakespeare's *The Tempest* students will value ideas of good coming from bad, atonement and reconciliation, purification through suffering, illusion versus reality, and nature versus society. • The unit will discuss the major themes, symbols and motifs discussed in *The Tempest*. 2.2 *The Tempest* Summary of Some of the Important Scenes 2.2.1 *The Tempest* Act I, Scene i The play opens on the deck of a ship that is sailing from the North African city of Carthage to the Italian city of Naples. The stage can be set or divided in many ways. The actors are usually center stage in this section. Others enter from the same wing. A clap of thunder sounds, light flashes, the dialogue begins between the Master of the boat and the Boatswain. The two characters run around trying to secure the rigging of the ship in the storm. Alonso, the King of Naples, steps from the wing to ask what is going on. He is accompanied by his counselor, Gonzalo and Antonio, the reigning Duke of Milan. The royal passengers ask the Boatswain about the status of the storm, and he orders them to get below the deck. Gonzalo warns him to be wary of the stature of the men on board, but the Boatswain is indignant:

None that I love more than myself. You are a councilor; if you can command these elements to silence and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more - use your authority.

If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hours,

if it so hap. Gonzalo exits, remarking that the Boatswain is fit for dying by hanging than drowning, as he continues to order the sailors. He returns with Antonio and Sebastian, Alonso's brother. The Boatswain demands to know why the three men have come back on deck and Sebastian insults him: "A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, and uncharitable dog!" Chaos continues as the storm ravages the deck of the ship. The mariners enter the stage and lament. Antonio asks if they are "merely cheated of our lives by drunkards" and the Boatswain exits. A clamor of shouts and cries is heard from within the boat and the royal passengers exit to die with the king. Gonzalo ends the act, wishing that he would not have to die at sea: "Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground, -long heath, broom, furze, anything? The wills above be done, but I would fain die a dry death" The curtains close and the stage is reset for the island scene. Summary A violent storm rages around a small ship at sea. The master of the ship calls for his boatswain to rouse the mariners to action and prevent the ship from being run aground by

the tempest. Chaos ensues. Some mariners enter, followed by a group of nobles comprised of Alonso, King of Naples, Sebastian,

his brother, Antonio, Gonzalo, and others. We do not learn these men's names in this scene, nor do we learn (as we finally do in Act II, Scene I) that

they have just come from Tunis, in Africa, where Alonso's daughter, Claribel, has been married to the prince. As the Boatswain and his crew take in the topsail and the topmast, Alonso and his party are merely underfoot, and the Boatswain tells them to get below-decks. Gonzalo reminds the Boatswain that one of the passengers is of some importance, but the Boatswain is unmoved. He will do what he has to in order to save the ship, regardless of who is aboard. The lords go below decks, and then, adding to the chaos of the scene, three of them— Sebastian, Antonio, and Gonzalo—enter again only four lines later. Sebastian and Antonio

curse the Boatswain in his labors, masking their fear with profanity. Some mariners enter wet and crying, and only at this point does the audience learn the identity of the passengers on-board. Gonzalo orders the mariners to pray for the king and the prince. There is a strange noise—perhaps the sound of thunder, splitting wood, or roaring water—and the cry of mariners. Antonio, Sebastian, and Gonzalo, preparing to sink to a watery grave, go in search of the king. 2.2.2 The Tempest Act I, Scene ii In an island hut, Prospero, brother of Antonio and the rightful duke of Milan, is speaking with his daughter, Miranda. She asks Prospero to calm the sea, if he has, by any means, stirred up the storm in which she watched the ship perish. Prospero tells his daughter to be calm, because no harm has come to its passengers. He reminds her that everything has been done for her. Prospero decides that now is the time to inform his daughter of what he has been hiding since they came to the island. He asks "Canst thou remember/ A time before we came unto this cell." Miranda says that she remembers her life before the island as if it were a dream. He tells her that they have been on the island for twelve years and that he was once the Duke of Milan. She asks what events transpired to bring them to the island, and he relays the tale. He had become entrenched in studies of the secret arts and put his brother in control of the affairs of state. Once his brother learned how to manage the state and Prospero himself had been detached from worldly affairs, a change took place: ...

in my false brother awakened an evil nature, and my trust, like a good parent, did beget of him A falsehood in its contrary as great As my trust was, which had, indeed, no limit, A confidence sans bound...

For Prospero, his "Library/ /Was dukedom large enough" but his brother thought him to be incapable of ruling. His brother made an alliance with the King of Naples. Miranda remarks that "good wombs have borne bad sons." With the support of the King of Naples, his brother raised an army and expelled him from the dukedom with his daughter. A few sympathetic ministers helped the fallen duke and his child to a boat, which carried them to the island. The pair was furnished with food, clothing and Prospero's

books by the good councilor, Gonzalo. Miranda exclaims "Would I might/ But ever see that man!" She then asks her father why he has raised the storm and he tells her that by chance his enemies have come near the island and he has shipwrecked them to get his revenge. He uses his magic to make Miranda go to sleep and he calls his spirit servant Ariel to him. Ariel enters from the wings. He reports that he has accomplished everything which his master bid him. He caused the storm and then the ship-wreck. He relays that the King's son, Ferdinand leapt up and shouted: "Hell is empty/ And all the devils are here" Ariel also tells Prospero that no one was wounded and that the ship itself is safe, its mariners sleeping. Prospero prepares to order more, but Ariel reminds him that he has been promised his freedom: ...I prithee, Remember I have done thee worthy service, Told thee no lies, made no mistakes, served Without or grudge or grumblings. Thou did promise To bate me a full year. Prospero reminds him that he freed him from his cell, in which he had been placed by Sycorax, the former ruler of the island. Prospero asks him about her, finding out that she was born in Algiers and was a terrible sorceress who came to the island with a child, Caliban. Ariel expresses his gratitude to Prospero for freeing him from his imprisonment and Prospero threatens him with twelve more years of imprisonment if he complains any more. Ariel is promised freedom in two days if he completes his commands. Prospero awakens Miranda and they go to visit Caliban. Caliban's hut is off to one of the sides of the stage. They rouse him from his dwelling and he curses them: As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed With raven's feather from unwholesome fen Drop on you both! A southwest blow on ye And blister you all o'er! Prospero tells him that he will receive stomach pains for such a curse. Caliban says that the island is rightfully his, but they took it from him and taught him "To name the bigger light and how the less" (the bigger light is the sun and the lesser the moon). Because of this, he taught them the secrets of the island: where to find food and shelter. Prospero assails him because he sought to "violate/ The honour of my child.". Caliban admits to the attempted rape charge, that he would have populated the island with his offspring.

Miranda berates him, asserting that they gave him the gift of language.

Caliban responds:

You taught me language, and my profit on't Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you For learning me your language!

Prospero

threatens him anew and Caliban capitulates, admitting his inferior strength. Ariel reenters the stage, in the guise of a sea-nymph, leading Ferdinand. Ferdinand follows the sound of Ariel's song, believing his father and compatriots to be dead. Miranda thinks that Ferdinand is a spirit, but her father corrects her. Ferdinand comes to Miranda and marvels that she is a human. Miranda and Ferdinand stare at each other. Miranda remarks that Ferdinand is the third man she has ever seen and the young prince swears he will make her the Queen of Naples, if she is a virgin. When Prospero alleges that Ferdinand has come to the island as a spy, Miranda exclaims at her father's accusation: There's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple. If the ill spirit have so fair a house, Good things will strive to dwell with't. Prospero calls him a traitor and threatens torture while Miranda pleads on his behalf. Prospero is pleased with this, because he plans to use the youths' affection towards his own ends.. Ferdinand submits to Prospero, continuing to praise his daughter:

Might I but through my prison once a day behold this maid. All corners else o'

the'

earth Let liberty make use of; -space enough Have I in such a prison.

Miranda tries to comfort Ferdinand as Prospero once again promises Ariel his freedom. Everyone exits. The curtain falls, and the stage is reset. Summary Scene ii opens on the island, with Prospero and Miranda watching the ship as it is tossed by the storm. Miranda knows that her father is creating the storm, and she begs him to end the ship's torment and her own, since she suffers as she watches the ship's inhabitants

suffer. Prospero reassures his daughter that his actions have been to protect her. He also tells

Miranda that she is ignorant of her heritage; he then explains the story of her birthright and of their lives before they came to

be on the island. Prospero begins his story with the news

that he is the duke of Milan and Miranda is a princess. He also relates that he had

abdicated day-to-day rule of his kingdom to his brother, Antonio. Prospero admits that books held more attraction than duties, and he willingly allowed his brother the opportunity to grasp control. But Antonio used his position to undermine Prospero and to plot against him. Prospero's trust in his brother proved unwise, when

Antonio formed an alliance with the king of Naples to oust Prospero and seize his heritage. Prospero and his daughter were placed in a small, rickety boat

and put out to sea. A sympathetic Neapolitan, Gonzalo, provided them with rich garments, linens, and other necessities.

Gonzalo also provided Prospero with books from his library.

Eventually, Prospero and Miranda arrived on the island, where they have remained since that time.

When he finishes the tale, Prospero uses his magic to put Miranda to sleep. The sprite, Ariel,

appears as soon as Miranda is sleeping and reports on the storm, the ship, and the passengers. Ariel relates everyone, except the crew, was forced to abandon ship. Ariel tells Prospero that the passengers have been separated into smaller groups and are on different parts of the island; that the ship, with its sleeping crew, is safely hidden in the harbor; and that the remainder of the fleet, thinking that the king is drowned, has sailed home. Ariel then asks that Prospero free him, as had been promised. But Prospero has more need of his sprite and declares that Ariel's freedom must be delayed a few more days.

When Ariel leaves, Prospero awakens Miranda and beckons Caliban, the son of the witch, Sycorax. Caliban has been Prospero's slave, but he is insolent and rebellious and is only controlled through the use of magic.

Caliban claims the island as his own and says that Prospero has tricked him in the past. Prospero

is unmoved, claiming that Caliban is corrupt, having tried to rape Miranda. Prospero threatens and cajoles Caliban's obedience, but Caliban's presence makes Miranda uneasy.

After Caliban leaves, Ariel enters with Ferdinand, who sees Miranda, and the two fall instantly in love. Although this is what Prospero intended

to have happen,

he does not

want it to appear too easy for Ferdinand, and

so he accuses Ferdinand of being a spy. When Prospero uses magic to control Ferdinand, Miranda begs him to stop. 2.2.3

The Tempest Act II, Scene i On another part of the island, Alonso, his brother Sebastian, the Duke Antonio, Gonzalo the councilor and Lords Adrian and Francisco enter the stage. Gonzalo is in the process of comforting the king by pointing out to him how lucky he is to have survived. Antonio and Sebastian are making fun of the exchange between the King and his councilor. The group begins to discuss the nature of the island, remarking that it is very green and wild. Gonzalo

continues to sing the praises of the isle while the rest of the group pokes fun at him, with the exception of the grieving King. They discuss the event in Carthage from which they are traveling home: the marriage of the King's daughter to the King of Tunis: ADRIAN: Tunis was never graced before with such a paragon to their queen. GONZALO: Not since widow Dido's time. ANTONIO: Widow? A pox o' that. How came that widow in? Widow Dido! They continue to make a game of

the mythical Dido (who is also from Virgil's Aeneid) and debate humorously over whether or not Tunis and Carthage are one and the same. Gonzalo speaks to the King, trying to cheer him up, asking if his "doublet is as fresh as the first day I wore it?" Alonso laments, wishing that he had never gone to Carthage because he has lost his son and heir, Ferdinand.

Francisco tells the king that his son might still be alive, because he saw him swimming in the wake of the wreck. Sebastian reminds the King that everyone had advised him against the marriage. Gonzalo attacks Sebastian's forwardness: My lord Sebastian, The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness, And time to speak it in - you rub the sore When you should bring the plaster. Gonzalo tells Sebastian that he is making the situation worse. He then tells the King what he would do if the island were his as a colony. During this speech Antonio and Sebastian continue to make fun of him on the side of the stage as he speaks in the center, saying that he would plant weeds in place of other crops.

Gonzalo describes the island

as a paradise without laws and without a social hierarchy, where everything would be innocent and pure. The other two continue to ridicule him:

SEBASTIAN: Yet he would be king on't. ANTONIO: The latter end of the commonwealth forgets the beginning. GONZALO:

All things in common nature should produce Without sweat or endeavour.

Gonzalo describes a utopia free of marriage and crimes, where he would rule with perfection. Alonso asks him to be quiet. The others continue to laugh at him. Ariel enters from the wings playing music. He is invisible to the characters but not to the audience. Everyone falls asleep except for Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio. Alonso wishes to sleep and the other two promise to guard him while he sleeps. Ariel exits and the pair discuss the odd sleep that has come over their comrades. Antonio alludes to a plan and Sebastian begs him to speak it. Antonio says of the King's son that " 'Tis as impossible that he's undrowned/ as he that sleeps here swims." The two agree that the prince must be dead and realize that the next heir to Naples is Alonso's daughter, the new Queen of Tunis. Antonio points out that there is a long distance between Tunis and Naples, proposing that she would not be able to rule the kingdom if the King were seized by death instead of sleep: As this Gonzalo; I myself could make A chough of as deep chat.O, that you bore The mind that I do, what a sleep were this For your advancement! Do you understand me? Antonio implies that Sebastian should kill his brother and become king himself. Sebastian points out that that is the same thing he did to his brother (Prospero) asking if he has a guilty conscience. Sebastian says that he is not at all guilt-ridden. Sebastian says that his example will be his own precedent. They draw swords. Ariel returns from the wings and awakens Gonzalo to tell him of the plot. Gonzalo yells to the others and they all awaken. Antonio claims they were drawing swords against the sound of some animals. Gonzalo says that he also hears a sound and they all exit the stage with swords drawn, searching for Ferdinand. The curtain falls and the stage is reset. Summary On another part of the island, Gonzalo tries to comfort King Alonso, who believes that he has lost his only son, Ferdinand. The King's brother, Sebastian, is not as comforting and he mocks Gonzalo's attempts to cheer up the King. Sebastian reminds the King that he had been advised not to take the journey to Tunis in the first place, and thus he is directly responsible for all of their problems. Ariel arrives and magically puts everyone to sleep except Antonio and Sebastian. Antonio suggests that they should kill the King as he sleeps and make Sebastian the new King of Naples. Sebastian agrees, but just as they are about to draw their swords, Ariel awakens King Alonso and Gonzalo. Gonzalo sees the men with their swords drawn and asks what they are doing. Sebastian makes up a lie that they heard "a hollow burst of bellowing" (316), that sounded like a wild animal, and they were merely trying to protect their sleeping king. Believing their intentions were good, King Alonso thinks no more about it and asks them to help in the search of Ferdinand. They agree and the scene comes to a close. 2.2.4 The Tempest Act II, Scene ii The curtain rises on another part of the island. Caliban enters the stage carrying wood and cursing Prospero. Thunder claps, and he assumes that it is Prospero listening. He describes the many ways that Prospero tortures him. Trinculo, a servant of King Alonso, enters the stage. Caliban thinks that he is a spirit sent by Prospero so he hides on the ground underneath his cloak. Trinculo has heard sounds come from this direction and looks around. When he sees the cloak on the ground he is not quite sure what he has found. He says that Caliban smells like a fish: "

Were I in England now, as I once was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver. There would this monster make a man - any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian."

Trinculo hears more thunder and hides underneath the cloak with Caliban. Stephano, another servant to the King, enters the stage from the wings carrying a bottle. Drunk, he sings a sea shanty. Caliban cries from under the cloak. Stephano looks at the cloaked spectacle on the ground and does not fear it. He is surprised that the four-legged beast on the ground speaks English and he plans to make a trophy of the creature. Caliban still thinks that he is being tormented by Prospero's spirits. Stephano leans forward with his bottle and tells Caliban to drink, for he still does not know that Trinculo is also under the cloak. Trinculo speaks out and Stephano exclaims "Four legs and two voices; a most delicate monster!" Caliban drinks again and Trinculo calls out to his compatriot. Stephano fears that he has come upon a devil and threatens to leave but Trinculo beseeches him. Stephano pulls his friend from under the cloak and the two celebrate their survival. Caliban speaks aside to the audience: "

These be fine things, an if they be not sprites. That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor. I will kneel to him." Stephano asks Trinculo to tell him how he survived the wreck and Trinculo swears by the bottle that he swam ashore. Caliban asks the pair if they have "dropped from heaven?" Caliban continues to drink and promises to show the pair every secret of the island. Trinculo does not trust him. Stephano asks him to swear on the bottle and Caliban pledges: I'll show thee the best springs; I'll pluck thee berries; I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough. A plague upon the tyrant I serve! I'll bear him no more sticks, but follow thee, thou wondrous man. Caliban proceeds to make more promises and Stephano accepts the offer. They all exit drinking, with Caliban singing. The curtain falls and the stage is reset. Summary As we had read in above act Caliban has just finished chopping wood when he hears loud claps of thunder. This prompts him to soliloquize on his hatred of Prospero: "

All the infections that the sun sucks up/From bogs, fens, flats on Prospero fall, and make him by inchmeal a disease!" (1-3). He feels that Prospero has filled the island with spirits to torment him for being late with the firewood. Trinculo, the court jester who has been travelling with the King, approaches, and Caliban naturally assumes he is one of Prospero's spying spirits. Caliban falls to the ground, hoping that it will somehow help him go unnoticed. Trinculo is looking for shelter, worried about the coming storm. He sees Caliban, lying flat on his face, and finds him very interesting. He wishes he were in England so that he could put the monster he has discovered on display as a freak of nature. The thunder grows closer and Trinculo finds it necessary, albeit unappealing, to crawl under Caliban's cloak for protection. In his now famous words, "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows!" (42). Another survivor of the shipwreck, a butler to the King named Stephano, appears. He washed ashore on a barrel of wine and has since ingested its contents and is very drunk indeed. Seeing Trinculo and Caliban lying on the ground,

he thinks that they are a two-headed monster with four legs, indigenous to the island. Stephano gives Caliban the bit of wine he has left, hoping to appease the horrid creature. Caliban cries out, "Do not torment me, prithee" (73) because he still believes the men are spirits sent by his master. Trinculo gets up and is relieved to see his friend. The two dance to celebrate their reunion while Caliban, now drunk from his first taste of wine, decides that Stephano will be his new master: "I'll kiss thy foot. I'll swear myself thy subject." (154). Stephano gladly accepts Caliban's offer and they head off to see all the wonders of the island. 2.2.5 Tempest Act III, Scene i The curtain reopens on Prospero's part of the island. Ferdinand enters the stage carrying wood, a task given to him by Prospero. He complains at first that his task is difficult, but later clarifies what drives him:

The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead, and makes my labours pleasures.

O, she is Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed, And he's composed of harshness. Prospero and Miranda enter on the other side and observe him. Miranda laments that he is working so hard. Ferdinand tells her that he will be working until dusk, and she tells him to sit down while she does some of his work. Ferdinand refuses to let her do his work and Prospero observes from a distance "Poor worm, thou art infected! / This visitation shows it.". Miranda tells Ferdinand her name, against her father's order. Ferdinand exclaims that her beauty is perfect. Miranda tells him that she has never seen another woman and does not know

what one should look like. She pauses her speech, remembering her father's commands. Ferdinand tells her that it is for her sake that he so patiently accepts his servitude. She asks if he loves her, and he replies: O heaven, O earth, bear witness to this sound, and crown what I profess with kind event If I speak true; if hollowly, invert what best is boded me to mischief: I, Beyond all limit of what else i' th' world, Do love, prize, honour you.

Miranda weeps in joy. Ferdinand asks why she weeps and she says that she is unworthy but his to marry if he wishes. He bends on his knee in front of her and accepts her offer. They part and exit to the wings. Prospero remains and moves downstage. He expresses pleasure at the circumstances and retires to his plotting. Prospero exits, the curtain descends, and the stage is reset. Summary Act Three opens with Ferdinand performing tasks against his will by his captor, Prospero. He tells himself that, although he is not use to such hard labour, he actually likes the work because he knows that Miranda "weeps" when she sees him suffer. Miranda appears, followed by Prospero who hides from their site. She offers to carry the logs for him but he refuses her help, insisting that he would rather break his back than see her undergo "such dishonor". They declare their love for one another and agree to be wed as soon as possible. Prospero is delighted by what he is hearing and, now sure that Ferdinand is worthy of his daughter, he returns to his books and to his other pressing business with Antonio and the King. 2.2.6 The Tempest Act III, Scene ii The curtain reopens on the part of the island where Caliban met Trinculo and Stephano. Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo reenter the stage, still drinking. Stephano and Trinculo play off each other's drunkenness and discuss their fortunes. They know that there are at least two other people on the island (Prospero and Miranda). Trinculo mocks Caliban, who calls Stephano 'lord'. Caliban beseeches Stephano who threatens Trinculo. Ariel enters, invisible to the characters, as Caliban recounts the state of the island:

CALIBAN:

As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island.

ARIEL: Thou liest. CALIBAN (to Trinculo): Thou liest, thou jesting monkey, thou! I would my valiant master would destroy thee. I do not lie Ariel impersonates Trinculo as he flits around the trio. Caliban tells the pair that Prospero took the island by sorcery. Stephano asks how they would be able to defeat him, and Caliban says that he could be killed in his sleep.

Ariel says that he is lying, again impersonating Trinculo. The audience can watch Ariel as he mocks the three men.

Caliban erupts in anger and asks Stephano to avenge him. Stephano threatens Trinculo who asks

"What, what did I? I did nothing! I'll go farther off." Trinculo moves upstage and Ariel remains. Stephano asks him if he said that Caliban lied and Ariel interjects again, saying that Stephano lies. He beats Trinculo who claims that the trouble has come from drinking. Stephano tells him to stand farther off. Caliban tells him that Prospero usually naps in the afternoon and that they should sneak in and burn all his books. He also tells them about Prospero's daughter: And that most deeply to consider is The beauty of his daughter. He himself Calls her nonpareil. I never saw a woman But only Sycorax, my dam, and she; But she as far surpasseth Sycorax As great'st does least. Stephano pledges to kill Prospero and says that he will be king alongside Miranda as queen. Trinculo agrees to the plot and accepts Stephano's apology. They drink to the plot and Ariel plans to tell Prospero. He plays music and the men become alarmed. Caliban assures them that they shouldn't be afraid of the noises, because he hears them all the time:

Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments Will him

about mine ears; and sometime voices, That if I then had waked after long sleep, Will make me sleep again,

and then in dreaming The clouds methought would open and show riches Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked I cried to dream again.

The three men exit and Ariel continues to play music. He follows the men into the wings as the curtain falls. Summary

The attention turns once again to Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo. Stephano is having trouble controlling Caliban, who hates Trinculo because he continues to refer to Caliban as 'the monster'. Caliban proposes that together they overpower and kill Prospero and steal his books and his daughter. Stephano agrees to the plan, imagining himself as ruler over the island and the husband of Miranda. But Ariel has been listening to their conversation and he rushes to tell Prospero.

2.2.7 The Tempest Act III, Scene iii The stage is reset for another part of the island. Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian and Francisco enter the stage. Gonzalo states that he needs a rest from their long walk. Alonso tells him that he cannot blame them and that he has almost given up hope of finding his son. Antonio tells Sebastian that this forlorn hope is in their favor. They plan to attack again that night. Music springs up from the orchestra and amorphous shapes carry in the makings of a banquet. These performers are dressed loosely in sheets and cloaks. Alonso cries out in surprise and so does Sebastian:

A living drollery! Now I will believe that there are unicorns; that in Arabia There is one tree, the phoenix' throne, one phoenix At this hour reigning there.

Antonio also expresses his surprise and Gonzalo wonders whether or not any one in Naples would believe his account of such events. Prospero, in the shadows, says that some of those men present "are worse than devils." Alonso doesn't trust such apparitions but soon they disappear. The men react at the disappearance of the shapes with curiosity about the food. No one dares to taste it, for fear of enchantment. Gonzalo tries to comfort them and so does the King. Suddenly, Ariel enters, dressed as a harpy, and the performers carry off the banquet. Ariel speaks from the side as the men all cower together: You are three men of sin, whom destiny, That hath to instrument this lower world And what is in't, the never-surfeited sea Hath caused to belch up you, and on this island Where man doth not inhabit-you 'mongst men Being most unfit to live. I have made you mad; Two of them draw their swords, but Ariel calls them fools and proceeds to recount the tale of Prospero's expulsion from Milan. He tells Antonio and Alonso that they remain guilty. He tells the group that their worse fate will befall them on the island. Ariel exits the stage and the shapes depart with the table. Prospero speaks from the shadows and observes that through their fear they are now under his control. Alonso tells Gonzalo what he has heard and exits. Sebastian and Antonio soon follow him. Gonzalo speaks to Adrian:

All three of them are desperate: their great guilt, like poison given to work a great time after, Now 'gins to bite their spirits. I do beseech you That are of suppler joints, follow them swiftly, And hinder them from what this ecstasy May now provoke them to.

The rest of the players exit, the curtain falls, and the stage is reset. Summary Meanwhile, King Alonso and his courtiers have been searching the island for Prince Ferdinand. Suddenly, magical creatures bring forth a banquet and place the food in front of the hungry men. Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio run toward the feast, but just as they are about to eat, Ariel appears, disguised as a harpy, and the table vanishes in a burst of thunder and lightning. Ariel accuses them of being sinful men and tells them that just Fate has caused their shipwreck and taken Alonso's son away from him. He also tells them that they will be tormented until they change their evil ways and lead "a clear life" (82). Ariel disappears and the mystical creatures again appear, dancing to the soft music that now fills the air, and again carrying the table. The King decides to keep looking for his son and die along side of him, and Antonio and Sebastian follow him, foolishly convinced that they can destroy the spirits on the island. Gonzalo, worried that they have gone mad, follows them, hoping to "hinder them from what this ecstasy/May now provoke them to". 2.2.8

The Tempest Act IV, Scene i The stage is set with Prospero's hut as the curtain opens. Prospero, Miranda and Ferdinand enter. Prospero is in the process of apologizing to Ferdinand for having put him through such tasks. He tells him that as compensation he will allow the marriage between the youths: ...

All thy vexations Were but my trials of thy love, and thou Hast strangely stood the test. Here, afore heaven I ratify this my rich gift. O Ferdinand,

Do not smile at me that I boast of her, For thou shalt find that she will outstrip all praise And make it halt behind her. Ferdinand agrees with his father-in-law to be who threatens that he must not sleep with her before they are married. He swears an oath to Prospero and then Ariel appears from off stage. Prospero commands Ariel to "Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple/ Some vanity of mine art." Ariel exits the stage to gather some of his fellow spirits. Prospero turns to Ferdinand and asks for a stronger vow. Ferdinand swears again and Prospero recalls Ariel. What follows is a scene played out by the spirits where they take on the roles of classical deities to bless the marriage. A spirit called Iris enters the stage. In her speech she announces the arrivals and the attributes of Ceres and Juno. Ceres asks Iris why she has been summoned and Iris says there is "a contract of true love to celebrate." Ceres asks if Venus or Cupid are now with Juno, and Iris says that they are not. Juno is the goddess representing marriage itself and subsequent childbirth, while Venus and her son Cupid represent lust. Juno arrives and speaks: How does my bounteous sister? Go with me To bless this twain, that they may prosperous be, And honoured in their issue. Juno sings for the blessing of their children and Ceres sings for the fruitfulness of their lands and the abundance of food. Ferdinand observes and is awe-struck, saying "Let me live here forever/ So rare a wondered father and wife/ Makes this place a paradise.". Iris calls out river nymphs to bless the marriage and a myriad of shapes and forms enter the stage. Suddenly, Prospero remembers that Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo are planning to kill him, so he stops the revelry. Ferdinand remarks: This is strange. Your father's in some passion That works him strangely. MIRANDA: Never till this day Saw I him so touched with anger, so distempered. Prospero speaks to Ferdinand, noticing his concern, and tells him not to be dismayed: ... These our actors, As I foretold you, were all spirits, and Are melted into air, into thin air, And, like the baseless fabric of vision, The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, The solemn temples, the great globe itself, Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff As dreams are made on, and our little life Is rounded with sleep. After this famous monologue, the two youths leave the stage and Prospero calls Ariel. Ariel asks him what he wants and he says that they need to go to Caliban. Ariel recounts that the three companions were drunk and he led them into a briar patch. Prospero sends Ariel to fetch Caliban: A devil, a born devil, on whose nature Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains, Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost And as with age his body uglier grows, So his mind cankers. I will plague them all, Even to roaring. Ariel exits and then reenters guiding Stephano, Caliban and Trinculo. Prospero and Ariel remain invisible to the trio, but not to the audience. They stand on the side of the stage. The two men verbally assault Caliban for having led them astray. They have lost their bottles of alcohol Stephano says that "There is not only disgrace and dishonor in that,/ monster, but an infinite loss.". Caliban assuages their anger and asks them to be quiet. Ariel has draped some clothing on the tree and Trinculo takes a robe and puts it on. Caliban tells him to leave it alone because they should kill Prospero before they do anything else. Stephano tells him to quiet down and he takes an article of clothing from the tree that is in the center of the stage. The two continue to dress themselves in the royal clothing, offering some to Caliban: I will have none on't. We shall lose our time And all be turned to barnacles, or to apes With foreheads villainous low. Caliban eventually submits to their pleas with the promise of more wine. Prospero calls out to the spirits of Mountain and Fury and racks the conspirators with pains. They run off stage. Prospero exits with Ariel and the curtain falls.

Summary Prospero has consented to the union of Miranda and Ferdinand and now prepares a wedding masque for the two lovers. He cautions Ferdinand not to "break her virgin knot" (15) until they are legitimately married. Soft music fills the air and three sprites pretending to be the goddesses, Iris, Ceres, and Juno, descend to participate in the celebration. Other nymphs appear and they all dance and make merry. But the festivities are cut short when they hear a "hollow and confused" noise coming from outside Prospero's dwelling. It is the sound of Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo, still drunk and ready to kill Prospero. Prospero dismisses the sprites and tells Ferdinand and Miranda: "Our revels are now ended." Prospero orders Ariel to bring out all his goods because he knows that Stephano and Trinculo will be enticed by the finery. Ariel enters once again, his arms loaded with beautiful apparel. Prospero and Ariel watch in the shadows as Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo enter Prospero's cell, and sure enough, they are distracted by the fine clothes. Stephano and Trinculo try them on, despite the pleading of Caliban who knows that Prospero will catch them. From outside a noise of wild dogs are heard. Prospero has summoned the spirits of the island to take the shape of fierce hunting hounds to chase the villains out of Prospero's cell. Comically the three men run screaming from the cell, and Prospero and Ariel remain. Prospero tells Ariel that his enemies are now all at his mercy and that he will soon have freedom from the island.

2.2.9 The Tempest Act V, Scene i The stage is reset. The curtain opens. Prospero and Ariel reenter the stage. Prospero says that his plans are coming to a climax. He asks Ariel how well the King and his followers are doing. Ariel recounts that they are distracted still by the earlier spectacle and that "If you now beheld them, your affections/ Would become tender."

Prospero

agrees with Ariel and continues to say that if he were a different kind of man, he would not be so forgiving of his transgressors: Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick, Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury Do I take part. The rarer action is In virtue than in vengeance. Prospero orders Ariel to retrieve the crew. Ariel exits the stage. Meanwhile, he calls out the spirits of the island to help him, pledging that with success he will give up magic. Solemn music starts playing and Ariel enters with Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, Antonio,

Adrian and Francisco. Prospero speaks, though he is not seen by them. He addresses each character, the noble Gonzalo, contriving Alonso and Alonso's brother Sebastian. Prospero commands Ariel to retrieve his hat and rapier. He returns singing and Prospero dresses. He promises Ariel his freedom again. The ship is still invisible with all its crew sleeping below the deck. Ariel exits and Prospero addresses the group, "Behold, sir King,/ The wronged Duke of Milan, Prospero" He embraces Alonso and welcomes him. Alonso is amazed, but he does not quite believe that this is real. Nevertheless, he asks for forgiveness: I fear a madness held me. This must crave, An if this be at all, a most strange story.

Thy dukedom I resign, and do entreat Thou pardon me my wrongs.

But how should Prospero Be living, and be here? Prospero embraces Gonzalo. Then he addresses Sebastian and Antonio as traitors. He calls his brother wicked and pledges to restore his own dukedom. Alonso asks him to tell the story of his survival on the island where he lost his own son. Prospero tells him that the loss of his son is not so grave because he, too, has lost his daughter. Alonso exclaims: A daughter? O heavens, that they were living both in Naples, The King and Queen there!

That they were, I wish Myself were mudded in that oozy bed Where my son lies. When did you lose your daughter?

Prospero tells him that he lost his daughter in the last tempest. He tells the group that their senses must have been altered by the storm and he reveals Ferdinand and Miranda playing chess in a curtained-off part of the stage. The two have not been aware of what has been happening on the rest of the island. Ferdinand comes forward and kneels to his father, whom he assumed was dead. Alonso exclaims in joy and Miranda is also surprised by the spectacle:

O wonder! How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world

That has such people in't!

Alonso asks his son who the girl is with whom he plays. Ferdinand tells his father that she is Prospero's daughter and that he has chosen her as his wife. Alonso says that this is all right. Gonzalo asks heaven for a blessing on the couple and asks, "Was Milan thrust from Milan that his issue/ Should become kings of Naples?" Alonso joins hands with the children and prays for their happiness. Ariel enters with the Master of the ship and the Boatswain. Gonzalo cries out: O look, sir, look, here is more of us! I prophesied if a gallows were on land This fellow could not drown. (To Boatswain) Now, blasphemy, That swear'st grace o'erboard, not an oath on the shore? Hast thou no mouth by land? What is the news? The boatswain tells them that the ship is in fine condition. Ariel secretly tells Prospero that this is his doing. Alonso asks the Boatswain how this came to be. The boatswain recounts the events of the storm: they were all below deck thrashing about and suddenly they awoke to a clear sky and an ordered ship. Alonso is in disbelief. He questions Prospero, but Prospero admonishes him to not worry about it: Sir, my liege,

Do not infest your mind with beating on The strangeness of this business. At picked leisure, Which shall be shortly single, I'll resolve you, Which to you shall seem probable, of every These happened accidents;

till then, be cheerful And think of each thing well. Prospero tells Ariel to set Caliban and the conspirators free. Ariel exits. The three enter the stage in their new found raiment. Sebastian and Antonio laugh at the scene and ask who these men are. Prospero explained that two of the men are from their ship. Alonso recognizes Stephano as his drunken butler. They poke fun at the trio and Prospero sends them away granting Caliban a pardon. Caliban accepts graciously: Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter, And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass Was I to take this drunkard for a god, And worship this dull fool!

Prospero invites everyone back to his lodge for the night. He plans to leave in the morning and hold the wedding in Naples. He promises safe winds on the voyage home and tells Ariel that this is his last command. Prospero ends the play with his monologue. He says that his magic is over since he has his dukedom back. He asks for a soft wind to take him home and end his years of exile. The curtain falls on the final scene of the play. Summary The final act opens three days after the great tempest that destroyed the boat. Prospero, clothed in his magic robes, hears a plea from Ariel on behalf of the stranded men. Ariel reports that King Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio have gone mad, while Gonzalo suffers mental anguish as he mourns for the victims. Prospero is moved by Ariel's words and decides that he will show them the mercy that they did not show him twelve years ago. He sends Ariel to fetch the men, and in a soliloquy he reveals that, once he restores the sanity of his enemies, he will forever renounce magic: "But this rough magic/I here abjure" (50-1). He breaks his magical staff, declares that he will drown his books, and exchanges his magician's robes for the clothing he wore when he was the Duke of Milan. Amidst solemn music Ariel leads Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian, and Francisco into Prospero's cell. They are in a trance and stand around a circle that Prospero has made. Prospero tells Ariel that he is free from all further obligations, and that he will miss him when he returns to Milan. Prospero breaks the spell that holds the men and Gonzalo is the first to speak: "

Some heavenly power guide us/Out of this fearful country." (105-6)

Prospero identifies himself and Alonso, who has seen the error of his ways, repents and resigns the dukedom to Prospero. Alonso is reunited with Ferdinand and he two fathers seal their peace with the marriage of their children. Alonso and Sebastian are not repentant, but they must comply with the orders of the King to restore Prospero as Duke of Milan. Prospero forgives Antonio but does not reconcile with him, saying: "For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother/Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive thy rankest fault" (131-2). Ariel enters with the Boatswain and the Master of the ship, and they report that, to their amazement, the boat has been fully restored and is ready to set sail. Ariel quickly fetches Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo, who are still drunk, and Prospero confronts them. He tells Caliban that he can now be king of the island and Caliban regrets ever thinking that Stephano was his master. He calls himself a "thrice- double ass" (296) for worshipping the dull fool. Prospero invites the King and his courtiers to hear the story of his life on the island, as Ariel (as his final task for Prospero) prepares the proper sailing weather to guide Prospero back to Italy.

2.3 Major Themes of the Play Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. 2.3.1

The Illusion of Justice The Tempest tells a fairly straightforward story involving an unjust act, the usurpation of Prospero's throne by his brother, and Prospero's quest to re-establish justice by restoring himself to power. However, the idea of justice that the play works toward seems highly subjective, since this idea represents the view of one character who controls the fate of all the other characters. Though Prospero presents himself as a victim of injustice working to right the wrongs that have been done to him,

Prospero's

idea of justice and injustice is somewhat hypocritical—though he is furious with his brother for taking his power, he has no qualms about enslaving Ariel and Caliban in order to achieve his ends. At many moments throughout the play, Prospero's sense of justice seems extremely one- sided and mainly involves what is good for Prospero. Moreover, because the play offers no notion of higher order or justice to supersede Prospero's interpretation of events, the play is morally ambiguous. As the play progresses, however,

it becomes more and more involved with the idea of creativity and art, and Prospero's role begins to mirror more explicitly the role of an author creating a story around him. With this metaphor in mind, and especially if we accept Prospero as a surrogate for Shakespeare himself, Prospero's sense of justice begins to seem, if not perfect, at least sympathetic.

Moreover, the means he uses to achieve his idea of justice mirror the machinations of the artist, who also seeks to enable others to see his view of the world.

Playwrights arrange their stories in such a way that their own idea of justice is imposed upon events. In *The Tempest*, the author is in the play, and the fact that he establishes his idea of justice and creates a happy ending for all the characters becomes a cause for celebration, not criticism. By using magic and tricks that echo the special effects and spectacles of the theater, Prospero gradually persuades the other characters and the audience of the rightness of his case. As he does so, the ambiguities surrounding his methods slowly resolve themselves. Prospero forgives his enemies, releases his slaves, and relinquishes his magic power, so that, at the end of the play, he is only an old man whose work has been responsible for all the audience's pleasure. The establishment of Prospero's idea of justice becomes less a commentary on justice in life than on the nature of morality in art. Happy endings are possible, Shakespeare seems to say, because the creativity of artists can create them, even if the moral values that establish the happy ending originate from nowhere but the imagination of the artist.

2.3.2 The Difficulty of Distinguishing "Men" from "Monsters"

Upon seeing Ferdinand for the first time, Miranda says that he is "the third man that e'er I saw" (I.ii.449). The other two are, presumably, Prospero and Caliban. In their first conversation with Caliban, however, Miranda and Prospero say very little that shows they consider him to be human. Miranda reminds Caliban that before she taught him language, he gabbled "like / A thing most brutish" (I.ii.359–360) and Prospero says that he gave Caliban "human care" (I.ii.349), implying that this was something Caliban ultimately did not deserve. Caliban's exact nature continues to be slightly ambiguous later. In Act IV, scene i, reminded of Caliban's plot, Prospero refers to him as a "devil, a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (IV.i.188–189). Miranda and Prospero both have contradictory views of Caliban's humanity. On the one hand, they think that their education of him has lifted him from his formerly brutish status. On the other hand, they seem to see him as inherently brutish. His devilish nature can never be overcome by nurture, according to Prospero. Miranda expresses a similar sentiment in Act I, scene ii: "thy vile race, / Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures / Could not abide to be with" (I.ii.361–363). The inhuman part of Caliban drives out the human part, the "good nature," that is imposed on him. Caliban claims that he was kind to Prospero, and that Prospero repaid that kindness by imprisoning him (see I.ii.347). In contrast, Prospero claims that he stopped being kind to Caliban once Caliban had tried to rape Miranda (I.ii.347–351). Which character the audience decides to believe depends on whether it views Caliban as inherently brutish, or as made brutish by oppression. The play leaves the matter ambiguous. Caliban balances all of his eloquent speeches, such as his curses in Act I, scene ii and his speech about the isle's "noises" in Act III, scene ii, with the most degrading kind of drunken, servile behavior. But Trinculo's speech upon first seeing Caliban (II.ii.18–38), the longest speech in the play, reproaches too harsh a view of Caliban and blurs the distinction between men and monsters. In England, which he visited once, Trinculo says, Caliban could be shown off for money: "There would this monster make a man. Any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian" (II.ii.28–31). What seems most monstrous in these sentences is not the "dead Indian," or "any strange beast," but the cruel voyeurism of those who capture and gape at them.

2.3.3 The Allure of Ruling a Colony

The nearly uninhabited island presents the sense of infinite possibility to almost everyone who lands there. Prospero has found it, in its isolation, an ideal place to school his daughter. Sycorax, Caliban's mother, worked her magic there after she was exiled from Algeria. Caliban, once alone on the island, now Prospero's slave, laments that he had been his own king (I.ii.344–345). As he attempts to comfort Alonso, Gonzalo imagines a utopian society on the island, over which he would rule (II.i.148–156). In Act III, scene ii, Caliban suggests that Stephano kill Prospero, and Stephano immediately envisions his own reign: "Monster, I will kill this man. His daughter and I will be King and Queen— save our graces!—and Trinculo and thyself shall be my viceroy" (III.ii.101–103). Stephano particularly looks forward to taking advantage of the spirits that make "noises" on the isle; they will provide music for his kingdom for free. All these characters envision the island as a space of freedom and unrealized potential. The tone of the play, however, toward the hopes of the would-be colonizers is vexed at best. Gonzalo's utopian vision in Act II, scene i is undercut by a sharp retort from the usually foolish Sebastian and Antonio. When Gonzalo says that there would be no commerce or work or "sovereignty" in his society, Sebastian replies, "yet he would be king on't," and Antonio adds, "The latter end of his commonwealth forgets the beginning" (II.i.156–157). Gonzalo's fantasy thus involves him ruling the island while seeming not to rule it, and in this he becomes a kind of parody of Prospero.

While there are many representatives of the colonial impulse in the play, the colonized have only one representative: Caliban. We might develop sympathy for him at first, when Prospero seeks him out merely to abuse him, and when we see him tormented by spirits. However, this sympathy is made more difficult by his willingness to abase himself before Stephano in Act II, scene ii. Even as Caliban plots to kill one colonial master (Prospero) in Act III, scene ii, he sets up another (Stephano).

The urge to rule and the urge to be ruled seem inextricably intertwined.

2.4

Motifs of the Play

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, and literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes. 2.4.1

Masters and Servants

Nearly every scene in the play either explicitly or implicitly portrays a relationship between a figure that possesses power and a figure that is subject to that power. The play explores the master-servant dynamic most harshly in cases in which the harmony of the relationship is threatened or disrupted, as by the rebellion of a servant or the ineptitude of a master. For instance, in the opening scene, the "servant" (the Boatswain) is dismissive and angry toward his "masters" (the noblemen), whose ineptitude threatens to lead to a shipwreck in the storm. From then on, master-servant relationships like these dominate the play: Prospero and Caliban; Prospero and Ariel; Alonso and his nobles; the nobles and Gonzalo; Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban; and so forth. The play explores the psychological and social dynamics of power relationships from a number of contrasting angles, such as the generally positive relationship between Prospero and Ariel, the generally negative relationship between Prospero and Caliban, and the treachery in Alonso's relationship to his nobles. 2.4.2

Water and Drowning The play is awash with references to water. The Mariners enter "wet" in Act I, scene i, and Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo enter "all wet," after being led by Ariel into a swampy lake (IV.i.193). Miranda's fear for the lives of the sailors in the "wild waters" (I.ii.2) causes her to weep. Alonso, believing his son dead because of his own actions against Prospero, decides in Act III, scene iii to drown himself. His language is echoed by Prospero in Act V, scene i when the magician promises that, once he has reconciled with his enemies, "deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book" (

V. i.56–57). These are only a few of the references to water in the play. Occasionally, the references to water are used to compare characters. For example, the echo of Alonso's desire to drown himself in Prospero's promise to drown his book calls attention to the similarity of the sacrifices each man must make. Alonso must be willing to give up his life in order to become truly penitent and to be forgiven for his treachery against Prospero. Similarly, in order to rejoin the world he has been driven from, Prospero must be willing to give up his magic and his power.

Perhaps the most important overall effect of this water motif is to heighten the symbolic importance of the tempest itself. It is as though the water from that storm runs through the language and action of the entire play—just as the tempest itself literally and crucially affects the lives and actions of all the characters. 2.4.3 **Mysterious Noises** The isle is indeed, as Caliban says, "full of noises" (III.ii.130). The play begins with a "tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning" (I.i.1, stage direction), and the splitting of the ship is signaled in part by "a confused noise within" (I.i.54, stage direction). Much of the noise of the play is musical, and much of the music is Ariel's. Ferdinand is led to Miranda by Ariel's music. Ariel's music also wakes Gonzalo just as Antonio and Sebastian are about to kill Alonso in Act II, scene i. Moreover, the magical banquet of Act III, scene iii is laid out to the tune of "Solemn and strange music" (III.iii.18, stage direction), and Juno and Ceres sing in the wedding masque (IV.i.106–117). The noises, sounds, and music of the play are made most significant by Caliban's speech about the noises of the island at III.ii.130–138. Shakespeare shows Caliban in the thrall of magic, which the theater audience also experiences as the illusion of thunder, rain, invisibility. The action of *The Tempest* is very simple. What gives the play most of its hypnotic, magical atmosphere is the series of dreamlike events it stages, such as the tempest, the magical banquet, and the wedding masque. Accompanied by music, these present a feast for the eye and the ear and convince us of the magical glory of Prospero's enchanted isle. 2.5 **Symbols In the Play** Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. 2.5.1 **The Tempest** The tempest that begins the play, and which puts all of Prospero's enemies at his disposal, symbolizes the suffering Prospero endured, and which he wants to inflict on others. All of those shipwrecked are put at the mercy of the sea, just as Prospero and his infant daughter were twelve years ago, when some loyal friends helped them out to sea in a ragged little boat (see I.ii.144–151). Prospero must make his enemies suffer as he has

suffered so that they will learn from their suffering, as he has from his. The tempest is also a symbol of Prospero's magic, and of the frightening, potentially malevolent side of his power.

2.5.2 The Game of Chess The object of chess is to capture the king. That, at the simplest level, is the symbolic significance of Prospero revealing Ferdinand and Miranda playing chess in the final scene. Prospero has caught the king—Alonso—and reprimanded him for his treachery. In doing so, Prospero has married Alonso's son to his own daughter without the king's knowledge, a deft political maneuver that assures Alonso's support because Alonso will have no interest in upsetting a dukedom to which his own son is heir. This is the final move in Prospero's plot, which began with the tempest. He has maneuvered the different passengers of Alonso's ship around the island with the skill of a great chess player. Caught up in their game, Miranda and Ferdinand also symbolize something ominous about Prospero's power. They do not even notice the others staring at them for a few lines. "Sweet lord, you play me false," Miranda says, and Ferdinand assures her that he "would not for the world" do so (V.i.174–176). The theatrical tableau is almost too perfect: Ferdinand and Miranda, suddenly and unexpectedly revealed behind a curtain, playing chess and talking gently of love and faith, seem entirely removed from the world around them. Though he has promised to relinquish his magic, Prospero still seems to see his daughter as a mere pawn in his game.

2.5.3 Prospero's Books Like the tempest, Prospero's books are a symbol of his power. "Remember / First to possess his books," Caliban says to Stephano and Trinculo, "for without them / He's but a sot" (III.ii.86–88). The books are also, however, a symbol of Prospero's dangerous desire to withdraw entirely from the world. It was his devotion to study that put him at the mercy of his ambitious brother, and it is this same devotion to study that has made him content to raise Miranda in isolation. Yet, Miranda's isolation has made her ignorant of where she came from (see I.ii.33–36), and Prospero's own isolation provides him with little company. In order to return to the world where his knowledge means something more than power, Prospero must let go of his magic.

2.6 Summing Up In this unit we discussed some important scenes of the play. It also shed light on the various themes that occur in the play time and again. Various motifs used in the play, namely, the master and servant motif, the water and the drowning motif and the mysterious noises were also discussed at length. The unit also traced the significance of the various symbols that were used in the play like the Tempest, the game of chess Prospero's book.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Discuss the important motifs that occur in the play.
2. Shed light on the theme of 'The Illusion of Justice'
3. Give an analysis of the following scenes:
 - a. Act II, Scene ii
 - b. Act V, Scene i

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Unit 3: The Tempest- III 3.0 Introduction 3.1 Objectives 3.2 Character Analysis of Major Characters: 3.2.1 Prospero 3.2.2 Caliban 3.2.3 Miranda 3.2.4 Gonzalo 3.2.5 Ariel 3.2.6 King Alonso of Naples 3.2.7 Ferdinand 3.2.8 Sebastian and Antonio 3.3 Dramatic Structure 3.3.1 Post Colonial Interpretation 3.3.2 Feminist Interpretation 3.4 Summing Up 3.0

Introduction In the previous two units you were given an introduction to Shakespeare. You examined his career as a playwright, learned about the literary qualities of Shakespeare's plays like his stagecraft and writing style. You were also given a critical analysis of the various acts to The Tempest. In this unit we will discuss some of the major characters of the play. Furthermore, the play will also be examined through Post Colonial and Feminist lenses.

3.1 Objectives After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Understanding William Shakespeare's craft and technique of writing
- Analyze the main characters of The Tempest.
- Interpret The Tempest through some modern literary theories like Post Colonialism and Feminism

3.2 Character Analysis of Major Characters 3.2.1 Prospero Prospero is the ousted Duke of Milan who has been living in exile on a remote island for the past twelve years. He is also a powerful magician, father of Miranda, master of Ariel and Caliban. Let us examine some of the major traits of Prospero's characters: Prospero's Magic Throughout the play Prospero uses his magic to whip up a dramatic storm, to put on a dazzling wedding entertainment, to bully his servants, to manipulate his enemies, and to orchestrate his daughter's marriage to the Prince of Naples. In other words, our favorite magician is a pretty powerful guy and quite a freak. Still, before Prospero landed on the island, his devotion to the study of magic got him into big trouble. While Prospero's nose was buried in his extensive library, his snaky brother managed to steal his title ("Duke of Milan") and get him thrown out of Italy. So, before Prospero was physically isolated on the isle, he did a pretty good job of isolating himself socially by making his "art" (magic) his number one priority. Is Shakespeare trying to tell us something about the dangers of letting one's devotion to mastering his craft consume him? Does Prospero's Art symbolize Shakespeare's Art? If you think Shakespeare is suggesting that being an artist makes for a lonely life, then you'll probably want to think about whether or not Prospero is a stand-in for Shakespeare himself. Well, Prospero uses magic to manipulate and dazzle, just like Shakespeare. A lot of literary critics think Prospero manipulates the action of *The Tempest* like a skillful director. Plus, when Prospero renounces his magic, Shakespeare knows *The Tempest* is the last play he will write alone. As the sorcerer Prospero breaks his staff, Shakespeare puts down his pen and it's as though he's speaking about his own retirement from the theater when Prospero says, "Now my charms are all o'erthrown, / And what strength I have's mine own" (Epilogue). He asks only that we appreciate what he's done, and humbly takes his leave of us to disappear quietly, letting his words work magic long after he has gone. From Bitter Old Man to Merciful Human Being But not everyone thinks of Prospero as a stand-in for William Shakespeare. In fact, some audiences see Prospero as nothing but a bitter tyrant. He's taken Caliban's island in return for his own lost title, he manipulates his daughter, is cruel to Ferdinand and Caliban, and kind to Ariel only when the spirit is totally subservient. He also puts his enemies through all kinds of hell to gather them up so he can judge them. Although Prospero does everything in his power to confront his enemies, he's no More importantly, instead of seeking the kind of blood-and-guts vengeance that could have turned *The Tempest* into a "tragedy," Prospero ultimately discovers that the capacity for mercy and forgiveness is what makes us human. After learning about the shipwreck survivors' pitiful state, Prospero declares "the rarer action is/ In virtue than in vengeance" (5.1.2). This is a pretty big deal, Shmoopsters. By this point in his career, Shakespeare made a name for himself writing bumper plays like *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, where violence and suffering are the names of the game. Yet, in *Prospero*, Shakespeare creates a figure who decides to forgive his enemies even though they have betrayed in the worst possible way. Does this mean Shakespeare has gone soft on us by the time he pens what is most likely the last play he wrote entirely by himself? We'll leave that for you to decide. Prospero's Power Prospero possesses magical powers and is able to conjure spirits and nymphs to perform tasks. With Ariel's help, he conjures the tempest at the start of the play. Prospero is quite a foreboding character dealing out punishments and treating his servants with contempt, raising questions about his morality and fairness. Both Ariel and Caliban want to be free of their master which suggests he is not easy to work for. Ariel and Caliban represent the two sides of Prospero's personality – he can be kind and generous but there is also a darker side to him. Prospero is accused by Caliban of stealing his island and thus usurping power like his brother. Prospero's power in *The Tempest* is knowledge and his beloved books demonstrate this these inform his magic. Prospero's Forgiveness Having been wronged by many of the characters, he graciously forgives them. Prospero's desire to rule the island reflects his brother Antonio's desire to rule Milan – they go about realizing their desire in similar ways but Prospero absolves himself at the end of the play by setting Ariel free and forgiving his persecutors.

3.2.2 Caliban "Hag-born" "whelp," not "honoured with human shape." "Demi-devil." "Poor credulous monster." "Hag-seed." "Strange fish." These are just a few descriptions of Caliban, one of the most debated figures in all of Shakespeare. Is this cursing, would-be rapist and wannabe killer nothing but a monster? Or, is this belligerent, iambic pentameter speaking slave worthy of our sympathy? Is Caliban a response to Montaigne's vision of the "noble savage"? Is he symbolic of the victims of colonial expansion? Critical interpretations of Caliban are wildly different and have changed dramatically over the years. In fact, scholars get pretty fired up about how this character should be interpreted. Before we get carried away, let's start with what we do know. Who or What is Caliban? Caliban is the island's only native. As Prospero tells us, he is the product of the witch Sycorax's with the devil and Caliban was "littered" (a word usually used to describe animals being born, like kittens) on the island after Sycorax was booted out of her home in Algiers. So, Caliban's life didn't exactly get off to a good start. So, was he born bad, or did something happen in his life to turn him into a "thing most brutish"? We know that after Prospero and Miranda washed up on shore, Caliban seems to have had a pretty decent relationship with the old magician. To Prospero Caliban says:

When thou camest first, Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me Water with berries in't, and teach me how To name the bigger light, and how the less, That burn by day and night: and then I loved thee And show'd

thee all the qualities o' the isle, The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile-- (1.2.3)

In other words, Caliban showed Prospero how to survive on the island and Prospero took Caliban under his wing and taught him to speak. (Apparently, Caliban had no language before this.) We even learn that Prospero treated Caliban "with human care" and let him stay at his pad. Caliban, we learn, tried to rape Miranda in an attempt to "people" the isle with a bunch of little Calibans. That's pretty inexcusable, so it's clear we're supposed to be repulsed by Caliban's monstrous behavior and it's easy to see why Prospero treats him like dirt. Yet, at the same time, Caliban is also a figure who can be read as a victim of Prospero's tyranny. When Caliban declares, "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother" (1.2.3), we're reminded that Prospero basically took over the island and made Caliban his slave. Caliban's also feisty and challenges Prospero's authority, which we can't help but admire, especially when Caliban points out that learning Prospero's language gave him the ability to "curse" his tormenter. Regardless of how repulsive Caliban may be, he's also the character who delivers some of the most beautiful and stunning speeches in the play. Let us check out the scene where Caliban describes the beauty and wonders of the island:

Be not afraid; the isle is full of noises, Sounds and sweet airs, that gives delight and hurt not.

Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices That, if I then had waked after long sleep, Will make me sleep again

What's in a Name? A lot of literary critics say that Caliban's name is an anagram or at least a play on the word can[n]ibal, a term derived from "carib" (as in the Caribbean), which became a European term used to describe flesh-eaters. If this is the case, then Caliban's name associates him with the kinds of "savage" man-eaters that Europeans were reading about in travel literature when Shakespeare wrote the play. It's also possible that Caliban's name may be a play on the Romany word "Cauliban," which means "black" or something associated with blackness. This makes some sense, especially given that Caliban is associated with darkness throughout the play. Prospero calls his slave "thou earth" (1.2.42) and says of him, "This thing of darkness / I acknowledge mine" (5.1.20). By the way, literary critic Kim F. Hall points out that

Caliban's association with "darkness and dirt" is the opposite of Miranda's association with purity and light. Is Caliban a Symbol of Colonial Injustice For a lot of critics, Caliban is symbolic of what happened to victims of European colonization in the centuries after Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*. We think Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T.

Vaughan do the best job of summing up this argument: Caliban stands for countless victims of European imperialism and colonization. Like Caliban (so the argument goes), colonized peoples were disinherited, exploited, and subjugated. Like him, they learned a conqueror's language and perhaps that conqueror's values. Like him, they endured enslavement and contempt by European usurpers and eventually rebelled. Like him, they were torn between their indigenous culture and the culture superimposed on it by their conquerors. This interpretation of Caliban can be pretty powerful and socially relevant, especially in film and stage productions where Caliban is portrayed as a colonized, New World subject. Yet, it's also important to remember, as Vaughan and Vaughan point out, that this "interpretation of Caliban is symbolic for what he represents to the observer, not for what Shakespeare may have had in mind." Born to Serve Regardless of whether or not we read Caliban as a victim of colonial injustice, he's most definitely a slave and, in some ways, the play suggests he was born to be one. Miranda says as much when she points out that she helped teach Caliban language: [...] I

pitied thee, Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage, Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes With words that made them known. But thy vile race, Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou Deservedly confined into this rock, Who hadst deserved more than a prison. (1.2.24)

In other words, Miranda suggests that Caliban's "vile race" and lack of language makes him deserving of his status as a slave. (This, of course, is exactly what European imperialists said about the people they colonized.) What's interesting is that even Caliban seems like he lives to serve. When he conspires with Stefano and Trinculo to kill Prospero, he promises to serve Stefano: I'll show thee every fertile inch o' th' island; And I will kiss thy foot: I prithee, be my god. 3.2.3 Miranda Miranda is the fourteen-year-old daughter of Prospero. (We know her age because her dad says she wasn't yet three years old when they landed on the island and twelve years have passed since then. After spending a dozen years on a remote island with her old man and the hideous slave Caliban, Miranda falls in love at first sight the moment she lays her eyes on the oh-so-dreamy Prince of Naples. Shakespeare also gives Miranda one of the most hopeful (and famous) lines in the play. Check out what Miranda says when she spots the shipwreck victims at the end of the play:

O, wonder! How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,

That has such people in't! Here, Miranda is the mouthpiece through which Shakespeare expresses the idea that human beings (and life in general) are pretty marvelous, despite the fact that we are all flawed creatures. Aldous Huxley liked this passage so much that he made the phrase "brave new world" the title of his famous book. We admit that Miranda is pretty naïve, but that's part of what makes such an endearing figure. In the play, she represents the guileless innocence of youth and, when she falls in love Ferdinand, her romantic union is the thing that will bring together Prospero and his former enemy, the King of Naples. When she has the chance, Miranda takes her fate into her own hands. She declares her love to Ferdinand, thinking her father still hates him. She doesn't know that Prospero secretly helped the situation along, but she's willing to do what she wants, even though it could get her into trouble with Daddy. When Prospero pretends to be mad that Miranda has fallen for Ferdinand, she totally stands up for herself: "My affections/ Are then most humble. I have no ambition to / To see a see a goodlier man". The girl isn't wise in the ways of the world, but she has a brave heart and a spirit to follow it. Miranda's most important personal qualities might be her ability to feel empathy and amazement. When we first meet her, she's frantically begging her father to have pity on the passengers of the storm-tossed ship, which is more than we can say for Prospero. In fact, she's so worked up that Prospero assures her "Be collected. / No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart / There's no harm done" (1.1.1). To be amazed in Shakespeare's day literally meant to be taken with terror – the word comes from how one would feel when facing a labyrinth, a literal maze. You'd be a bit scared, but maybe you'd be taken over by the wonder of this unknown thing, and brave enough to go into it anyway. Amazement might be the most fitting word for this girl – as she faces the unknown bravely, armed with her good courage and big heart, she finds innocent wonder and delight. Miranda's name literally means "that which must be admired" (from mirari – to admire). She looks on the world with a childlike wonder, which is more than naïveté and might actually just be the eyes of an artist, able to see the beauty in everything. Admiration is an important word for Miranda from the other side too, as she isn't the only one doing all the looking: she is much admired by those who look upon her. 3.2.4 Gonzalo In the play's dramatis personae (literally, a list of the "persons of the play"), we're told that Gonzalo is "an honest old counselor of Naples." He's travelling with the King's party when he's shipwrecked with the other passengers on Prospero's island. The thing to know about Gonzalo is that he's a really good guy with an optimistic outlook on life. The first time we meet Gonzalo, he's trying to break up a nasty argument between the royals and the mariners on deck during the tempest. While everyone around him is bickering and worrying about drowning, Gonzalo keeps his cool and says he's sure "good Fate" has something other than drowning in store for everyone on board the ship.

We also know that, when Prospero was booted out of Italy and set adrift with his infant daughter, Gonzalo was the one who made sure Prospero had enough food and water to survive. Gonzalo didn't just make sure Prospero would have supplies to physically sustain him, he also made sure Prospero had fancy linens and books – the kinds of things that would keep a guy like Prospero comfortable: By Providence divine. Some food we had and some fresh water that A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo, Out of his charity, being then appointed Master of this design, did give us, with Rich garments, linens, stuffs and necessaries, Which since have steaded much; so, of his gentleness, Knowing I loved my books, he furnish'd me From mine own library with volumes that I prize above my dukedom. After washing up on shore, Gonzalo is the one who reminds everybody else that they should be celebrating because they're alive: "Beseech you, sir, be merry. You have cause / So have we all, of joy; for our escape is much beyond our loss" (2.1.1). Gonzalo gives voice to the idea that, despite the (seeming) loss of the ship, the survivors can uncover something even greater. In fact, this seems to be one of the play's biggest messages. Check out what Gonzalo has to say at the play's end: In one voyage Did Claribel her husband find at Tunis, And Ferdinand, her brother, found a wife Where he himself was lost, Prospero his dukedom In a poor isle and all of us ourselves When no man was his own. (5.1.249-254) Literary critic Robert Langbaum writes that Gonzalo's speech sums up the philosophy of the genre of tragicomedy – "that we lose in order to recover something greater, that we die in order to be reborn to a better life." In other words, violence and tragedy are "all part of a providential design."

Notice the way Prospero associates Gonzalo with "fate"? Earlier, we saw how Gonzalo believes that "fate" determined whether or not he and the rest of the party would drown during the storm. Here, Prospero directly associates Gonzalo with the workings of "Providence divine," as if Gonzalo is an agent of fate. This is a pretty big deal because, in the play, we get the sense that some force greater than even Prospero's magic is at work guiding the lives of each of the characters. Gonzalo also makes a big utopian speech that literary critics like to compare to a passage from Montaigne's "Of Cannibals," a famous essay that Shakespeare totally cribbed when he wrote Gonzalo's lines. We talk about this more in "Symbols" so check it out if you want to know more.

3.2.5 Ariel Ariel is Prospero's "tricksy" spirit servant and attends to Prospero's every need. Unlike Caliban, Ariel has a (mostly) warm and loving relationship with Prospero, who saved Ariel when he arrived on the island. (The evil witch Sycorax imprisoned Ariel in a tree because the "delicate" spirit didn't have the heart to do her bidding.) Even though Ariel is affectionate toward Prospero, we learn early on that Ariel isn't a servant by nature; he primarily wants his liberty, but, knowing that it will come, serves Prospero wholeheartedly and happily. Ariel is notable for his use of white magic in the play, but also for his empathy and goodness. These traits are lacking in some of the play's human characters, and Ariel's feelings only make that fact more conspicuous. Most telling is his report on the three traitors: Antonio, Sebastian, and Alonso. He claims that their state is so pathetic, if Prospero saw them he would be moved to mercy and sympathy. Ariel thinks he himself would have that same tenderness, were he human. While we are reminded that this is a spirit of a not-human nature, he seems filled with angelic grace – even about human matters. Check out Ariel's response when Prospero asks how the King and his party are doing:

ARIEL

Your charm so strongly works 'em That if you now beheld them, your affections
Would become tender.

PROSPERO Dost thou think so, spirit? ARIEL Mine would, sir, were I human. PROSPERO And mine shall. (5.1.2)

Prospero's just transformed from a revenge thirsty magician to a human being with the capacity to forgive his enemies and feel "tender[ness]" toward those who betrayed him and exiled him to the island. In other words, Ariel's compassionate spirit is the catalyst for Prospero's change. Without Ariel, Prospero may never have learned that "the rarer action is / In virtue than in vengeance" (5.1.2). Ariel performs all of his services with great skill and presentation. From showing up as fire on the ship to his appearance as a great harpy to the three traitors, Ariel treasures the aesthetic. He tends to speak in beautifully poetic verse, even about the silliest things, without ever seeming foolish. Even as he pulls on Prospero's robes, he sings a beautiful little song. Ariel stands in for all that is delightful and good in the world.

3.2.6 King Alonso of Naples Alonso, the King of Naples, is not a particularly good guy, but not a particularly bad one, either. As we know he was an enemy of Prospero, but the first we hear of the King is that he was easily swayed by Antonio's self-interested flattery. When we properly meet Alonso, we see he's completely self-involved, easily moved to passion, sorrow, or tears, and even though he doesn't mean to be, sometimes he is a total jerk. Alonso is easily moved one way or another, sometimes giving up his son for dead and other times searching for him doggedly. Gonzalo can sway him in one direction (towards good) when he speaks, but we know Antonio's wicked flattery also worked on the King before. That Alonso keeps Antonio and Sebastian, willing traitors, so close to him is evidence that he is at once trusting and naïve, in addition to being a horrible judge of character. Unlike many of the other characters here, Alonso is quick to admit when he has done wrong – so long as he is called out on it first. When Ariel as a harpy reminds King Alonso

what he's done to Prospero and Miranda, the King is genuinely sorrowful. Further, when Alonso sees Prospero, he's quick to return the man's dukedom. Yet we get the sense that Alonso doesn't think too much about his actions until he's called to account for them. Because of his remorse and his willingness to embrace Miranda, his son, and Prospero, Alonso seems to be a not-all-that-bad kind of guy, just easily influenced by the wrong crowd. Most importantly, Alonso doesn't really trust his own senses. At the end of the play, he wonders at his son and can't really wrap his mind around the strange story they've all been part of. Ultimately, he's just another one of Shakespeare's misguided royals, not the brightest crayon in the box, easily persuaded, but not altogether bad.

3.2.7 Ferdinand Prince Ferdinand is Alonso's son and the heir to the throne of Naples. He is quick to love, and seemingly quick to forget his father's "death," but it does seem that his heart is true and his affections, though quick, are genuine. He does have a sort of princely arrogance about him. (He may be a prince, but a little humility never killed anybody.) We learn about Ferdinand mostly through his efforts to gain Miranda from Prospero. Ferdinand is happy in his labors, blinded by love, and quick to promise the title of queen and wife to a girl before he even knows her name. He also vows to stay true to her father, Prospero, and not violate Miranda's chastity before their wedding night – maybe because he's a good guy, maybe because Prospero threatens that the heavens will rain down fire and brimstone on him. You can't say much about Ferdinand because he doesn't say or do much, besides mooning in love. Still, he does seem easy to love, earnest, and good above all else.

3.2.8 Sebastian and Antonio This pair can mainly be dealt with together, since nearly all of their lines are together, and their action is matched. They're also in similar positions, as both are traitorous younger brothers. Antonio is Prospero's brother, who betrayed him to have the dukedom; Sebastian is younger brother to King Alonso of Naples and is interested in stealing Alonso's throne. They work well together because Sebastian is prone to fooling around in a mean-spirited way and Antonio earns Sebastian's trust and respect by also being a horrible human being. When Sebastian is moved to murder his own brother, it is at the suggestion of the traitorous Antonio.

In their last lines in the play, Sebastian and Antonio mock Trinculo and Stefano (who are basically their reflections). They show they have learned absolutely nothing, have no remorse, and do not wish to be forgiven, because they see nothing wrong with themselves. Their plot against the King, their lack of remorse, and their wickedness in general characterize them as bad seeds. The entertaining part of this pair is their jesting with words and ideas. They have no boundaries on the horrible things they'll say, and they make fun of everything, usually cleverly and with great effect. Basically, we find them disgusting, but fascinating to watch.

3.3 Dramatic Structure The *Tempest* differs from Shakespeare's other plays in its observation of a stricter, more organized neoclassical style. The clearest indication of this is Shakespeare's respect for the three unities in the play: the Unities of Time, Place, and Action. Shakespeare's other plays rarely respected the three unities, taking place in separate locations miles apart and over several days or even years.[28] The play's events unfold in real time before the audience, Prospero even declaring in the last act that everything has happened in, more or less, three hours.[29][30] All action is unified into one basic plot: Prospero's struggle to regain his dukedom; it is also confined to one place, a fictional island, which many scholars agree is meant to be located in the Mediterranean Sea.[31] Another reading suggests that it takes place in the New World, as some parts read like records of English and Spanish conquest in the Americas.[32] Still others argue that the Island can represent any land that has been colonized.

3.3.1 Postcolonial Interpretation In Shakespeare's day, much of the world was still being discovered by European seafarers, and stories were coming back from distant islands, with myths about the Cannibals of the Caribbean, faraway Edens, and distant tropical Utopias. With the character Caliban (whose name is almost an anagram of Cannibal and also resembles "Cariban", the term then used for natives in the West Indies), Shakespeare may be offering an in-depth discussion into the morality of colonialism. Different views of this are found in the play, with examples including Gonzalo's Utopia, Prospero's enslavement of Caliban, and Caliban's subsequent resentment. Caliban is also shown as one of the most natural characters in the play, being very much in touch with the natural world (and modern

audiences have come to view him as far nobler than his two Old World friends, Stephano and Trinculo, although the original intent of the author may have been different). There is evidence that Shakespeare drew on Montaigne's essay *Of Cannibals*—which discusses the values of societies insulated from European influences— while writing *The Tempest*. Beginning in about 1950, with the publication of *Psychology of Colonization* by Octave Mannoni, *The Tempest* was viewed more and more through the lens of postcolonial theory. This new way of looking at the text explored the effect of the coloniser (Prospero) on the colonized (Ariel and Caliban). Though Ariel is often overlooked in these debates in favour of the more intriguing Caliban, he is nonetheless an essential component of them. The French writer Aimé Césaire, in his play *Une Tempête* sets *The Tempest* in Haiti, portraying Ariel as a mulatto who, unlike the more rebellious Caliban, feels that negotiation and partnership is the way to freedom from the colonizers. Fernandez Retamar sets his version of the play in Cuba and portrays Ariel as a wealthy Cuban (in comparison to the lower-class Caliban) who also must choose between rebellion or negotiation. Although scholars have suggested that his dialogue with Caliban in Act two, Scene one, contains hints of a future alliance between the two when Prospero leaves, Ariel is generally viewed by scholars as the good servant, in comparison with the conniving Caliban—a view which Shakespeare's audience may well have shared. Ariel is used by some postcolonial writers as a symbol of their efforts to overcome the effects of colonization on their culture. For example, Michelle, a Jamaican author, has said that she tries to combine Caliban and Ariel within herself to create a way of writing that represents her culture better. Such use of Ariel in postcolonial thought is far from uncommon; the spirit is even the namesake of a scholarly journal covering post-colonial criticism.

3.3.2 Feminist Interpretation *The Tempest* has only one female character, Miranda. Other women, such as Caliban's mother Sycorax, Miranda's mother and Alonso's daughter Claribel, are only mentioned. Because of the small role women play in the story in comparison to other Shakespeare plays, *The Tempest* has attracted much feminist criticism. Miranda is typically viewed as being completely deprived of freedom by her father. Her only duty in his eyes is to remain chaste. Ann Thompson argues that Miranda, in a manner typical of women in a colonial atmosphere, has completely internalized the patriarchal order of things, thinking of herself as subordinate to her father.

The less-prominent women mentioned in the play are subordinated as well, as they are only described through the men of the play. Most of what is said about Sycorax, for example, is said by Prospero. Further, Stephen Orgel notes that Prospero has never met Sycorax – all he learned about her he learned from Ariel. According to Orgel, Prospero's suspicion of women makes him an unreliable source of information. Orgel suggests that he is skeptical of female virtue in general, citing his ambiguous remark about his wife's fidelity. However, certain goddesses such as Juno, Ceres, Iris, and sea nymphs are in one scene of the play.

3.4 Summing Up *The Tempest* first appeared in print as the first play in the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare. Throughout the play's history, the play has been variously regarded as a highlight of Shakespeare's dramatic output, as a representation of the essence of human life, and as containing Shakespeare's most autobiographical character, in the form of Prospero the magician-ruler. The 1623 text appears to have few omissions or corruptions in the text, though the play does include stage directions that are unusually detailed when compared to Shakespeare's other plays.

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Analyze the following characters from the play *The Tempest*: a. Miranda b. Prospero c. Ferdinand
2. Analyze *The Tempest* in PostColonial context.
3. Give a Feminist interpretation of *The Tempest*.

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Unit 4: A Midsummer Night's Dream - I

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Comedy: Its origin and journey
 - 4.2.1 Various Kinds of Comedy: Classical Comedy
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Summary 4.0

Introduction As is obvious, to recreate oneself is one of our necessities since time immemorial. Today, we are living in a world facilitated by hi-tech gadgetries as C.Ds, D.V.Ds, ipads, android phones, cinema, internet etc. to cater our taste buds for entertainment. Did you ever think that before the invention of these gadgets how did people recreate themselves? Going back to history we find that besides listening to great orators and old wives tales, people were introduced to a very different form of art, the 'Drama'. Beginning of Drama in England is around eighth century when Saxon Kings ruled in various kingdoms into which the land was then divided, and print media was nowhere in existence. The church thought of play acting as a means of instruction to impart the important lessons for life and religion to the illiterate villagers in an interesting manner so that they could chew upon the moral or religious principles and be entertained simultaneously. These dramatized versions of episodes from the Bible were called Miracle plays and Morality plays. This effort of clergy made the teachings of Bible more accessible to the common people. As more characters were introduced and the performances became elaborate they shifted from church to churchyard and so into streets. In cause of time, developing from morality plays and Interludes, drama established itself at the royal court and in the households of nobility and the characters took a shift from merely moral types to actual persons. Another influence was the Greek drama. The tragedies of Aeschylus and Seneca, the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus, had been composed centuries earlier. Their works were regarded by scholars as the supreme models of drama. The learned Aristotle had framed rules of dramatic construction, and those came to be called Aristotle's Unities. All men like to be amused, to have fun and to see wonderful things. Drama in the broader perspective provides the glimpse of life. Audience correlate their life and its experiences with that of the actors in the drama, at times being purgated or purified, having released such emotions which could else had been heavy on them. Thus, it aims to be reformatory or corrective. In this unit, we will enjoy reading a comedy crudely defined as a play with a happy ending. The comedy that we will read is A Mid Summer Night's Dream by one of the greatest playwright William Shakespeare.

4.1 Objectives
After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand comedy and its various types.
- Differentiate between the classical and romantic comedy.
- Appreciate the life of Shakespeare and its formative influences.
- Understand world of Shakespeare's comedies.
- Analyze different phases of Shakespeare's Career tracing his evolution as a dramatist.

4.2 Comedy:

Its Origin and Journey

The idea of comedy originated in ancient Greece of 4th century BC and persists through the present. It's primarily concerned with humans as social beings and its function is corrective. The word comedy (kōmōidia, komoidia) is derived from Greek verb meaning "to revel", intended to be humorous. Comedy arose out of the revels associated with the rites of Dionysus, a god of vegetation. The word came into modern usage through the Latin 'comoedia' and Italian 'commedia'. Greeks and Romans confined the word "comedy" to descriptions of stage plays with happy ending. In the Middle ages, the term expanded

to include narrative poems with happy endings and a lighter tone. With the progress of time, the word became synonymous with humour in general and was associated with any sort of performance intended to cause laughter. Greek philosopher Aristotle, around 335 BC, in his work *Poetics* stated that comedy originated in phallic processions and is the light treatment of the otherwise base and ugly. Comedies begin with low or base characters seeking insignificant aims and end with some accomplishment of the aims which either lightens the initial baseness or reveals the insignificance of the aims. It includes unrealistic in order to portray realistic. For Greeks, all comedies ended happily which is opposite of tragedy, which ends sadly. Comedy testifies to physical vitality, delight in life, and the will to go on living. Comedy is utmost enjoyable when it co-relates with the festivity of life. Comedy presents the life as it should be, not as it is, as we would expect it to be. It intends to present the amusing view of life. The hero of the comedy struggles against the odds and triumphs over difficulties and the manner in which he succeeds, wins our admiration and gives us aesthetic pleasure. Contrary to tragedy, we find that the end of comedy all the characters are happy and together. It exercises 'poetic justice' i.e., vices are punished and virtues are rewarded.

4.2.1 Various Kinds of Comedy: Classical Comedy The classical comedy follows the rules of dramatic composition as laid down by ancient Greek and Roman writers like Aristotle around 4th century BC and persists through present. It is primarily concerned with humans as social beings, rather than as private persons. Its function is corrective i.e. to expose some human folly, to hold a mirror up to society to reflect its follies and vices, in the hope that they will be mended as a result. The rules that are of importance are: the observance of three unities of time, place and action as described by Aristotle, the strict separation of the tragic and the comic and of light and serious elements. There is realism in portrayal of life of characters. The first English comedy *Ralph Roister Doister*, was modeled on the comedies of Plautus.

4.2.2 Comedy of Manners Also known as artificial comedy or High Comedy, it was a popular style of writing in English after restoration. Its subject is a particular section of society usually upper class society and it uses humour to satirize the behaviour, social customs and mannerisms of its members. The comedy of manners developed during restoration period. It is realistic in character and focuses our attention on the life, manners, ways, love-intrigues and foppery of the upper and the aristocratic classes of society. The scenes of comedies were generally laid in London, particularly cafes, chocolate houses, clubs and gambling centres. Comedies of Congreve and Dryden belong to this class.

4.2.3 Comedy of Homours This type of comedy practiced by Ben Jonson, is a satire on eccentricity, which was supposed to be due to excess of one of the four 'humours' or natural fluids of the body- blood, phlegm, cholera and melancholy or black bile. It is also known as comedy of characters. It presents some special peculiarity or oddity of character, some salient trait, the habitual attitude and the conduct of the person possessing it. Ben Jonson was the progenitor of this form of comedy and his theory was that comedy ought to be judicial. It should treat real life in the spirit of satire so that it introduces reform in social life. This type of comedy is also known as satirical comedy, as the weapon of ridicule and division is used in exposing human folly. This type of comedy presents the manners of the time of low life, of low bullies, sinister cheats and ignorant dupes. *Every Man in His Humour* by Jonson is an example of comedy of manners.

4.2.4 Comedy of Intrigue This type of comedy focuses on the plot or action and not the presentation of character. Comedies of this kind were very popular in Spain during Restoration and Post Restoration period. It specializes in situations arising out of infidelity in love and marriage. Dryden's *The Spanish Friar* is a comedy which depends for its interest on intrigue.

4.2.5 The Divine Comedy Dante used the term comedy for his great epic *The Divine Comedy*. He used the term 'comedy' in a sense, very different from that in which it is used by us. In his time, comedy meant a story with a happy ending. There was no notion attached to it, of its being hilarious or mirth provoking.

4.2.6 Romantic Comedy or Shakespearean Comedy This form of comedy was practiced mainly by Shakespeare and the University Wits including Lyly, Greene and Nashe. This comedy depicts romance growing rapidly and focuses on the foibles of those falling in love in humorous terms. Comedy, in Elizabethan time had a very different meaning from modern comedy. A Shakespearean Comedy, on the other hand, is a romantic comedy. It is a product of the national taste and tradition of

that time. Shakespeare considered life as a blend of joys and sorrows, and therefore mingled the serious and the gay, the comic and the tragic freely in his comedies. He wrote his comedies not with any corrective or satiric purposes; instead he aimed at good natured laughter. Follies are no doubt exposed and ridiculed but the laughter is gentle and sympathetic. It explores the possibility of a better world order, in which life would be much happier and nobler. In this world, life is lived differently and beautifully. It presents a paradisaic glimpse for the soul to come out of its shell and a happy adventurer in the quest of a higher life. Just as the modern man in present time being fed up of the monotonous life finds nature as the antidote to his boredom, similarly the desire to get some relief from prosaic day to day life would have eluded the dramatist to introduce the remote, the distant and the unfamiliar enchanted world. The characters in Shakespearean comedy are always on a quest and we are inspired to become partners in their quest. Unlike classical comedy, merely exposing and ridiculing human folly, hypocrisy and vanity, Shakespearean comedy presents an artist's vision of a better world order. That is why, the characters in his comedy are not ludicrous specimen of humanity but are beautiful, noble and have glory.

4.3 Shakespeare's Life: Formative Influences

William Shakespeare was born on or about the 23rd April 1564, at Stratford on Avon, Warwickshire. His father, John Shakespeare, was a prosperous tradesman in Stratford. His mother, Mary Arden, came from a higher social background, being the daughter of a gentleman and landowner, Robert Arden. He received his early education from the local Grammar School, where he was taught Latin and Arithmetic. Unfortunately due to financial misfortunes of his father he withdrew from school at the age of fourteen to help the family by earning money on his own account. Before his nineteenth birthday, Shakespeare married Ann Hathaway, who was eight years older than himself and became a well-known actor and playwright by 1592. Few years after his marriage—roughly about 1587, he left his native place to seek his fortunes in London, where he stayed for another twenty years and grew steadily in fame and wealth. He became a share holder in two of the leading theatres of the time, the Globe and the Black friars. The years between 1596 to 1610 brought many domestic sorrows to him. He lost his dear ones and between 1610 and 1612, he retired to Stratford. Between the years 1589 and 1611, he wrote at least 36 plays, 2 narrative poems and many sonnets. He retired as a wealthy man and on 23rd April 1616, took his last breath.

Though four hundred years

have passed since his dramas were written, yet their freshness and their appeal is permanent in literature. His dramas have an neither eternal freshness which neither age can wither nor custom stale. The most significant quality that we notice in Shakespeare's work is his universality and his profound understanding of human nature. A man is not born as a personality but there are many factors that mingle up to form a persona. Shakespeare too was influenced by many such factors. Warwickshire is situated in the heart of England. The river Avon runs through the middle of it dividing it into two—to the north the Forest of Arden, and to the south beautiful landscape of countryside. This abundance of natural beauty permeated his creative genius and is generously exhibited in his works. Shakespeare was of an observant mind as he not only observed with interest various tradesmen as carpenters, cobblers, drapers etc. but also portrayed with remarkable accuracy and authenticity these characters in his plays. One can readily notice references to various country sports as archery, beer baiting, hunting etc. in his plays proving his love of outdoor life and his knowledge of even the minutest details of it. As an Elizabethan boy, he had to attend the church services regularly, and the verses of Bible, of the pray-book, of the sermons and of the Psalms became a part of his being and are reflected throughout the plays in various forms. Critics have expressed surprise at the vastness of Shakespeare's knowledge of classical mythology and literature of birds, beasts etc. that too when he had no university education at all. Shakespeare was a hungry and rapid reader. He lifted tales from the books and re-handled them. Shakespeare used to vividly watch Greek dramas: his acquaintance with drama later on inspired him to create masterpieces. Shakespeare was an artist divinely inspired and a great humanist.

4.3.1

Shakespeare's Works : Different Phases of Career Rightly regarded as one of the most precious treasures of the world, Shakespeare's literary career, if chronologically considered evinces four distinct periods. Quite surprisingly, Shakespeare appears to be least concerned about the publication of his plays, for it is his friends and fellow actors John Heminge and Henry Condall who painstakingly issued all his plays in 1623 in the first Folio dedicated to the Earls of Pembroke and of Montgomery. Other Folios, The Second, The Third and The Fourth appeared in 1632, 1663-64 and 1685. Spread over a period of Twenty four years (1588-1612) Shakespeare's dramatic career divided into four distinct periods, illustrates the development of his mind and art. In the first period of apprenticeship, termed by Dowden as period 'In the workshop', Shakespeare

rewrote other's plays. Titus Andronicus, Love's Labour's Lost, The Comedy of Errors, The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Richard III and A Mid Summer Night's Dream

were written in this period eliciting the following commentary from Hudson, 'The work of this period, as a whole, is extremely slight in texture; the treatment of life in it, is superficial; there is little depth in thought or characterization; and the art is markedly immature. Though lacking in finesse, in some technical features, the plays are marked by vivacity, cleverness, delight in beauty and a quick enjoyment of existence.' The drama *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* that we are going to read in this unit, assumed to be written around 1598 is a romantic comedy. It is the first mature comedy of Shakespeare and has a number of distinctive features of its own. Termed as 'In the World' (Dowden), the second period (1594-1600) reveals Shakespeare's bid to grow independent in power and technique. The youthful crudeness, strain and extravagance disappears; and in its place, a penetrative insight into the human mind, a deep understanding of the complexities of the world, a matured wisdom enrolls the splendid panorama of national history and the moral issues perturbing life. During this period were written

Richard II, King John, *The Merchant of Venice*, Henry IV, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*,

As You Like It, Henry V, *Taming of the Shrew* and *Twelfth Night*. Known as 'Out of Depths', the third period (1600-1608) saw the production of plays –

Julius Caesar, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*,

Coriolanus,

All's Well That Ends Well, *Measure for Measure*, *Troilus and Cressida*

and

Timon of Athens. The dark world of crime and punishment in war with the innocent, noble minded, good people – constitutes the themes of many of these plays. Problems of life and death, issues of ambition, ingratitude, treachery, passions of love, envy, hatred, sins and weaknesses of men form the crux of the plot. The clash of characters – the play of fierce judgment, hot passion, misanthropy, violent acts, the darker sides of human experiences make the plays superb. Described as 'On the Heights' (Dowden), in the fourth period (1608-1612), the torrent of the violent passions and hurricane of emotions get calmed and 'the air is filled with sweet and tender melodies' whose themes such as

repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation, rule the plots of the plays of this period – *Cymbeline*, *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*. *Pericles* and *Henry VIII* are also attributed to this period. In these last plays, the

groundwork is still furnished by tragic passion but the evil is no longer permitted to have its way, but is controlled and conquered by the good. Now you might have got an idea of the immense dramatic talent of Shakespeare. The range of themes, the depth of passions, the variety of characters, a mixing of conventional, folk and royal theatre, the complexity of the ways of the world found in his plays, remain unchallenged even today.

4.4 A Mental Voyage to Elizabethan Time
The period of time from 1562-1602 in the history of English literature is said to be Elizabethan period. It is named after its ruler - Queen Elizabeth who ruled England during this time.

She was succeeded by the Stuart King, James I (1603-1625). Thus Shakespeare lived and created both in the Elizabethan Age and Jacobean Age (

Adjective for James). These were the period of English Renaissance in England. The Age of Shakespeare or the Elizabethan Age was the richest period in the history of England. Renaissance had its birth in Italy, and spread in Germany, France and England. Under its influence, the people made efforts to free themselves from the rigid institutions of the Middle Ages, feudalism and the churches and to assert their right to live, to think, and to express themselves in accordance with a more flexible secular code. Under the new creed, Humanism flourished, life no longer seemed mere penance to be endured by good Christians in preparation for heaven. People began to take interest in this life and strove hard to make it larger and happier. Both in politics and religion, the English nation was attaining to a state of stability. Edmund Spenser presented the best trends of Reformation in *The Faerie Queen*. He even expressed the possibility of the existence of a fairy world over and above the world of mortals. Men's geographical horizons were widened by the discovery of the New World which opened the new vistas of wealth and prosperity. New discoveries in the field of astronomy by Columbus and Cabot not only widened the horizons but also opened the new doors of knowledge from the new worlds. It was an age of adventure. The new learning was popularized by the advancement of printing.

Elizabethan age was the manhood of Renaissance, meaning both reawakening and revival. It was the efflorescence of this spirit in this age and the world of literature also could not remain unaffected. Many ancient masterpieces were translated into English, and made available to the people.

The

dramas of the age, including those of Shakespeare are full of classical references of Gods, Goddesses and mythology. Pamphlets and treatise were freely written. Art and literature are peace time activities and the accession of glorious

Queen Elizabeth brought both external and internal peace resulting in an abundance of excellent literature. She was popular and powerful and was looked upon as an exalted individual therefore countless tributes were made to her in contemporary literature. It was the age when literature made an all round development whether it be poetry, translations, prose, or drama. Shakespeare was fortunate in the moment of his birth, as it was the most suitable time when men of genius like Shakespeare could make their mark and reached heights of glory.

4.5 Shakespearean Theatre/Stage

During the earlier times, since drama came out of churchyards to streets, it was hampered for want of a suitable place. It used to be staged in the courtyards of inns, in some open space at the outskirts of the city or, in the mansions of the rich. The first English theatre called "The Theatre" was built in 1576, which later in 1599 was reconstructed as the "Globe" where most of the Shakespeare's plays were staged. This was the time when Puritans were in power. They were opposed to such constructions and regarded all the plays as immoral and the actors as vagabonds, thieves and good for nothings. Later when the nobles and Lords gave their names to these acting troupes, they came to be seen with some measure of respect. Hence, it was essential for the actors to be associated under such noble patronage. Shakespeare also joined Lord Chamberlain's Company in 1594, and the patronage of the Queen. Elizabethan theatres were generally built after the design of the original Theatre, which was built of wood, a circular enclosure, open to sky and containing a ground floor and two upper galleries. The stage was not a thing apart from the audience, with a curtain to hide it. The main stage for action was a wooden platform. There was little attempt to decorate it. There were no curtains with painted scenery and this lack was supplied through appropriate dialogue. Similarly, the time of day, night and location were indicated through dialogue. Trap-doors were let into the floor of the stage, through which devils, fairies and other supernatural beings could make their exits and entrances. About 1500 audience members could pay extra money to sit in the covered seating areas, while about 800 "groundlings" paid less money to stand in the open area before the stage. The stage was divided into three levels (1) a main stage area, doors at the rear and a curtained area in the back for "discovery scenes" (2) an upper, canopied area called "heaven" for balcony scenes, and (3) an area under the stage called "hell", accessed by a trap door in the stage. Since there could be no dramatic lighting, there was very little scenery and props; audience relied on the actors' lives and stage directions for the mood of the scenes. One important difference between plays written in Shakespeare's time and those written today is that they were published after their performances, sometimes even after their author's death. The audience came from all classes, and his plays appealed to all kinds of sensibilities, from kings and queens to clowns and servants. No such thing as a female actor assisted or would have been tolerated. All female parts were played by boys or young men, who frequently wore masks. At the conclusion of each performance, the actors knelt on the stage and offered a prayer for the queen. The Elizabethan stage brought the audience into, direct, almost personal touch with actors. They surrounded the actors on three sides. The royal court supported the theatre, and most of the respectable citizens of London visited the performances.

4.5.1 Shakespeare's Audience

The Elizabethan Theatre audience attracted people from all classes- The upper-class nobility as well as the Lower-class commoners. Queen Elizabeth loved watching plays but these were generally performed in indoor playhouses for her pleasure. Nobility formed a sizeable portion of the audience; however, it was the poorer audience referred to as 'groundlings' which occupied stage more often. While richer patrons would sit in the covered galleries, paying as much as half a crown each for their seats in 1599, anyone who remains on the level standing pays only one English penny. It appears that Shakespeare's audience was composed of tannery butchers, iron workers, millers, seamen, servants, shopkeepers, wig makers, bakers and countless other tradesmen and their families. Loud, hot tempered, the audience was far more boisterous than are patrons of the theatre today. In Hamlet, reference is made to such groundlings thus: O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious Periwig - patted fellow tear a passion to tatters, to - Very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but In explicable dumb shows and noise(III, II). Shakespeare again makes reference to such a crowd in his comedy A Mid Summer Night Dream.

4.6 Shakespeare: Criticism down the Ages Criticism does not simply mean to find faults in world of art. Bringing to light the minutest beauties and nuances of aesthetics is what it stands for. Shakespeare perhaps is the only author who has invented, attracted and compelled the lovers of literature to read, appreciate and comment in such large numbers. He has been viewed, reviewed, interpreted and re-interpreted at different periods of time in the light of critical standards of that age to such extent that in itself Shakespearean criticism has become a class apart. In his times, Shakespeare was a well established writer. He 'surpassed the Greek and Latin dramatists by reason of his art and was not of an age but for all time' so wrote Jonson. Called 'an upstart crow beautified with our feathers' (Greene), Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night was criticized as 'a silly play'. A Mid Summer Night's Dream was surprisingly called as "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever he saw in his life' (Samuel Pepys). Though Dryden admired Shakespeare, he could not accept Shakespeare as a model to be followed. Though Alexander Pope in eighteenth century found fault with Shakespeare's puns, conceits and extravagance of language, yet he admired Shakespeare's infinitely diversified characters. Dr. Johnson appreciated Shakespeare's comprehensive vision and for holding a faithful mirror of manners and of life. Charles Lamb added another dimension to criticism when he found Shakespeare's plays 'less calculated for performance on the stage than those of any other dramatist.' Dowden perceived a reflection of Shakespeare's attitude to life in his plays. It was criticism of Granville-Barker that once again recognized Shakespeare, the craftsman. Post colonialists and cultural materialists review Shakespeare's plays and find it promoting the cause of aristocracy and feudalism. Recently, Critics add to criticism by studying Shakespearean literature against the backdrop of theory of Exclusion, subaltern and marginality.

4.7 Summing Up Apparently intended to be written and staged for wedding festivities and generally considered a dream, A Mid Summer Night's Dream is no more labeled as a comedy without significance. An analysis of the comedy suggests that it is splendidly wrought and through the skilful weaving of opposing strands of plot and subplots, the interest of the reader is sustained throughout. Called Shakespeare's 'farewell to mirth', the play along with the pervading spirit of gaiety and happiness, also underlines some grey areas, paving the way for the somber and mature plays. However, in the ultimate analysis, the comedy mixing mirth with beauty, stands out as one of the loveliest of all the Shakespeare's plays.

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Self-Assessment Questions 1. 'A writer is the product of his age' to what an extent is this true in case of Shakespeare? 2. Prepare a write up on the contemporary writers of Shakespeare. In what ways are Shakespeare's plays different from theirs? 3. Does the modern stage bear any similarity to the stage in Elizabethan times? Discuss.

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Unit 5: A Mid Summer Night's Dream II 5.0 Introduction 5.1 Objectives 5.2 Act wise Analysis of The Play 5.3 A Historical Perspective 5.4 Plot: A Triumph of Construction 5.5 What is the Play About? 5.5.1 The Theme of Love 5.5.2 Marriage as a Comic Closure 5.5.3 The Theme of Conflict 5.6 Analyzing the Characters 5.6.1 Theseus and Hippolyta 5.6.3 The Lovers : Helena and Hermia and Demetrius and Lysander 5.7 Summing up 5.0

Introduction Though Shakespeare's *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* is grouped among his comedies, yet it falls in a class by itself. From time to time, the play has been described as a comedy, a romance, a fairy tale, a masque, a burlesque, however no name adequately describes the true nature of the play. Too ethereally delicate, romantic imagination let loose here is guided by Shakespeare's masterly skill into the most exquisite form with incomparable beauty and suavity. With its intricate yet ingenuous plot – wholly Shakespeare's invention, it is, as its name acknowledges, a dream. While its musical quality links it with opera, its sparkling fun almost faultless puts it in the group of most hilarious comedies. The play is unique for there is no pathos (unlike other comedies such as *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It* etc) and no hurricane of passions. Printed in 1600 and publicly acted innumerable times, *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* is a lyrical fantasy dealing with love as a dream, a fever, an illusion, an infatuation etc.

5.1 Objectives

This unit will help you to:

- Understand the true nature of Shakespearean comedy
- Understand Shakespeare's skill in plot-construction

- Comprehend how universal is the theme of love, romance and marriage

5.2 Act Wise Analysis of the Play

The play is called *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* not because the action takes place on Midnight (June 24) or because the play was produced then, but because it was the time according to superstition or folk belief when strange things happened, when spirits were abroad, and supernatural was closest to the lives of men. The title reminds us that the fantastic happenings the play contains have the unreal quality of a dream.

ACT I: There are three strands of the strands which are all attached to another story that of Theseus and Hippolyta. While reading the play, you will be surprised to know how much ingenuity and tact is required to piece together the three strands which are so different in texture. As in the practice with Shakespeare, almost all the characters of the main plot are introduced. The opening line sets the stage for the approaching marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta and Theseus is the connecting link between the four stories *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* comprises of – Oberon and Titania, Helena and Demetrius, Hermia and Lysander and that of Theseus and Hippolyta besides the histrionics of Bottom and friends.

ACT II: The plot becomes complex as Oberon decides to be benevolent and quite whimsically announces his decision to help Helena win Demetrius who has turned his affection now to Hermia under the influence of love-juice. The intervention of the fairies in settling the affairs of the estranged lovers lends a magical and fairy character to the play. Puck mistakes Lysander for Demetrius and anoints his eyes so that he turns from Hermia to Helena.

ACT III: In this act, Shakespeare skillfully mixes together both the comic and the fairy stories through Bottom's transformation into the monster that Titania wakes to love. Shakespeare, however, does not forget to bring into focus, the central idea of the play, that of love's illusions. What adds amusement to the comedy is the contrast between Bottom's rustic matter of factness and complacent opinion of himself and Titania's poetical fancies and magic powers. The confusion in the play reaches into high point in this scene as the earlier position of the lovers now gets reversed. Hermia is deserted

and Helena is loved by both Demetrius and Lysander and a quarrel ensues between Hermia and Helena.

ACT IV: Herein, efforts are made to straighten out the three intermingled stories, 'the complication, like a musical discord, having existed only for the sake of being resolved.'

5.3 A Historical Perspective

Said to be written between 1594 or 1596 (mainly because of topical references and an allusion to Spenser's *Epithalamion*), the play was performed at the theatre and later the Globe. The play was staged during Puritan and Victorian times as well in 19th centuries either in the form of drolls or in the Opera style. In 20th century, Reinhardt directed a film while H.G. Barker (1914), Peter Brook (1970) Joseph Pepp, Riverside Shakespeare Company also staged the play. It is expected from students to gather more information on stage, film, opera adaptations of not only this play but of Shakespeare's other plays as well. It is interesting to note that Shakespeare's *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* continues to inspire later works-the main being *St. John's Eve* (1853 Henrik Ibsen), comic series *Sandman* (Neil Gaiman), *A Mid Summer Night's Gene* (1997 a sci-fi Parody by Andrew Herman), *Magic Street* (2005 by Orson Scott Card) etc. Here is given the list of some of the film adaptations of *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*: 1935 - by the Director Max Reinhardt 1968 - by the Director Peter Hall 1982 - by the Director Woody Allen 1999 - by the Director Michael Hoffman 2002 - by the Director Gil Cates Jr Best known T.V. productions are listed below: 1981 - B.B.C. Television Shakespeare Prod. (Jonathan Miller) 1999 - Walt Disney Productions. 2005- Shakespeare-told B.B.C. T.V. Series

5.4 Plot: A Triumph of Construction

What does plot mean? Do not you think it is simply design? 'The means by which the artist, out of a chaos of characters, actions, passions, evolves order (W.H. Fleming: *Shakespeare's Plots*, 15) within the limited spaces of five acts. The plot in its simplest form is a story with a beginning and an end; the beginning and end are conjoined with related incidents, sequences, episodes and climax with a central purpose. The dramatist writes

and invents incidents to communicate to the audience/reader with a central purpose. The central purpose may be to illustrate a many sided character - hero in this case or it may be to convey a central idea. The plot of A Mid Summer Night's Dream is in fact a triumph of construction. When you go through the plot, you would be surprised to find how many heterogeneous elements are conjoined together in the play. There is a classical hero along with an Amazonian queen. Two pairs of Athenian lovers are contrasted with fairy lovers. The tedious quarrels of the lovers exist along with the dispute between Oberon and Titania about the changeling boy. Jumbled together are such astonishing things as fairies 'creep into acorn cups and hide them there'. Daintiest woodland fairies are contrasted with 'hempen homespuns' English artisans on one hand and with aristocrats on the other. When and how does the four nights and four days pass away is still a mystery, waning moon is full before she is new, how does ass-head enables Bottom to speak the English tongue. These varied and diversified situations and characters are caught together in moonshine not of poetry interspersed with allusions to mythical demigods, London actors, Indian King, centaurs, six pence, magic herbs etc. Do not you think that it requires exquisite innovative mind to unify such disparate elements in a plot having an artistic harmony? That the intricate plot of the play is Shakespeare's own invention, there is no doubt about it. After going through A Mid Summer Night's Dream, it is evident that the real centre of the plot is the love story of the four Athenian lovers and a special occasion – a wedding, festivities determine the selection and the adjustment of the material. The love chase of Helena, Hermia, Demetrius and Lysander, the quarrel between Oberon and Titania, the infatuation of the Queen for the ass head Bottom, the rehearsal of the tragi-comedy of Pyramus and Thisbe all are conjoined together to be in line with the dramatic purpose of the author. 5.5

Theme: What Is The Play About As said about the plot, Shakespeare's masterly skill is revealed in the way, he handles various themes. He weaves together the court background of the marriage of Theseus and Hippolyta, the double lovers' entanglement of Lysander and Hermia, the underplot/secondary drama of the Athenian artificers and Pyramus and Thisbe interlude along with the fairy world of Oberon and Titania linked up with and playing over all these. When you read A Mid Summer Night's Dream you find three distinct

worlds existing together – (a) The court of Pre-Homeric Athens, (b) the realistic population of a contemporary English countryside along with all its trifles, beliefs and issues and (c) the realms of a fairy land. The three distinct and apparently unrelated worlds – ancient, medieval and modern exist together in one and the same timeless moment. The wonderful dexterity with which the three evidently alien kinds of matter are woven into a single composite picture is not found elsewhere. Needless to say, the three different worlds of aristocracy, the commoners and fairies, welded into the form of a credible society – reveal the imaginative insight of Shakespeare. However, they also reveal the professional side of a writer who appeals to all sections of the society. The central idea of the play is that reason and love do not go together. Sanity, commonsense, cool reason is pitted against the insanity, absurdities and impulsiveness of love. Through the four pair of lovers, Shakespeare embodies almost every conceivable manifestation of love. The theme of love is illustrated in the gravely expressed perception of the capriciousness and transforming power of love.

Things base and vile, holding no quantity, Love can transpose to form and dignity (1.1.282-3).

Besides, the main theme, the play brings to the fore, the theme of patriarchal and parental authority trampling the freedom of lovers. At the macro level, the play refers to the disruption of the established order i.e. the social conventions and the laws of Athens are challenged by the young especially women. At first glance, the play appears but a light excursion into the realms of pure romance, where fairies dance and lovers woo, and magically all the complications get removed, yet the intellectual foundations of it all, are embodied in the unromantic worldly realism of Theseus. The main theme is contrasted and parodied in the comic under plot of the rude mechanicals who present quite a queer interlude, 'A tedious brief scene of young Pyramas and his love This by: very tragical mirth.' The main theme of love and tertiary themes will be discussed in the following pages. An attempt will also be made to analyze the underlying issues such as exclusion, marginality, aesthetics of class and poor as well as stage ability of the text in the next unit.

5.5.1 The Theme of Love The play opens with the preparations for the festivities for the impending marriage of the middle aged Theseus, King of Athens and Hippolyta, the Amazonian queen. The ducal pairs have tastes in common, and are friendly rather than ardent lovers. To Theseus' anxiety, '

How slow/ this old moon wanes! She lingers my desires'/

Hippolyta's reply is quite restrained and sober:

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night. Four nights will quickly dream away the time, And then the moon, like to a silver bow. Now bent in heaven, shall behold the night of our solemnities.

And then we are introduced to the two pairs of lovers whose pursuit of love constitutes the main theme of A Mid Summer Night's Dream. When Lysander utters, 'the course of true love never did run smooth' (1.1.134), he is simply articulating Shakespeare's most favourite and people's most sought after theme – the theme of obstacles in the path of love. Egeus, the father invokes parental authority and oral conventions, pleads in the court of Theseus to restrain his daughter Helena from marrying Demetrius. As '

Love looks not with eyes, but with the mind/ And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind/ nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste',

Shakespeare portrays the love madness of his youthful characters. You would have read and seen a number of stories and films wherein is depicted how lawless and capricious love invites troubles, impediments and even tragedy. Look around yourself and you will find how youth betray friends, plan murders, disobey parents and switch over loyalties. In the play, Helena betrays Hermia and Lysander to Demetrius. The friendship of Helena and Hermia ends; Lysander and Demetrius seek each other's death. Under the spell of love juice – a symbol of man's inconstancy and blindness – even the majestic Titania falls in love with ass-headed Bottom. Love takes its own fanciful and whimsical path and in the dream ridden fancy, there are vagaries, passionate loyalties, fantastic humours, quixotic adventures and midsummer madness of subjectivity. The love has no basis in reality; it merely creates a phantom; a mere shadow of the beloved person; it is a dream. However, the lover remains under the delusion that he is following the dictates of reason. Thus Lysander, pranked upon by Puck, has been made to transfer his love from Hermia to Helena. He exclaims:

The will of man is by his reason swayed
And reason says you are the worthier maid

Reason becomes the marshal to my will,
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'er look Love's stories;
written in love's richest book. Titania too makes her impassioned declaration of love to Bottom : I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again
Mine ear is enamoured of thy note So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
And thy fairy virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the view, to say, to swear, I love thee. Now, you can draw upon the conclusion that the infatuation of Titania, the fairy queen for a weaver transformed into an ass parodies the main story. Further what Shakespeare wrote several centuries back also holds good even today. Love for aristocracy is partly a frivolous amusement in idleness, partly a sensual caprice, while love for lower class is 'bitter earnest, they know its pathos only'. As is apparent, the comic under plot of the rude mechanicals serves as the parody of the main theme of love. Further, the love of Oberon for Indian boy and beautiful Titania's passion for clumsy and grotesque represents how disparity and inequality hamper the path of love. You would agree now that Shakespeare in sketching his characters is sketching your own picture of youthful days – passionate, impulsive, dreamy, romantic, adventurous – a little bit of mad, unruly, lawless, capricious, inconstant etc. etc. Youth even today express their love by interchanging rhymes and love tokens, serenading by moon light and using bracelets of hair, rings, conceits, knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats. Their passions and preferences are not amenable to reason, 'Things base and vile to common views, their love has transposed them to form and dignity'. However, the lighthearted tone of the play suggests from the beginning itself that everything is going to be settled happily – all the hazards, confusions, obstacles, misunderstandings, uncertainties will end up soon.

5.5.2 Marriage as a Comic Closure
One of the most outstanding features of Shakespearean comedy is its 'pervading obsession with marriage' (Lisa Hopkins). In *Love's Labour Lost* and *As You Like It* four couples marry or are expected to marry. In *Twelfth Night*, three couples marry and in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, two couples marry. In *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *Taming of the Shrew*, marital relations dominate the plays; Viola is seen enquiring about Orsino's marital status. Olivia proposes marriage to the supposed Cesario, Rosalind engineers her own marriage. As written earlier, there appears to be no doubt that *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* is marriage play, written to be performed at a grand wedding in some noblemen's house. Elizabethans, as the play seems to suggest, missed no opportunity for feasting and merry making and for revelry no time was more auspicious than a wedding day: A fortnight hold we this solemnity
In nightly revels and new jollity. What masques, what dance shall we have, to wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after supper and bed time? However, after going through *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, you would realize the contention that all of Shakespeare's comedies end up with happy marriage' is not true. The play warns about the possible dangers of marriage – quarrels, curbing of will, infidelity, death in childbirth etc. The conversation between Egeus and Theseus articulates that lovers stand up in rebellion against the patriarchal order. Hippolyta, though eager, is a sullen bride despairing entrapment. That 'man' is dominant is obvious in how Theseus overrules Hippolyta's distaste for mechanicals' play (v.i. 89-105) and when

he

says, "Hippolyta, I

wooed thee with my sword/won thy love doing thee injuries"(1.1.16-17).

Helena is ridiculous and fails to preserve her dignity and self respect: I

am your spaniel, Demetrius
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you

Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me. Titania too is a butt of jokes accusing Oberon of infidelity and falling herself in love with ass head Bottom. However, by the end of the play, Titania and Oberon are reconciled; the lovers are reconciled with Theseus and Egeus. 5.5.3 The Theme of Conflict As you examine the text of *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, you notice that despite its dreamy nature, lyrical fantasy and romantic atmosphere, Shakespeare refers to a number

of issues which impacted the society of Elizabethan times and which still holds good in our times as well. As Shakespearean society was patriarchal, revolt against parental authority is manifested in Hermia's defiance of her father Egeus's authority. Hermia would rather become a nun, or even die, than give to herself to him, 'whose unwished yoke/my soul consents not to give sovereignty'. Both she and Lysander lamenting that the 'path of true love never did run smooth' are able to invoke the sympathy of audience. 'Theirs is the romantic, but also profoundly human appeal of youth and freedom in conflict with the restrictions and compulsions associated with age (Draper). Does not Egeus's pleading in the court of King Theseus against Lysander remind you of court cases pending in courts now-a-days against love birds. Analyzed from the perspective of Elizabethan society when arranged marriages were the norms, the assertion of parental authority invoking law against her own daughter by Egeus may appear to be cruel, tyrannical and unreasonable. Shakespeare while doing so was merely giving us a glimpse of Elizabethan society struggling to emerge from the shadow of tyrannical conventions of the medieval times. The theme may be analyzed from another angle also. Evidently, renaissance with its emphasis on liberty and dignity of human beings had inserted new hopes and the young people's rebellion may be studied in this light also.

5.6 Analysing The Characters

Each dramatist's forte is distinct – with some it is plot while with other, it is either language, or story, or music, or spectacle etc. etc. In case of Shakespeare, his greatest strength is his characterization. In fact, it is his deep insight and close study of human nature which keeps alive the interest in his dramas. Neither his predecessors nor contemporaries like Chaucer, Marlowe, Kyd, Nash, Lyly, Beaumont and Fletcher, nor his successors like Webster, Ben Jonson etc. can equal Shakespeare in the art of characterization. The variety, vitality, originality, completeness and disinterestedness of Shakespeare render his character sketches unrivalled in the whole range of literature. Who can match the inimitable Othello, given to suspension, the unparalleled Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, given to noble inaction, the intemperate King Lear, the brave Macbeth's vaulting ambition, Sir Andrew's stupidity etc.? Where else is equaled Rosalind's wit, humour and vivacity, Cleopatra's majesty and grace? Significantly, the denizens of different worlds also feature in his plays. He opens the gates of the magical world of spirits, calls up the midnight ghosts, exhibits before us his witches amidst their unhallowed mysteries, peoples the air with sportive fairies and sylphs. Most importantly, Shakespeare wrote for the Elizabethan stage and always had his audience in mind but his characters are not of an age, but of all ages, not of one country, but of all countries. Drawn from all walks of life, of all times, of all genders, of all worlds, of all professions and classes, his characters are truly universal as each of us empathizes with them. However, a reading of A Mid Summer Night's Dream clearly gives the idea that Shakespeare was experimenting with his art of characterization. No single towering figure gets space in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. Characters of all ages-aged or young, of all classes – of aristocracy, middle class, or poor class – do cross the stage of this Shakespearean play. That Shakespeare was still in 'the workshop' while writing this play is evident in the weak characterization of the play. At this time, you must know, Shakespeare was slowly mastering the temptation of the domination of the poetic and lyric faculty by the dramatic. As the play is more of a dream than a drama, a lyric, a dramatic fantasy, it will be proper to conclude that the centre of interest is incidents and situations which get further complicated by mistakes, disguises, crudities, absurdities, cross-purposes and the improbabilities. However, it has to be conceded that the play is a notable advance on his early comedies such as Love's Labour's Lost, Comedy of Errors, Two Gentleman of Verona etc.

5.6.1 The Characters: Theseus and Hippolyta

Theseus and Hippolyta are the central figures in the sense that it is their wedding that provides the occasion for the play to be written and staged. Besides, they provide true proportions to the fairy tribe upon one hand and upon the other to the human mortals. Theseus represents ideals of reason, heroism, serenity and graciousness. He is in love, but his love has no fantasy. He believes: Lovers and Madmen have such seething brains Such shaping fantasies that apprehend More than cool reason ever comprehends

The lunatic, the lover and the poet Are of imagination all compact.

That Theseus is a man of the world and statesman is evident in his deep respect for the Athenian law and precedent, his moderation and firmness in judgment. Though he appears to pity Hermia, yet his patriarchal mindset dominates his decisions – in wooing

Hippolyta with sword as well as in threatening Helena of dire consequences, in case, she does not obey her father Egeus. Hippolyta is the sensible woman of high rank-an Amazon as well as a great lady. She has little patience with folly and ignorance and is greatly bored with Pyramus and Thisbe, 'This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard'. On the contrary, Theseus is a benevolent monarch and sympathizes with rustics, 'The Kinder we', says Theseus, 'to give them thanks for nothing'. 5.6.2 The Lovers: Helen and Hermia, Demetrius and Lysander: Of Lysander and Demetrius, Lysander is rather more likeable. Even Theseus admits: In himself he is worthy gentleman But in this kind, wanting your father's (Egeus) voice. Though well intentioned, chivalrous and resourceful, his ill treatment of Hermia and his valentine like surrender of her to Demetrius can be explained in the light of the spell caused by Puck. Demetrius serves as a foil to Lysander. Helena 'devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry /upon this spotted and inconstant man.' It is, in fact, the passionate entreaties of Helena to Demetrius which compel Oberon to help Helena. Puck is asked to apply juice resulting in the ensuing utter confusion. Only such a dramatic genius as Shakespeare could have relied upon a not so important character as Demetrius for bringing about complications, twists and turns in the plot. As compared to the male counterparts, Hermia and Helena are exquisitely drawn. Sharply differentiated in appearance as well as in temper, they outmost their lovers. Of the two, Hermia is more pert in temper and shrewish in speech, while Helena has a milder and softer disposition. Hermia anticipates Shakespeare's powerful women characters such as Rosalind, Celia, Beatrice, Viola, Olivia etc. While Viola is practical, Helena lacks in judging human mind. Helena represents the traditional forlorn maiden love, a sweet lady doting upon an inconstant man. Whimsical, impulsive and emotional as she is, she believes –

Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is winged cupid painted blind.

The sketches of the female characters of Shakespeare though not fully flesh and blood, are significant in that they give us glimpse of girls who challenge the parental authority and conventions of the constricted society of the times. The confident, defiant girls perhaps represent the stirrings and transformations, Elizabethan society was experiencing as a result of expanding renaissance spirit. 5.7

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Summing Up In this unit you got familiarized with: • The narrative of the play. • Shakespeare's art of plot construction and characterization. • Shakespeare's handling of theme of love. You now know how skillfully Shakespeare weaves together the elements that serve the palate of his audience comprised of almost all the sections of society. The story of Theseus and Hippolyta, of Helena and Hermia, of Demetrius and Lysander and the reference to Athenian workmen cater to the aristocracy, the middle class and the poor men respectively. To this is added the invisible world of fairies and dreams. It goes to the credit of Shakespeare that he brings together the ancient, medieval and the modern world. The conflict ensues between the upholders of the traditional conventions and those resisting them. The romantic world of lovers and the realistic world of the rude mechanicals are seen together bringing out their sharp contrast. 5.8 Self Assessment Questions 1.

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How does Shakespeare weave together the three distinct worlds - that of court, streets and dreams. 2. Write a note on how the theme of love is treated in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 3. Compare and contrast Helena and Hermia. 4. Demetrius and Lysander are two typical lovers. Discuss. 5. What role do Theseus and Hippolyta play in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 6.

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What do you mean by plot? How is it different from a story? 7. How do you know that the play was written to be staged during wedding festivities? Find out the textual references. 8. Gather information about the three distinctly projected classes Shakespeare refers to namely the aristocracy, the commoners and fairies. 9. Which of the following does Oberon want that Titania should refuse to give him? o Her attendant, an Indian Prince. o Her magic Wand o Her maid in waiting o Her Love

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Unit 6: A Mid Summer Night's Dream - III 6.0 Introduction 6.1 Objectives 6.2 The World of Fairies: Oberon and Titania 6.3 The Athenian Workmen and Bottom 6.4 The Play: Is It Not -a Dream? 6.5 The Issue of Exclusion 6.5.1 Marginals/Subalterns 6.5.2 Patriarchy, Shakespeare and Global Girlhood 6.6

Summary 6.0

Introduction Shakespeare is one of those writers in the world who impacted the world in various areas of literature, culture, art, theatre and film. Over the centuries, there have been speculations surrounding various aspects of his life, his professional career, religious affiliation, gender orientation, political obligations. Considered a playwright, controversies round up the sources for collaborations, authorship and chronology of plays. There exists no other writer whose plays have been perfumed, adapted, revised and translated as many times as Shakespeare. His knowledge of the human heart and mind is unparalleled and the colourful gallery of superbly etched characters still continues to entertain and intrigue audience and spectators. A Mid Summer Night's Dream is one of most popular works on the stage and is widely performed across the stage. It is not merely a dream but a play being interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of new theories of literature, offering new insights. 6.1 Objectives • To study with a view to demystify Shakespeare - the man and his comedies. • To understand constraints under which Shakespeare, the playwright wrote. • To analysis the play in the light of theories of Exclusion, Marginality and feminism.

6.2 The World of Fairies: Oberon And Titania It is significant to note that Shakespeare brings into conjunction two extremely different worlds – the exquisite delicacy of fairy world of Titania and Oberon and Puck and the thick witted grossness and clumsiness of the world of Bottom and others. The elaborate account of fairies given by Shakespeare stands proof to the special interest taken by him in the superstitious fancies which had clustered round the fairies during his times. Compared to the present times, in Shakespeare's times, fairies held a more prominent position in popular literature. Not only in this play, the fairy lore lies scattered through Shakespeare's writings. In the world of A Mid Summer Night's Dream, it appears that you meet fairies – Over hill, over dale Through bush, through brier Over park over pale Through flood, through fire wander everywhere Swifter than moon's sphere. The graphic pictures of fairies are a step ahead of the divergent traditions Shakespeare inherited from his predecessors like Chaucer and Spenser. In fact, it was only due to Shakespeare's innovative skills that what existed as fragmentary popular world evolved into a beautiful and regulated world. What was invisible got a form – fairies are lords of imagination and ideas conveyed by the senses. Shakespeare gives a convincing world of fairies and creates an atmosphere proper to such a world. Bestowed with perpetual youth and beauty, immortality, the delightful sketches of the fairy tribe which includes Peas- blossom, Cobweb, Moth, Mustard Seed, Puck, Oberon and Titania add to the charm of the play. It is the fairy element that makes Apparently, it appears that a sort of ideal dream and it is from the fairy personages that its character as such mainly proceeds (Hudson). However, quite significantly, Shakespeare invests them with a personality. Besides performing several duties they draw comparison with mortals in being jealous, mischievous, revengeful, capricious and manipulative. In folklore, you might have heard of both wicked and good fairies. The fairies of folklore are rough and repulsive taking their style from the hempen homespun who invented them. They are wicked and dreaded spirits who abducted mortals, dealt in changelings, smote humans with diseases, blessed crops, stole cattle and punished with punching and nipping unchastity and any interference with their own privacy. But the fairies of Shakespeare, though indulging in innocent mirth and mischief, yet bless mortals, help them in keeping their dwellings clean and generally are benecolent in their altitude

towards humanity (Furness). The fairies in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* differ from the fairies in *Tempest* mainly in two ways – fairies in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* are projected as superior to mortals while Prospero uses supernatural for his own purpose. Secondly, while in *Tempest*, Oberon, Titania and Puck are drawn from folklore and tradition, Ariel is Shakespeare's original creation. In a nutshell, Shakespeare did not intend to project the fairies merely as a spectacular device. He introduced them to cater to the taste of the audience of his times who believed in witches, ghosts and fairies. The fairies are important as agents in the main plot. They are not merely to assist other effects; their story has its own plot interest. Besides, adding to the dreamy character of the play, the lovely poetry they speak adds to the unique appeal of the comedy. Puck is the prominent actor, 'mischief loving sprite', the jester of the court along with being a little bit of a rogue and sportive. Called Robin Good fellow, 'lob of spirits', Puck seems to be the domestic spirit who frightens the maidens of the village, skims milk, labours, tricks upon the 'breathless housewife', misleads night wanderers and laughs at their harm. Puck had been mentioned by writers such as Drayton, Burton, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher etc though with other names. Puck's role is important in that it is his mischief that gives twist to the plot. Oberon and Titania are represented as keeping rival courts in consequence of a quarrel. Like mortals, they love and quarrel which causes abnormality in the seasons – i.e. – 'the chiding autumn, angry winter' etc. They draw an analogy with Theseus and Hippolyta. Oberon is not Shakespeare's invention but also appears in the old French romances, German stories, Spenser's Fairy Queen as well as in Greene's James the Fourth. However, the name of Titania as the Queen of fairies seems to be Shakespeare's invention. At times, the human characters are the sport of their whims and fancies, though they have their human side too. Disturbed by the trouble of Helena, Oberon orders Puck to anoint Demetrius' eyes so 'that he may prove. More fond on her than she upon her love'. However, when he finds that Puck has committed a blunder, he arranges to set the things at right, 'What has thou done? Though has mistaken quite, And laid the love juice on some true love's sight'. Conclusively, the fairy world does not exist for the sake of delight only, it intervenes and twists the plot to the delight of the reader.

6.3 The Athenian Workmen and Bottom Though called Athenian Workmen, the group is characteristically English belonging to various professions which were common in England. Their presence in the play is significant as it makes Shakespeare's vision of humanity complete and round. They offer well marked contrasts – their rudeness, roughness, coarseness and poverty is contrasted with the majesty, culture and opulence of Theseus and Hippolyta on the one hand and on the other with airy, ethereal, romantic and refined Oberon, Titania and their attendant fairies. The mechanicals, forming a group of amateur actors in Peter Quince's Company act unabashedly the 'comical tragedy of Pyramus and Thisbe' and thus add to the play's entertainment value. The tragedy, they enact, parodies the love theme of the play besides giving a glimpse of the aesthetics of the folk people vis-à-vis aesthetics of the cultured. Bottom Being simply the best wit of any handicraftsman in Athens, Bottom is the most distinctly drawn character of the play. Though called Athenian, he is thoroughly Elizabethan and completely English. Deriving his name from bottom in weaving which is either a ball of thread or the block on which it is wound, Bottom is a self assured and conceited actor, 'there is not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he'.

Of all the Athenians i.e. Quince, Snug, Flute and Starveling, he is 'the shallowest thick skin of that barren sort', "nothing less than hateful fool". He relieves Peter Quince, the stage manager and takes upon himself the whole management of the play. He shows himself up as the romantic, the poetical, the imaginative man, who naturally takes command. He is an artist who directs the whole proceedings, the calling of the roll of players, the description of the piece, the casting of the parts etc. He alone shows the enthusiasm for the drama itself; others are only concerned with pleasing the Duke-if they frighten – the ladies they may be hanged; if they please they may receive a little pension, 'a six pence a day'. Bottom may be charged with being conceited, however, it is he only who shows passion for the drama. The creative artist is stirring in the soul of Bottom. He is set to play the principal part, however, he expresses his wish to play Thisbe as well as Lion too. Even when, Bottom is finally restricted to one part, that of Pyramus, he shows his eagerness to come to grips with the details, particularly the matter of beards, 'to discharge it in either your straw coloured beard, your orange tawny beard, your purple in grain beard, or your French crown colour beard, your perfect yellow'. At places, this eagerness, this overconfidence becomes gigantic – but do not you think it is better to be vain like Bottom than to be dead in the spirit like Snug or Starveling. His understanding of the theatre is revealed when he corrects even the Duke, 'No, in truth, Sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisbe's cue; she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.'

As discussed in other units in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, Bottom appears to represent the folk theatre as against the urban theatre represented by Duke and aristocrats. Critics go on to point out that Shakespeare's representation of Bottom draws similarities with the great Ned Alleyn whom Shakespeare had observed at the Rose Theatre listening to the synopsis of a new play. In fact, it is reasonable to believe that Shakespeare caused his mechanics to ape the methods of the professional actors. Bottom follows the creative artist's ambition to play the different types of character roles. Further, the ambition of the theatrical personalities for applause is also ridiculed in Bottom. Puck out of sheer mischief puts an ass head over him. Though glimpsed as something monstrous, gross and earthy, Titania falls for Bottom. Deserted by his companions, conjured into fairyland, metamorphosed Bottom is promoted into the paramour of the fairy queen who embraces, fondles and asks her fairies to look after him. He carries off this role bravely with a mingled touch of wit, philosophy and masculine complacency :

Methinks mistress, you should have little reason for that; and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together

now a days; the more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion. He enjoys his present role of queen's beloved, 'I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master Cobweb: "If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you, and that 'get your weapons in your hand and kill me a red-hipped humble bee on the top of a thistle and bring me the honey bag." A glance at the play suggests that Bottom is the only fully developed character in the play. Apparently, it appears that *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* has all the characters of a dream. Its action is ruled by caprice and moonlit madness; Its personages appear to be under the spell of visions or to walk and talk in sleep. But lastly, there is Bottom who is neither a flickering self, nor a bewildered passionate lover, but a man of this world,

comfortably housed in flesh, personage of some note among the artisans of Athens' (Priestley). 6.4 THE PLAY: IS IT NOT A DREAM? That the title of the play mentions dream is, enough to underscore the dreamy nature of the play. Hippolyta's speech in the very First Act of the play, '

Four days will quickly steep themselves in night / Four nights will quickly dream away the time'

refers to the world of dreams wherein exists only fun, laughter, gaiety and romance. Further, the bizarre, the magical events and happenings cannot be explained but for dream and magic. Bottom articulates the dream like nature of the day when he says: I have

had a dream, past the wit of man to say what

dream it was Man is but an ass if he go about it expand this dream. Not only in this play but even in other plays of Shakespeare, dreams are significant. They seem to cover up how events occur without explanation. Time seems to stop; impossible becomes possible. With the introduction of dream, Shakespeare recreates an environment wherein anything is possible- Titania and Oberon resemble the stately, graceful creations of our imagination when we are asleep. The fairies are like those unfinished childish fancies, begun and broken off which we see in dreams. Puck is the representative of the grotesque, immoral inhuman creations which so strongly go and come in dreams. The changes of scenes, the appearance and disappearance of the personages cross and re-cross one another with the bewildering capacity of a dream. Carried away to great distances, fairies move as swiftly as thought in the spiced Indian air. It appears that Shakespeare learnt all about any fairies and elves in Warwickshire as a little boy sitting on his mother's knees. The presence of Pease blossom, Cobweb, Mustard Seed and Moth – attendants of Fairy Queen Titania builds up an appearance of the fairy land, 'of the stuff of which dreams are made of' with their alluring unreality and fantasy. The fairies 'hunt the worms in a rose bud, tease bats, chase spiders and 'lord it over nightingale'. Their elements are twilight, moonlight, dew and spring perfumes. They take care of the flowers, adorn them with pearls of the dew, are the enemies of all gloomy and ugly things, drive them from Titania's bed, and sing to her as she sleeps. In beautiful things, such spirits dwell. Oberon is the spirit of a graver sort, who takes no delight in mischief for its own sake, though he can play a magic trick to serve his own ends, and he is willing to assist the lovers. Puck is the domestic spirit who hunts farm and dairy, and plays childish practical jokes. Titania is involved in the misadventures of the night by falling a victim to the magic flower.

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fairies do not exist for their own sake in the play, it is they who twist and transform the narrative. Puck is the chief of the troubles, mistaking Lysander for Demetrius; he anoints the love juice on Lysander's eyes. Lysander awakens and through the virtue of the charm, falls instantly and violently in love with her. Again, it is Puck who transforms Bottom into an ass whose song wakens Titania who at once falls in love with him under the influence of the magic flower. It goes to the credit of Shakespeare's plot construction skill that he weaves superbly the fairy world with several other worlds in the comedy. The fairies are linked with Theseus and Hippolyta, with the lovers, and with the clowns and in fact, it is they who mix with every group in the play. Besides their contribution to the action of the play, they render the play a grace, loveliness and magic, so unmatched. Fairies speak poetry of the most exquisite type, 'more tune able than lark to shepherd's ear/when wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear'. It is not surprising therefore to find E.A. Poe exclaim, "When I am asked for a definition of poetry, I think of Titania and Oberon of A Mid Summer Night's Dream". Written as the play is in the first phase of Shakespeare's professional career as a playwright, here one finds Shakespeare's young heart outpouring his poetic fancies in full vein. It is the fairies that make the play 'an elf play, a fairy carnival of inimitable mirth and melody, steeped in a mid-summer atmosphere. 6.5

The Issue of Exclusion There is a common understanding that Elizabethan literature focuses upon the aristocracy and forwards the ideology of the upper classes. Shakespeare's days too have been criticized by Post colonial critics for endorsing the discourse of colonialism. Crosby in his analysis concludes that Shakespeare failed to catch the restlessness, uneasiness and anxiety of the subaltern which figure prominently in his contemporary writers. Shakespeare has often been denigrated as anti-democratic and contemptuous of the crowd. That he was an unfailing supporter of the Elizabethan social hierarchy, however, reveals only the half truth. In fact, while writing plays, Shakespeare was governed only by certain factors – marketability, taste and choice of the audience, stage ability, patronage, and political as well as economic constraints. Even a cursory glance at Shakespeare's plays would suggest that he was writing for a most heterogeneous kind of audience comprising both the vulgar 'and the refined'. In *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, besides the fairy world, the three layered social hierarchy he introduces is as follows: • Theseus, the Duke of Athens and Hippolyta form the first social stratum. • Lysander, Demetrius, Egeus, Helena, Hermia, the noblemen and women of the Duke's Court. • Plebians like Bottom, Quince, Flute, Starveling, Tom Snout, Smug etc. Evidently, characters in the third category form the lower class or the excluded class. Their subordination is implicit in the class they belong to; thus Bottom is a weaver; Flute is a bellow mender with the falsetto voice; Quince is a carpenter and Starveling is a tailor. Puck refers to their inferior rank by calling them 'a crew of patches, rude mechanicals/ that work for bread'. They are 'hempen home spuns' and are outside the established structures of political representation. Economically deprived, they form the class of marginals. Bottom's following speech brings to surface the deep cleavage between the high and the low classes: In any case, let Thisbe have clean linen, and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And most dear actors, eat no onion or garlic (11.ii.35-9) The dialogues of the rustics reflect the constrictions of the class. Frightening the ladies, forcing them shriek, presenting a lion among ladies are practices which invoke punishment. Incorporated in the text are the measures through which aristocracy maintains its stronghold. The dominant section as is revealed in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* uses not only religion, tradition and culture but also the political and bureaucratic powers and if nothing works also indulges in violence to perpetuate its dominant position. Bottom's rebellious gestures appear subversive in intent and are seen as challenging the power of the aristocracy. Barber, however adds another dimension to Bottom's challenges. In *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, he notices the conflict between the two aesthetics – the archaic, amateur, folk theatre and the mature Elizabethan theatre. Referring to the theatre of Elizabethan times, he evinces in his study how the festive or folk elements in Shakespeare's plays were appropriated and absorbed by the mature theatre, 'Shakespeare's theatre was taking over on professional and everyday basis functions which until his time had largely been performed by amateurs on holidays his comedy presents holiday magic as imagination, games as expressive gestures' J.D. Palmer finds in Bottom's famous protest to the Duke, 'an artist's anxiety to be well understood'. However, studied from the point of view of Exclusion, the protest offers a problematization of the question of representation of subalterns. Subalterns are pushed to the margins and are denied recognition. Recognition is a question of social status. Theseus' interruption opens a conflictual space and reveals Court's hegemonic ends: Pyramus: O, wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss. Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me! Theseus: The Wall, Me thinks, being sensible, should curse again. Pyramus: No in truth, sir he should not 'Deceiving me' is Thisbe's cue You shall see it will fall pat I as told you. (V.I.174-81) 6.5.1 Marginals/Subalterns Studied from the point of view of the theory of subalternity, Bottom's challenge appears as his bid to wrest initiative and settle scores with the Duke. Again, studied from the point of view of Exclusion theory, various conventions and techniques of traditional drama such as use of dreams, mixing of human and non-human world, use of masks etc open up channels of inclusion in the larger society. Queen's infatuation in dream for a lower category person i.e. Bottom suggests a breakdown of categories. Victor Turner's *Theory of Communitas (The Ritual Process : 1969)* too seems to suggest that ass's head that Bottom wears is not merely a comic attribute. It suggests lower class's rising aspirations to break the hierarchy of the class. Shakespeare's picture of Elizabethan society evidently represents social, economic and cultural chasm between the two groups-elites and non-elites. By depicting the protest and resistance of the subaltern class, Shakespeare hints at the fissures, fractures and 'rupture' of social bonds. It is quite interesting to note that the implicit suggestion of resistance in mechanical's amateur theatrical in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, said to have been written between 1590-96 can be traced to the popular uprisings taking place in Elizabethan times. Underscoring an automatic assumption of an equation between crises and rebellion, such uprisings offer invaluable insights into the subtle dynamics of power. Uprisings, in fact, are seen as attempts to generate opportunities for the socially excluded. In his famous study, Theodore B. Leinwand links Titania's lament and the artisans' presence with the 'anti- enclosure riot of distinctly violent proportions generally referred to as the Oxford shire rising of 1596'. Incidentally, the leaders of this uprising were all artisans, the main being Bartholomew Stere, a carpenter and Richard Bradshaw, a miller. Sharp Buchanan (1980) too refers to forty food riots in west of England during 1586-1631. Brian Manner, another

Shakespearean scholar refers to several such disturbances in 1595 alone, one being initiated by a silk weaver. With such a scenario, it is but natural for a dramatist to insert such social and cultural signs of unusual economic distress. Seen in this context, it is also not without reason why Shakespeare picked up Bottom, the weaver as the leader to play such an important role in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*. In short, deconstructing Shakespeare's play in the context of narratives of exclusion subalternity helps in understanding the hegemonic grammar of social and political order.

6.5.2 Patriarchy, Shakespeare and the Global Girlhood: Women, especially in Shakespeare's comedies do take a central stage- there is no doubt about it. Though Hippolyta, Hermia, Helena and Queen cannot be equated with Shakespeare's heroines in other plays in terms of fully grown characters, yet they play – significant roles in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*. Hermia and Helena openly defy the existing patriarchal rulings and dare to disregard the father's advice in matrimonial matters. As a typical Elizabethan father, Egeus is privileged with double fold rights - he can restrain Hermia, his daughter from marrying a man 'he' disapproves and again forcing her into an alliance which 'he' favours: As she is mine, I may dispose of her; Which shall be either to this gentleman, Or to her death, according to our law Immediately provided in that case. (I. i. 42-45) Theseus' advice to Hermia "To you, your father should be as a God" (I.i. 47) throws to the wind, "renaissance precepts of companionate marriage." Again Theseus' reprimand exposes the general attitude of the age. The father is one: that composed your beauties, yea, and one To whom you are but as a form in wax (I.i 48-49) It is his prerogative, "To leave the figure, or disfigure it" (I. 151). Evidently, here is strong suggestion that patriarchal postulations will not spare Hermia's individual resolution – she will have to die or she will remain cloistered rest of her life "chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon" (I.i.73). Elizabethan society bears similarity to our society in that here girls are assigned that much liberty as the patriarchy feels justified to, not more. However, signs of rebellion do exist and when Lysander proposed elopement, "If thou lov'st me then/Steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night" (I.i.163-64). Hermia readily agrees to go to a place where "Athenian law/cannot pursue (i.i.462-63)". However, she sticks to preserve her chastity and virginity, ideals so important in Elizabethan age. Helena's dilemma illustrates another form of patriarchal repression. She casts off her feminine conventions without upholding her dignity, "I am your spaniel; and Demetrius, The more you beat me, I will fawn on you" (II.ii 202-03). It is she who is victimized even by Puck – actually she seems to suffer from persecution mania. In the relationship between Oberon and Titania, you can read signs of struggles regarding political supremacy as well as sexual subordination. Oberon's displeasure at Titania's excessive fondness for a 'changeling boy' (II.i. 120) appears to be an expression of 'masculine anxiety about the uses of patriarchal power over women' specially, 'over women's sexuality.' Elizabethan society as depicted by Shakespeare bears an analogy to the Indian society in the sense that men's infidelity is deliberately undermined by the patriarchy where as women's infidelity is not tolerated upon. 6.6

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Summing Up In this unit you have got familiarized with the following: • The play is not merely a dream. It discusses some of the issues which stirred the people of Elizabeth's times. • The mechanicals no doubt add to the entertainment value of the play, however interpreted in the light of theories of Exclusion and marginality, they represent a class which has been kept out of the mainstream through a design. • Bottom and mechanicals' bid to perform the play of Pyramus and Thisbe can be interpreted in terms of creative people's aspiration to ape the methods of the professional actors. 6.7 Self-Assessment Questions 1.

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What popular beliefs are connected with fairies in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*? Make a list of them. 2. What absurdities of stage-management occur in the mechanics' play? 3. Is the play only a Dream or nothing else? Discuss and substantiate your answer with examples. 4.

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Shakespeare endorsing the ideology of the upper classes? Discuss. 5. The rebellious gestures of Bottom question the challenge the power of aristocracy. Do not you think that the protest offers a problematization of the question of representation of subalterns? 6. Trace the signs of rebellion among the youth especially women in Shakespeare's play

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A Mid Summer Night's Dream. Questions 1. Write a note on the significance of the title with special reference to the world Dream in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 2. Does the Pyramus and Thisbe story have any relevance to the main story, or is it simply a comical interlude? 3. Is the play merely a Dream? What other issues are raised by Shakespeare? 4. The mechanicals are a source of mockery through the entire play? Is Shakespeare making a class commentary here? 5. Discuss how Shakespeare deals with gender issues in the play.

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Module 2: History Plays

Unit 7: Shakespeare's Play: Henry V 7.0 Introduction 7.1 Unit Objective 7.2 Character List 7.3 Summary and Analysis Act I: Prologue 7.3.1 Summary and Analysis Act I: Scene 1 7.3.2 Summary and Analysis Act I: Scene 2 7.4 Summary and Analysis Act II: Prologue 7.4.1 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 1 7.4.2 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 2 7.4.3 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 3 7.4.4 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 4 7.5 Summary and Analysis Act III: Prologue 7.5.1 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 1 7.5.2 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 2 7.5.3 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 3 7.5.4 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 4 7.5.5 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 5 7.5.6 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 6 7.5.7 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 7 7.0 Introduction (Summary of the Play) As indicated at the close of Henry IV, Part II, King Henry V is planning on entering into a war with France over some disputed lands and titles. He has instructed the Archbishop to be sure that his claims are valid. When the play opens, the Archbishop explains to his Bishop how he plans to convince the king to enter into a war with France, thus protecting the church's property, which might otherwise be placed in the hands of the state rather than left in the church's control. After the king is convinced of the validity of his claims, an ambassador from France arrives with a rejection of the claims; he also delivers an insulting barrel of tennis balls from the French Dauphin, who still considers King Henry to be the silly and rowdy Prince Hal. As they are on the verge of leaving for France, King Henry is tending to some business — releasing a prisoner for a minor offense — and then he turns to three of his trusted advisors and has them executed for conspiring with the French to assassinate him. Meanwhile, in the French court, no one seems to take Henry seriously. The entire court is contemptuous of his claims and of his abilities. They are so overconfident that they do not send help to the town of Harfleur, which Henry easily conquers. After this victory, Henry gives strict instructions that all the citizens are to be treated with mercy and that his soldiers are not to loot, rob, or insult the native population. However, a companion from Hal's youth, Bardolph, an inveterate thief, steals a small communion plate, and, as a result, he is executed. In spite of the English victory, the French still do not express concern, even though the Princess Katharine is involved; if Henry is victorious, she will become Queen of England; as a result, she feels the necessity to learn the English language, and so she begins taking instructions in that language. Meanwhile, the reports that the English are sick and tattered allow the French to prepare for the battle with complete confidence, especially since they outnumber the English 60,000 to 12,000 troops. Just before the crucial Battle of Agincourt, an emissary once again approaches King Henry with demands that he immediately surrender his person. His demands are rejected, and King Henry, in a patriotic speech, urges his troops to fight for "Harry, England, and St. George." By miraculous means, the English are victorious and the French are shamed into submission. At the end of the play, King Henry's demands are granted, and he is seen wooing and winning Princess Katharine as his future queen. 7.1 Unit Objective This Unit intends to inform the learners on - The characters in Henry V. - The summary and analysis of Prologues (I, II, & III) and their including Acts 7.2 Character List King Henry V The ruling monarch, who is presented in the play as the ideal Christian king. The main purpose of the play is to convey the idea that Henry V represents in all aspects the model of the ideal ruler. The Duke of Exeter He is the uncle of Henry V and a trusted advisor; he functions as both a statesman and as a warrior. Even though he is left in charge of the city of Harfleur, where he is instructed to rule with leniency, he turns up at the Battle of Agincourt, and later he acts as the English ambassador and mediator of the treaty between Henry V and the King of France.

The Duke of Bedford A brother to Henry, he is used to suggest the close familial bonds between the two brothers. (Historically, he was not present at the Battle of Agincourt, since Henry had appointed him as Regent of England during his absence in France.) The Duke of Gloucester Henry's youngest brother. Although he is present in most of the scenes in which Henry appears, he has little function in the drama except to illustrate, as Bedford does, familial loyalty. He is placed in charge of some military operations, and he is gently chided by his brother Henry for hoping that the French will not attack while the army is tired. His remark allows Henry to speak on the necessity of relying on the Divine Providence of God: "We are in God's hand, brother, not in theirs." The Duke of York Henry's cousin, whom he is very fond of; upon learning of his death during the Battle of Agincourt, Henry is moved to tears when he hears of the duke's courage and his last words of loyalty to the king. The Archbishop of Canterbury He is a man of great learning and a master of the English language. He is one of the first persons who brings forth Henry's claim to the French lands, and by so doing, he protects the church's own property from being taken for royal expenditures. He is an extremely astute man, supporting Henry's army with heavy levies from the church; because of this, he is able to retain for the church the basic lands from which the levies are derived. The Bishop of Ely An assistant to the Archbishop, he functions mainly as a sounding board for the Archbishop's ideas. The Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop, and Sir Thomas Grey The conspirators who accept money from France to assassinate Henry V. They are discovered and immediately executed for treason. Their betrayal of Henry evokes from the king a bitter denunciation of their intentions and causes him to wonder whom he can trust. Lord Scroop and the Earl of Cambridge had been especially good friends and confidants of the king. The Earl of Westmoreland Another of Henry's administrators who, early in the play, urges him to press for his claims in France. The Earl of Salisbury His only function in the drama is to give a patriotic speech in Act IV, when it is discovered that the French armies far outnumber the English forces. He gives a six-line speech and is heard of no more. The Earl of Warwick Like the Earl of Salisbury, he plays no particular role in the drama. He appears in several scenes but speaks only one line in the entire play. He is sent along with Gloucester to make sure that Fluellen and Williams do not get into a real fight; otherwise, he has no function. Captain Fluellen An intensely loyal Welshman who provides much of the humor in the play by his eagerness to argue and to show off his knowledge of the classics, even though he gets most things mixed up. He is a very proud, opinionated, conceited, testy person who is willing to argue with anyone about anything. Captain Gower A friend of Fluellen's, he often serves merely to draw out Fluellen's eccentricities. He is a good soldier who is actually more perceptive about human nature than is Fluellen, and he realizes quickly that Pistol is a cowardly braggart. Captain Jamy A Scotsman who appears only briefly in Act III, Scene 2, and seems immensely to enjoy arguing. Captain Macmorris He appears only in Act III, Scene 2, when he gets into an argument with Fluellen concerning the Irish. Bardolph This character is retained from the earlier Henry IV plays, in which he was distinguished by having a bad complexion, a fiery red nose, and carbuncles on his cheeks. For some reason, he is now a lieutenant in this play, but he is still a coward and a thief. He is hanged during the course of the play for stealing a communion plate from a French church. Pistol Like Bardolph, Pistol also appears in the Henry IV plays and thus would be a character whom the audience would be familiar with. He is a ranting and raving coward, a "swaggering rascal," a "fustian rascal," and a "bottle-ale rascal." At the end of Act V, Scene 1, Pistol is finally dispensed with, thus bringing to a close a series of characters that began three plays earlier in Henry IV, Part I. Nym A corporal who is as much of a coward as Bardolph and Pistol are, and he is also an accomplice in their thefts. Like Bardolph, Nym ends up on the gallows. The Boy One of Shakespeare's magnificent minor characters, he is younger than the others, and yet he has the quick wit and intelligence to discern the cowardice of Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. When they try to teach him how to pick pockets, he is outraged and threatens to leave their service. Unfortunately, he is killed when the French raid King Henry's supply area during the Battle of Agincourt. Hostess Quickly A simple, uneducated woman who is married to Pistol but has an unabashed admiration for Sir John Falstaff. She dies of the French malady (syphilis) just before Pistol is to return to England. Michael Williams One of the three soldiers whom King Henry, in disguise, meets the night before the Battle of Agincourt. He questions the king's rightness to wage this war, but he never questions his own obedience to the crown. He wonders if the king doesn't

have a heavy moral obligation for the souls of those who die in battle. Williams even wonders if the king could not use himself for ransom so that the rest of them will not get killed. When Henry, in disguise, challenges Williams, Williams accepts and they promise to fight each other if they are both alive after the Battle of Agincourt. They exchange gloves so as to recognize each other. Afterwards, when it is discovered that he was arguing and challenging the king, Williams defends himself in such an honest and straightforward manner that the king rewards him with a glove filled with money. John Bates and Alexander Court Along with Williams, these two men represent the average or common English soldier. Court has only one line, but Bates has a slightly larger role; for example, he does not share Williams' concern as to whether or not the king's cause is a just one; it is sufficient enough for him to know his duty, and his duty is to fight for the king. Charles VI The quiet and dignified King of France, who is able to sense the impending danger caused by the approaching English forces, but whereas he grasps the significance, he cannot communicate his fears to the French nobility. He orders his son, the Dauphin, not to go to battle, but apparently this order is ignored since the Dauphin is at the Battle of Agincourt. In the final scene of the play, Charles delivers a gentle speech which is conciliatory as he looks forward to a time of peace and a prosperous union with England through the son whom he hopes his daughter Kate will provide King Henry. The Dauphin Next in line for the throne of France, the Dauphin is insolent, opinionated, and stubborn. He knows of Henry's wild, youthful escapades, but he is not perceptive enough to realize that Henry has changed. He still thinks of Henry as a mere wastrel, a young man to whom no attention should be paid. Therefore, he sends Henry a barrel of tennis balls, implying that Henry should content himself with playing ball and not waging war. At the Battle of Agincourt, the Dauphin is more concerned with singing the praises of his horse than he is with the serious business of war. After the defeat of the French, he bitterly feels the shame of it, and he does not appear again in the play. The Constable of France The official commander-in-chief of the French forces, he stands out as one of the most capable of the French forces. Yet ultimately, he too succumbs to the temptation of not taking the English seriously; as a result, he is soundly beaten by them. The Duke of Burgundy One of the powerful French noblemen and one of the officials of the court, he is responsible for drafting the treaty at the end of the play; he delivers a splendid speech on the virtues of peace.

The Duke of Orleans Like the other French lords, he is boastful and contemptuous of the English forces, but he does defend the Dauphin when the Constable suggests that the Dauphin might not be as brave as he would like people to believe. The Duke of Bourbon One of the French lords who is terribly ashamed about the "ready losses" of the French to the English: "Shame and eternal shame, nothing but shame." Montjoy The French herald, or messenger, in charge of delivering the various ultimatums from the French to the English. After the defeat of the French, he comes humbly to ask for peace and request permission for the French to be allowed to collect their dead. Rambures and Grandpré Two French lords who appear only briefly. The Duke of Bretagne and The Duke of Berri Two noblemen who are onstage only briefly and receive orders from the King of France. Queen Isabel The French queen who joins in the negotiations for peace in the hope that her feminine voice will help soothe certain matters in the negotiations. She is pleased with the union between Henry and her daughter, Kate, and hopes for a strong union of the two kingdoms as a result of the marriage. Katharine A young girl of fourteen who accepts the fact that she will be given to Henry as his bride; consequently, she is beginning to learn English for that day when she will be Queen of England. Alice Katharine's lady-in-waiting; she is the well-mannered companion of the young princess. 7.3 Summary and Analysis Act I: Prologue Summary The Chorus (one person) enters and calls upon the "Muse" to help in presenting this play since it deals with such a lofty subject matter. The Chorus explains that the small Elizabethan stage can hardly transform itself into the fields of France, or into an English court, or into a battlefield upon which thousands of horses and soldiers fight; with imagination, however, when "we talk of horses . . . you [can] see them" moving across the landscape. Thus the greatness of the subject matter — a subject dealing with England's ideal king, Henry V — requires that the audience exert its greatest imagination to be able to see in their minds the vastness and the splendor that the play recalls. The audience must also be tolerant of the actors who attempt to portray personages of such high estate. And finally, the audience must be prepared for "jumping o'er times" back and forth, from England to France.

Analysis Because of the ambitions of the playwright and the limitations of the Elizabethan stage, an introduction is in order and the Prologue serves as that introduction. Chronologically, this is only the second time in Shakespeare's career that he has used the device of a Chorus to introduce a drama (the first time he used a Chorus, it introduced Romeo and Juliet). One of Shakespeare's purposes in using the Chorus is to be able to celebrate the greatness of Henry V directly; for that reason, he does not have to rely solely on the other characters to sing the king's praises. The Chorus also sets the time and place for the drama and excites the imagination of the audience. The audience, of course, must use its imagination in any type of drama, but now Shakespeare is demanding that they extend even further their imagination and create large battlefields and countries across the sea and hordes of horses charging up and down the landscape. This demand to the audience is partly an answer to the classicists who complained that Shakespeare took too many liberties with the Elizabethan stage and violated the classical sense of the unities of time and place. It is, nonetheless, effective. Before each of the subsequent acts, Shakespeare will also use the Chorus as a device to compensate for the limitations of the stage and continually to remind the audience of a need for imaginative cooperation.

7.3.1 Summary and Analysis Act I: Scene 1 Summary The opening scene is set in the ante-chamber of the king's palace in London. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely are discussing a bill that is still pending, one that was to be passed during King Henry IV's reign. The bill would have divested the church of more than half of its lands and wealth — in fact, it "would drink the cup and all." Because of civil strife at that time, the bill was forgotten, but now it is once again being discussed. Fortunately, King Henry V is a true lover of the church and, it is believed, can be dissuaded from supporting the bill. Canterbury describes the changes that have overtaken Prince Hal since he became King Henry V: Never was such a sudden scholar made; Never came reformation in a flood, With such a heady currance, scouring faults. (32-34) While still a prince, Hal and his "unlettered, rude and shallow" companions spent their time indulging in riotous living. The wildness of his youth seemed to have left him the moment his father died: The breath no sooner left his father's body, But that his wildness, mortified in him, Seem'd to die too. (25-27) Henry V is now a sober, wise, and beloved king; in the same way that "The strawberry grows underneath the nettle / And wholesome berries thrive and ripen," so did Prince Hal conceal his real worth as a youth and then emerge fully ripened into a magnificent monarch. Canterbury then discusses how he has been trying to sway the king against the bill. He has suggested to the king that instead of taking so much from the church's holdings, the king should regain some of France's domains, which would yield much more revenue. He maintains that Henry has a claim on the French crown derived from his great-grandfather, King Edward III. The Archbishop of Canterbury then explains that he and the king were earlier interrupted by the French ambassador, and that he is to meet again with the king to further explain the matter to him. He has an appointment to see the king at four o'clock and must be on his way. Ely expresses his eagerness to know the outcome of the meeting.

Analysis For a full understanding of King Henry in Henry V, it is essential that one knows something about him as Prince Hal, as Shakespeare conceived of him in the earlier plays, Henry IV, Part I, and Henry IV, Part II. This background information is necessary because Shakespeare probably conceived of the series as a related group of plays leading up to presenting Henry V as England's ideal king. Certainly, the traits and qualities attributed to Henry are a result, in part, of what he has learned from his past life and past experience. Scene, One opens with a discussion of Henry's qualities and his past escapades, emphasizing the differences between the wild youth he once was and the wise and prudent king that he has become. The discussion between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Ely reminds the audience of the tremendous changes that have taken place in

Henry since his coronation. Upon the death of Henry IV, the wild behavior of Prince Hal's past was immediately rejected and replaced by the sober duties of kingship. Thus the opening scene begins the essential theme of the play — that is, the "miraculous" transformation of a wild, impetuous, and dissolute prince into an ideal, perfect Christian monarch, yet one who is also fully aware of various, earthly political intrigues. After due praise of the new king, the churchmen bring into focus the political intrigue in terms of the bill which will deprive the church of a major portion ("the better half") of her wealth and revenues. The Archbishop's interest lies first in the preservation of both the state and the church, and thus, he must be diplomatic when he ensures that neither church nor state be deprived; he is, of course, willing to make large levies on church revenues for the sake of the state, but he also must see to it that the church retain control of its revenues. As a result, with diplomatic cunning and political intrigue, the Archbishop hopes to convince King Henry to seek additional revenues in France; to do this, he cleverly advances the theory that Henry is entitled to certain domains in France. If he is successful in this stratagem, the church will not be deprived of its revenues. The Archbishop's chances of success in persuading King Henry are enhanced by the fact that King Henry is "full of grace and fair regard," and he is also a "true lover of the holy church." Consequently, this ideal monarch, through his love of the church and through his spiritual virtue, will be manipulated into a political conflict with France. Consequently, the theme of King Henry's moral growth will be presented against a background of moral political choices and political intrigues instigated by representatives of the spiritual church.

7.3.2 Summary and Analysis Act I: Scene 2 Summary Scene Two takes place in the "presence chamber" of the palace. The king wants to hear from the bishops concerning the rightness of his claims in France before he sees the ambassadors from France. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely enter to explain to the king his rightful claim to the French throne. But before they begin, the king warns them to tell the truth. Henry understands that a legitimate claim would mean a war with France and would cost thousands of lives. He wants more information about the "Salic law" that France is using to disprove Henry's claim. Therefore, he urges Canterbury to begin and to speak with "your conscience wash'd / As pure as sin with baptism."

In a very long and involved speech, Canterbury explains that the king has a legitimate claim to the French crown. The Salique (Salic) laws were once applied to a small area in Germany (not even France) called Salique Land. There was, long ago, a decision made by the settlers of the area that decreed that the family's inheritance would not pass on to the women. This law "was not devised for the realm of France," for several of the kings of France obtained their right to the throne through their mothers' line. What is more, Canterbury explains, the French are simply using this law to keep Henry from the French throne. King Henry asks if he can in good conscience make the claim. The Archbishop of Canterbury responds with a biblical quote from the Book of Numbers: "When a man dies, let the inheritance / Descend unto the daughter." He then urges the king to fight for his claim by remembering the great exploits of his great-grandfather, Edward III, whose mother was Isabella, the daughter of Phillip IV of France. Here, the Bishop of Ely, Exeter, and Westmoreland all implore the king to remember his noble ancestry and his regal blood. They remind the king of his courageous heritage and the unswerving loyalty of his subjects. The Archbishop of Canterbury promises him that not only his subjects, but the clergy as well, will financially support him in his fight for the French throne: In aid whereof we of the spirituality Will raise your Highness such a mighty sum As never did the clergy at one time Bring in to any of your ancestors. (132-35) Henry expresses his fears for the Scottish defenses if he were to leave, recalling that every time that English kings have gone off to war, the Scots "come pouring like the tide into a breach." While Canterbury believes there is nothing to worry about, Ely and Exeter seem to agree with the king. Canterbury responds, then, using the metaphor of a bee colony in which he compares the working of a kingdom to that of a beehive: every bee has an assigned task to perform, and they all work to accomplish a common goal for the total good. Therefore, he urges Henry to divide up his forces into quarters and, with one quarter, he can conquer France and leave the other three-fourths to defend the homeland: If we, with thrice such powers left at home Cannot defend our own doors from the dog, Let us be worried, and our nation lose

The name of hardiness and policy. (217-20) The king seems satisfied with this suggestion and pronounces that he and his forces are going to France. He then summons the ambassadors from France. They are sent by the Dauphin (the king's son) and not by the King of France. Henry assures the ambassadors that they can speak freely and safely because "We are no tyrant, but a Christian king," and he urges them to speak frankly about what is on the Dauphin's mind. They say that the Dauphin is aware of Henry's claim upon the French throne, but that the Dauphin believes Henry to be young and immature and worthy only of the gift which he sent with his ambassadors: tennis balls. King Henry, with dignity and clarity, responds that he will go to France to play a match that will "dazzle all the eyes of France." The tennis balls, he says, will be transformed into cannonballs, and many will "curse the Dauphin's scorn." Granting the ambassadors safe conduct, Henry bids them farewell. After their exit, he says that he hopes that he will make the "sender [the Dauphin] blush at it," and then he begins to prepare for war with France. Analysis In Scene One, we only heard about King Henry V; now, in Scene Two, the praise we heard is justified with Henry's appearance. Here is the ideal Christian king who has rejected the depraved companions of his youth. King Henry is seen as a prudent and conscientious ruler; that is, he has apparently already decided to wage war against France, and now he seeks from the Archbishop a public statement justifying his actions. And furthermore, he is fully and conscientiously aware of the loss of lives that this struggle will entail. To the Archbishop, he admonishes: Therefore take heed how you impawn our person, How you awake our sleeping sword of war: We charge you, in the name of God, take heed; For never two such kingdoms did contend Without much fall of blood. . . . (21-25) With this speech emerges the theme which will be carried forth to the battlefield later in the play — the theme of the horrors of war and the loss of many lives which this encounter will entail and, thereby, the heavy responsibility which it places upon the conscience of the king who decides to wage such a war.

Consequently, the king commands the Archbishop to consult his own conscience before speaking and justifying such an undertaking. Here is the mature Christian king, concerned not with just matters of state, but with the conscience of the entire state (or nation) as well. The Archbishop explains the justification for Henry's actions in a speech that has to be one of the most garbled, confused, and tedious speeches in all of Shakespeare's works (in dramatic productions, this speech is usually cut and altered severely). When the Archbishop, the head of the church of England, pleads with Henry to let "the sin [be] upon my head" if there be any wrongdoing, Henry resolves to proceed; he has full assurance that he can go to war with a clear conscience. When Henry expresses concern about an invasion from Scotland (it has happened before when the king and his army are absent from England), the Archbishop answers with the now-famous beehive comparison. This elaborate comparison of the state or human society to a beehive is a familiar Renaissance idea which supports the idea that all classes (royalty, workers, drones, and fighters) are necessary for the welfare of the perfect state. Another facet of Henry's character is revealed during his handling of the ambassadors from France. The Dauphin has apparently heard a great deal about the wildness and immaturity of the young Prince Hal and is openly insulting to the newly reformed king. (By the Dauphin's assumptions about Henry's past life, Shakespeare also assumed that his audience was familiar with his earlier plays about Prince Hal.) But Henry is not rankled by the Dauphin's insults; instead, he responds with an evenness of temper, amazing self-control, and complete courtesy: We understand him well, How he comes o'er us with our wilder days, Not measuring what use we made of them. (266-68) Henry means, as was indicated in Scene One by the Archbishop, that the "wilder days" were a part of the king's training and have been put to good use in his present knowledge of human nature. In this scene, the Archbishop is presented as a person of great learning and one who is a master at garbling the English language in a serious manner. He is completely dedicated to England, to the king, and, last but not least, to the church. He is an admirable diplomat

in the manner in which he is able to inspire and convince the king of the rightness of the engagement against France. We, however, must always keep in mind that the Archbishop's insistence upon the rightness of the claims against France are due, in part, to his desire to retain the church's revenues — with this in mind, he even promises more revenues for the war than any clergy has ever before provided. With all the noblemen, kinsmen, and churchmen united behind the king, the first act ends with a perfect sense of unity of state and church and citizenry. There is total and utter confusion concerning how anyone could make a strong, legitimate case for Henry's claim to the French throne. Henry's claim is based on a flimsy assertion that his great-great-grandmother, who was in line for the French throne, married his great-great-grandfather, Edward II of England. Yet there were many in the male line of descendants who are much more entitled to claiming legitimacy to the French throne. And aside from all other matters, King Edward III renounced forever any claim by any of the sovereigns of England to the throne of France. In conclusion, King Henry V has absolutely no claim whatsoever, and the Archbishop's speech simply obscures all these issues.

7.4 Summary and Analysis Act II:

Prologue Summary

The Chorus again appears on stage telling the audience that England has been preparing to go to war. Young men are leaving their farms and joining forces with the king; England is "like a little body with a mighty heart." The French are frightened upon hearing of England's plans to wage war. The Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop, and Sir Thomas Grey have been paid by France to kill the king; they plan to accomplish this when the king and his forces are in Southampton, ready to sail for France. Finally, the Chorus tells the audience again to use their imaginations and suppose that they are to be transported first to Southampton and "thence to France."

Analysis The Prologue, or the Chorus,

informs the audience of the length of time which has passed since Henry's decision to invade France and the present, actual time. All of the preparations for war have been made, and enough time has elapsed for the French to learn of the plans for war and, as a countermeasure, to enter into a conspiracy to have Henry assassinated. The Chorus also reminds the audience that they must continue to use their imaginations as the scene will soon shift from London to Southampton and then to France.

7.4.1 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 1 Summary

This scene introduces several of Shakespeare's comic characters whom Elizabethan audiences were already familiar with from Henry IV, Parts I and II. On a street in London, Corporal Nym and Lieutenant Bardolph meet. Bardolph tells of the marriage between Pistol and Hostess Nell Quickly, a woman who had apparently once promised to marry Corporal Nym. No sooner do Pistol and Hostess Quickly enter than Nym and Pistol draw swords and launch into a verbal match. Efforts by Bardolph and Quickly do not calm them, but a boy enters and urges Hostess Quickly to come quickly to tend an ailing Falstaff. She exits, and Bardolph draws his sword and threatens to use it on both Nym and Pistol if they don't settle their feud. They are hesitant, but after Bardolph threatens again, they agree to shake hands. Pistol agrees to pay Nym the eight shillings he owes him, and Pistol then says that he has a position in the army as a seller of provisions and the three of them can share in the profits. Quickly re-enters to tell the men that Falstaff is dying, and they all go off to see him, explaining on the way that the changes in the king's behavior brought about Falstaff's downfall.

Analysis

The characters introduced in this scene have no real purpose in the play. Bardolph, Pistol, and Hostess Quickly are included only because they were in the earlier Henry IV plays, and Shakespeare's audience would expect to see them again. Furthermore, Shakespeare lets the audience know that Sir John Falstaff — one of Shakespeare's greatest comic creations — is not totally forgotten. Yet since the king has undergone a complete transformation, these comic characters, once his old drinking cronies, will never appear in scenes in which the king appears; they have very little or nothing to do with the main story. They simply provide the comic relief from the serious plot developments, and as

noted, these characters were well known and well loved by the audience. However, this scene stresses that this is not the world of Henry IV, and the mere absence of Sir John Falstaff reinforces this idea. Even the humor has changed; the quarreling between these characters is more of the snarling type and thus loses much of the gusto of the earlier plays. In Henry IV, Part I, Bardolph was Falstaff's servant and held the rank of corporal. He is usually presented as having a large, flaming red nose, facial blemishes, and carbuncles on his cheeks, and as was true earlier, he is often the butt of many jokes because of his physical appearance. In Henry IV, Part II, he was still a corporal; Shakespeare never reveals how Bardolph received his present rank of lieutenant in this play, and critics who suggest that it could have been through Falstaff's influence miss the point that Henry's vow to be mature and responsible would not allow Falstaff to be in his presence, much less to have any influence over him. But even though Bardolph has been promoted, he is still just as much a coward as he was earlier; however, with his promotion, he has learned to conceal his cowardice better. His purpose of remaining in the army is that it provides him with a good opportunity to loot. Pistol and Nym also provide comic relief through their worldly boasting, their blustering and swaggering, and their constant misuse of the English language. Many of their expressions are absurd, alliterative nonsense. Hostess Quickly is the same good-hearted, simple person that she was in the earlier plays. She has always had a great admiration for Sir John Falstaff, and presently she is deeply concerned over his serious illness.

7.4.2 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 2

Now in Southampton, Bedford (the king's brother), Exeter (the king's uncle), and Westmoreland are discussing the conspirators — Scroop, Cambridge, and Grey — who, for a price, are planning to kill the king. The king, however, is aware of the plot and those behind it. Henry, Scroop, Cambridge, and Grey enter and begin to discuss the support and loyalty which the king has among his subjects. And as if to illustrate Henry's deserved loyalty to his goodness and wisdom, Shakespeare has Henry order a man who committed a minor offense the day before to be released from prison. Scroop, Cambridge, and Grey argue that the king must set an example and prosecute the offender to the full extent of the law, but the king argues for mercy and pardons the offender, explaining that if he punishes severely for petty crimes, how shall he punish major crimes? Henry then shows the three men some papers which prove that he knows about their plot. Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey each confess and ask him for mercy. Henry, answering them in a moving and bitter speech, says first that these three who expressed no compassion for the minor law-breaker deserve none now for themselves; he then speaks of the ideal of loyalty and the crime of betrayal. The treachery of Lord Scroop, who "knew'st the very bottom of my soul, / That almost mightst have coined me into gold" and who betrayed Henry for a price, is the most incredible. Henry cannot understand why these three so-called old friends have plotted against him for nothing more than French gold. He questions how he can trust any man if these three whom he thought were most loyal could betray him. But compassionately he says: I will weep for thee; For this revolt of thine, methinks, is like Another fall of man. (140-42) He then orders their arrest for high treason against the crown. Exeter arrests the three, and they tell the king they are ready to die for their crimes; they ask him to forgive them, and each asserts that he is glad that their plan has been uncovered. Henry, in words that suggest his greatness as a magistrate, says that he holds no personal grudge ("Touching our person seek we no revenge"), but the safety of the nation is at hand. He therefore pronounces the sentence: Hear your sentence. You have conspired against our royal person Join'd with a proclaimed enemy and from his coffers Received the golden earnest of our death . . . Therefore, get you hence, Poor miserable wretches, to your death. (166-78) Then, exhibiting further the qualities of mature kingship, he turns his attention immediately to matters of state and prepares for the embarkation to France.

Analysis

The treason that the Chorus speaks of in the Prologue is now discovered and resolved by King Henry in a very calm and reasoned manner. This scene emphasizes many of Henry's admirable qualities. In the first part of the scene, he shows great mercy in forgiving a person whose offense was unintentional. It is also ironic that the three traitors argue for

exceedingly harsh punishment: "Let him be punished, sovereign, lest example / Breed, by his sufferance, more of such a kind." Ironically, King Henry allows the offenders to convict themselves. The treasonable actions of Cambridge, Grey, and Scroop emphasize the many cases of duplicity that a true king must contend with, and Henry's treatment of the conspirators is firm, just, and decisive; yet in Henry's long speech of denunciation, there is also a note of deep personal tragedy. All of these conspirators have been the recipients of special favors from the king. The treachery of Lord Scroop is the most difficult for Henry to understand since Lord Scroop knew Henry's innermost person: Lord Scroop "knewest the very bottom of my soul." Thus as Henry contemplates the contrast between appearance and reality, between the inner duplicity of the traitors and their outward show of loyalty, he is faced with not so much a political tragedy as he is with a personal tragedy. But however much the tragedy is personal, he must transcend it, and for the sake of England, he must send the traitors whom he has believed to be loyal friends to their deaths. At the end of his speech of denunciation, he feels the betrayal so personally that he accounts for it in terms that would imply that man is sometimes simply born depraved and evil. At least, Lord Scroop's betrayal is, for Henry, deep-rooted enough to be compared with the original fall of man: I will weep for thee; For this revolt of thine, methinks, is like Another fall of man. (140-42) But the mark of a great king is that he must rise above personal tragedy, and thus Henry does as he tells the conspirators: Touching our person seek we no revenge; But we our kingdom's safety must so tender, Whose ruin you have sought, that to her laws We do deliver you. Get you therefore hence, Poor miserable wretches, to your death. (174-78) Here, Henry sets aside his personal views and calmly sends the traitors to their deaths for the safety and welfare of the entire nation, a nation which could have been destroyed if the treachery had been successful. After dealing with the traitors, then, Henry turns his attention immediately to the duties at hand — the war with France. Historically, both Cambridge and Lord Scroop wanted to replace Henry on the throne with Edmund Mortimer, who also had a claim to the throne, and who, in the earlier Henry IV plays, had support from Lord Scroop's father for the throne.

7.4.3 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 3 Summary In front of a tavern on a London street, Hostess Quickly tells her husband, Pistol, that she wants to accompany him to Staines on his way to Southampton. Pistol says no; they (Pistol, Bardolph, and Nym) are mourning Falstaff's death. Hostess Quickly describes for them the death of Sir John Falstaff, whom she attended until the end, and as they make ready to leave for Southampton, Pistol gives Hostess Quickly advice about running the inn. Then he kisses her, as does Bardolph, but Nym refuses. She bids them all adieu. Analysis The main purpose of Scene Three is to announce the death of Sir John Falstaff, and the manner of that announcement by Hostess Quickly contains as much humane feelings from these comic characters as we are to find from them in the entire play. We should remember from the earlier plays that Hostess Quickly did have a strong admiration for the marvelous fat knight. Her misused words and phrases are comically absurd, but they nevertheless possess a charm that is missing in the rest of the drama that concerns them. Once Sir John's death is announced, Pistol expresses the common concern for greed and gain which the lower characters in this play have and their decision to join their king: Come, let's away. . . . Yoke-fellows in arms Let us to France; like horse-leeches, my boys, To suck, to suck, the very blood to suck! (49-58) As noted earlier, the low characters will now function mainly as looters or bloodsuckers. 7.4.4 Summary and Analysis Act II: Scene 4 Summary In the palace of the French king, the king expresses his fear of the approaching English forces. He tells the Dauphin to prepare for war "with men of courage and with means defendant." But the Dauphin maintains that the English will be easy to defeat and that Henry is a "vain, giddy, shallow, humorous youth." The Constable of France believes the Dauphin is mistaken and has misjudged the character of the English king. The French king agrees and urges the Dauphin to remember that "King Harry" comes from the line of Edward, the Black Prince of Wales, a fierce warrior who won the Battle of Cressy. "This is a stem / Of that victorious stock; and let us fear / The native mightiness and fate of him."

Exeter enters, as the ambassador from King Henry, asking the French king to give up his crown and give it to King Henry, the rightful heir; if he refuses, bloodshed and war will follow. He warns the Dauphin that his gift of tennis balls was not appreciated and that he shall have to answer to King Henry for the insult. The French king tells Exeter that he shall have to wait until the next day for his answer. Analysis The basic purpose of this scene is twofold: first, to show that the French court is not prepared for war, and second, to show the disunity which is prevalent in the court. The French king, Charles VI, is not characterized as an impressive king. Even though he is correct in his appraisal of King Henry, he does not possess a commanding presence. The Dauphin, as was indicated by his insulting gift of the tennis balls in the first act, is characterized as a rather insolent, self-opinionated young man who will function as a direct contrast to the more noble Henry. The Dauphin believes that the French should have good defenses but not because of the approach of young King Henry; he is guided not by fear but only by the general principle that one should always have good defenses. Of more direct concern in this scene are the words of Exeter, the English ambassador; he echoes the king's determination, and he anticipates the spirit of the scenes to come in his reference to the horrors of war which can be avoided only by the French king's submission to the will of King Henry V. Exeter warns: . . . if you hide the crown Even in your hearts, there will he rake for it. Therefore in fierce tempest is he coming, In thunder and in earthquake, like a Jove, That, if requiring fail, he will compel. (97-101) 7.5 Summary and Analysis Act III: Prologue Summary The Chorus enters with a flourish and once more urges the audience to imagine the king and his troops setting sail for France and also to imagine an England emptied of all her stalwart soldiers, defended only by "grandsires, babies, and old women." The English ambassador has returned; the French king has offered his daughter, Katharine, and some minor dukedoms, but he has refused to give up his throne. Henry has rejected the offer, and he now sails to France to do battle. Analysis

As with the previous Prologues, this one serves to explain a lapsed time period, and again it reminds the audience that they must continue to use their imaginations — this time, however, the language of the Prologue is more elaborately descriptive. The king embarks on a "fleet majestic" which bears the English forces to France, and the entire "brave fleet" is adorned and lighted by dawn: . . . behold the threaten sails, Borne with the invisible and creeping wind, Draw the huge bottoms through the furrow'd sea, Breasting the lofty surge. (10-13) 7.5.1 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 1 Summary This scene, consisting solely of a soliloquy by King Henry, contains many famous passages; in fact, this speech is probably the best known speech in the entire play. The scene is Harfleur, where Henry, surrounded by his troops, urges them on to one more supreme effort. Henry's speech proves that he knows his men well; speaking plainly and to the point, he appeals to their manhood, their ancestry, and their love of England:

Follow your spirit, and upon this charge Cry, "God for Harry! England and Saint George!" (33-34)

Analysis This speech confirms for the audience the personal and inspiring leadership of King Henry V. Even though some critics have dissected the speech and found it lacking, it is nevertheless one of the most inspiring war speeches ever uttered, and apparently it is very successful in spurring the soldiers on to make one more supreme effort. Lines 6-17 seem to suggest that in terms of the various passions of man, his spiritual emotions are directly dependent upon his physical state. In times of peace, the manly virtues are quite proper and will suffice, but in times of war, man must put aside manly virtues and become a virtual beast. It is the duty of the soldier to become a beast, and his actions should be in imitation of a wild beast — the blood is to be "summoned" and the sinews "stiffened." 7.5.2 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 2 Summary In another part of the Harfleur field, Bardolph, apparently inspired by Henry, calls, "

On, on, on, on, on! To the breach, to the breach!" But Nym

and Pistol remind him that they might be killed; they have no intention of dashing "to the breach." The Boy wishes that

he were back in London. Fluellen, a Welsh officer in the English army, enters and commands them to fight. He drives them forward and leaves the Boy to reflect on the pickpocket schemes that Nym, Pistol, and Bardolph are involved in. Fluellen reenters with another Welsh officer, Gower, who tells Fluellen to come with him, that the Duke of Gloucester wants to speak to him. Gloucester, along with the Irish Captain Macmorris, is "mining" - that is, digging tunnels under the city. Fluellen does not think highly of the captain. Captain Macmorris and Captain Jamy, a Scotsman, enter then, and Fluellen compliments Captain Jamy on his military knowledge. Meantime, Captain Macmorris is angry that work on the mines has stopped and he will not be able to blast the walls of Harfleur with his mines. Fluellen tries to goad Macmorris into an argument, but the captain is unwilling to waste words, so Fluellen makes a remark about the Irish, a remark which Macmorris immediately resents. A fight is about to ensue when Captain Gower steps in before swords are actually drawn. A trumpet announces that a parley has been called, and Fluellen promises to resume the argument when a break in the action occurs. Analysis This scene, placed between Henry's charge to his armies and his confrontation with the Governor of Harfleur (and the surrender of the town), is Shakespeare's now familiar means of using a comic interlude to comment upon the serious scenes. In contrast to the nobility of Henry's inspired charge in the preceding scene ("Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more . . ."), Bardolph repeats the charge in a bit of low, echo-like comedy: "On, on, on, on on! To the breach," thus connecting the two scenes and also showing that not all of Henry's soldiers are inspired by his valiant and heroic leadership. The behavior of Nym, Bardolph, and Pistol is a negative counterpoint to Henry's stress on the model Englishman's patriotic virtues. These low characters would prefer to be "in an alehouse in London . . . [and] would give all . . . for a pot of ale and safety." This comic scene, however, lacks the force of the scenes in the Henry IV plays, in which Sir John Falstaff imparted more pertinent observations about the situation. The Boy's earlier comments remind us of Falstaff, but they are, nonetheless, a poor substitute for the original.

Behind the comic aspects, however, even here Shakespeare seems to insert into these interludes something new, a deep concern about the serious waste of human lives. Nym doesn't have "a case of lives" to spare, and Pistol, in spite of his obvious cowardice and striking flamboyance, reflects: "

knocks go and come; God's vassals drop and die."

When the Boy is left alone on the stage, we see another view of King Henry's inspired Englishman. In contrast to the young Boy, Bardolph is "white-livered and red-faced," Pistol has a vicious tongue but a "quiet sword," and Nym has never hurt anyone except himself — when he was drunk. Yet together, they will "steal anything and call it purchase." For the Boy, their combined "villainy goes against my weak stomach." His inexperienced and untried manhood is admirable as he deserts the three and goes off to do "some better service. The Welsh officer Fluellen, introduced in this scene, is one of the more interesting characters in the play. While he is eager to argue and quick to show off his knowledge on almost any subject, and while he is opinionated and conceited, he is also a good soldier who shows great courage and loyalty to Henry. Ultimately, in spite of all his flaws, he will become one of the more lovable characters in the play due to his quaint and amusing ways. His antagonist in this scene, Captain Macmorris, the Irishman, is seen no more, and the long argument presented in a heavy dialect is often severely cut or omitted from many productions since it does not move the plot forward. 7.5.3 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 3 Summary Scene Three opens before the gates of Harfleur, where King Henry is warning the Governor and the local citizens of the dreadful things that will happen if the city does not surrender. The king and his men are prepared to show no mercy and will reduce the town to ashes if the Governor does not surrender. The Governor replies that the Dauphin, whom he entreated to come and defend the town, sends word that his forces are not yet ready "to raise so great a siege." He therefore surrenders Harfleur to King Henry and asks for mercy. The king responds by entrusting the town to Exeter and charging him to be merciful to all the people of the city and to fortify it. He will then lead the army to Calais.

Analysis Here, in the capitulation of Harfleur, we have the first significant surrender, and we see Henry as a victor for the first time. In this role, he is stern and undeviating in his demands that the Governor surrender the town peacefully. He depicts vividly the many horrors which could result if his demands are not met; yet, in contrast, he is willing to show great mercy if his demands are met. A new note, however, is introduced in Henry's closing speech. Winter is coming, and there is a growing sickness among the men. This problem will remain a constant concern throughout their encampment at Calais, when Henry's men will be seen as only tatters of their former selves. In the Governor's surrender, we hear that the Dauphin refused to send help. We can assume that the Dauphin has still not taken Henry's threats seriously. 7.5.4

Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 4 Summary In a room of the French palace at Rouen, Katharine, the king's daughter, and Alice, the old gentlewoman, have an English lesson. Alice knows only a little English, and Princess Katharine is trying to learn the language. All of the dialogue is in French except the few words (hand, nails, arm, and elbow, etc.) that she learns from Alice during the lesson. Analysis Katharine, the future Queen of England whom Henry will woo and become betrothed to in the final scene of the play, is here introduced as a girl of fourteen whose destiny has already been decided. The purpose of the scene is to give the audience some light-hearted relief from the battle scenes and also to show that Katharine, by her statement that "it is necessary" that she learn English, is already reconciled to the idea that she is to be Henry's queen. In this scene, the French words and phrases that appeared in the early editions of the play were filled with errors and have been corrected by successive editors. Even though the content is trivial and hardly needs a translation, a loose translation follows: Kath. Alice, you have been to England, and you speak the language well. Alice. A little, my lady. Kath. I beg you to teach me because it will be necessary that I learn it. How does one say la main in English? Alice. La main? It is called de hand. Kath. De hand. And les doigts?

Alice. Les doigts? O my goodness, I have forgotten les doigts; but I shall soon remember it. Les doigts? I think that they are called de fingres; yes, de fingres. Kath. La main, de hand; les doigts, de fingres. I think that I am a good student; I have quickly learned two English words. How does one say les ongles? Alice. Les ongles? They are called de nails. Kath. De nails. Listen and tell me if I speak well: de hand, de fingres, and de nails. Alice. You have spoken well, my lady; it is very good English. Kath. Tell me the English for le bras. Alice. De arm, my lady. Kath. And le coude. Alice. De elbow. Kath. De elbow. I will now repeat all of the words that you have taught me up to now. Alice. I think that it will be very difficult, my lady. Kath. Excuse me, Alice; listen: de hand, de fingres, de nails, de arma, de bilbow. Alice. De elbow, my lady. Kath. O my goodness, I forgot. De elbow. How does one say le col? Alice. De nick, my lady. Kath. De nick. And le menton? Alice. De chin. Kath, De sin. Le col, de nick; le menton, de sin. Alice. Yes. To your honor, in truth, you pronounce the words as though you were a native English lady. Kath. I do not doubt it at all that I shall be able to learn it in a little more time. Alice. Have you yet forgotten what I have already taught you? Kath. No, I shall recite to you promptly: de hand, de fingres, de mails, — Alice. De nails, my lady. Kath. De nails, de arm, de ilbow. Alice. With your permission, de elbow. Kath. That is what I said; de elbow, de nick, and de sin. Now how do you say le pied and la robe? Alice. De foot, my lady, and de coun. Kath. De foot and de coun! O my Lord! These are very bad words — evil, vulgar and immodest, and not for ladies of honor to use. I would never pronounce these words before French gentlemen — not for the whole world. Foo! Le foot and le coun! Nevertheless, I

am going to recite my entire lesson together one more time: de hand, de fingres, de nails, de arm, de elbow, de nick, de sin, de foot, de coun. Alice. Excellent, my lady! Kath. It is enough for this time; let's go to dinner. 7.5.5 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 5 Summary In another room of the Rouen palace, the King of France is worried about the presence of King Henry and his soldiers in France. The Dauphin is upset by the ladies of the court, who are, in turn, disgusted with the lack of manliness exhibited by the French officers of the army. According to the Dauphin, their wives think that Our mettle is bred out and they will give Their bodies to the lust of English youth To new-store France with bastard warriors. (28-30) The Duke of Bourbon and the Constable speak with disdain about England and her forces, and they note that Henry's army must be stopped quickly. The king calls on all of the French nobility to fight at once against Henry but commands the Dauphin to stay with him. The Constable remarks that such a battle between Henry's sick and hungry forces and all of the French nobility will be uneven enough to convince Henry to surrender. The king then sends all of the French nobility to battle against Henry — with the exception of the Dauphin, whom he orders to remain with him. Analysis Since the English audience of Shakespeare's day would have known that the English were indeed victorious in their encounter with the French forces, this scene is therefore filled with dramatic ironies. The French are so certain of victory that they are arrogant and overconfident. Rather than being apprehensive about Henry's forces, they hold his army in contempt: "His soldiers sick and famish'd in their march . . . when he [Henry] shall see our army, / He'll drop his heart into the sink of fear." Dramatically, the audience will take pleasure in seeing the insufferable pride of the French brought low by Henry's yeomen. Dramatically, the Dauphin is presented as a worthy opponent of Henry, even though his father, Charles VI, is still in charge. (Historically, Charles was actually insane at this time,

and the Dauphin was in charge of the royal council; this is only one of many examples of the way in which Shakespeare alters history for dramatic purposes.) The Dauphin, even though he is ashamed of the French army's fighting record, is still shown here as being contemptuous of the English army; yet still, apparently, he does not take Henry seriously 7.5.6 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 6 Summary In the English camp in Picardy, Fluellen meets Gower and tells him that they have saved the bridge which they were fighting for, and he extravagantly extols the Duke of Exeter's bravery and leadership. He also mentions that Pistol fought courageously. Pistol enters then and asks Fluellen to intercede for Bardolph, who is to be hanged for stealing a pax from the church. (A pax was a small plate, usually with an engraved picture of Christ or a saint, and it was used in the communion service to hold the wafers. In Holinshed's History, the object was a "pyx" — the vessel used to hold the consecrated communion host and, consequently, an object of much more value, and, from a mercenary viewpoint, the offense would be much greater. Thus again, Shakespeare alters history to lessen Bardolph's crime in order to allow Pistol to pun that Bardolph's death is "for a pax of little price." Actually, the intrinsic value of the object does not matter since theft from the church was punishable by death.) Fluellen refuses, saying discipline must be maintained and that he would not interfere — even for his brother. Angry, Pistol leaves, hurling insults at Fluellen. Gower tells Fluellen about Pistol's true character lest he be misled, and Fluellen pretends to understand; he promises to deal with him. Henry and the Duke of Gloucester enter. Fluellen tells them how heroically the Duke of Exeter performed. When the King asks about the casualties, Fluellen tells him that there was only one — Bardolph is soon to be hanged for robbing a church. Henry reiterates his orders that the French populace is to be dealt with fairly; there is to be no plundering. He hopes in this way to win the people's loyalty and respect. The French herald, Montjoy, enters and says that the French king demands that "Harry" pay for the damage which his troops have caused. Henry recognizes Montjoy's rank and admits that his English army is indeed small and tired; he would like to avoid a confrontation, but they will fight if harassed. Henry tells his brother Gloucester that God is on the side of the English army and then orders the march to the bridge.

Analysis Historically, the events related by Fluellen refer to the fact that King Henry had to march fifty miles out of his chosen path in order to find a bridge to cross the river. They discover a suitable bridge at a place called Teroune, but the French are on the verge of destroying it when the Duke of Exeter bravely drives them back. The additional fifty-mile march was an additional hazard on King Henry's men and further weakened them. Fluellen, as a comic character, is further developed in this scene. Comically, he is totally mistaken about Pistol and is actually a terrible judge of character. In his speech about Fortune, we see once again his propensity for trying to show off his knowledge on any subject. But, as King Henry later points out, though Fluellen "appears a little out of fashion / There is . . . much valour in this Welshman"; particularly in his rejection of Pistol's pleas to intercede for Bardolph's life, Fluellen shows that he is a strong advocate for absolute discipline. For students of Shakespeare, King Henry's actions are often puzzling. On the one hand, he is the exemplary, impeccable king who pronounces: We give express charge, that in our marches through the country, there be nothing compelled from the villages, nothing taken but paid for, [and] none of the French upbraided or abused in disdainful language; for when lenity and cruelty play for a kingdom, the gentler gamester is the soonest winner. (115-20) In other words, he tells his soldiers to conduct themselves in the most respectable manner possible — even no abusive words are to be spoken. In contrast, when Fluellen casually announces that the only casualty from the encounter with the French is that Bardolph is to be executed for robbing a church, King Henry expresses no concern for, nor even recognition of, this old companion from his youthful days of tavern living. (In both of the King Henry IV plays, Bardolph, as noted earlier, was, along with Pistol and the late Sir John Falstaff, the drinking companion of King Henry when he was the "madcap Prince Hal.") It is difficult for some critics to understand how King Henry can so easily forget his past relationship with Bardolph that he can send him to his death with only the cursory comment, "We would have all such offenders so cut off." The contrast between Henry's order for lenity and mercy for the captured French and the strict enforcement of discipline

among the English forces appears contradictory. Furthermore, Bardolph is to be put to death for stealing a small plate from the church, and yet King Henry himself has deprived the church of large sums in order to wage his wars with the idea of taking not a small plate, but a large crown — the French crown. Thus the subplot here, involving Bardolph's theft, is also a comment on the main plot of Henry's war against France. With the arrival of the French emissary, Montjoy, we see still another side of Henry — his concern for his men and the honesty with how he appraises his situation: "My people are with sickness much enfeebled, / My numbers lessen'd." Shakespeare is dramatically creating a situation in which the English will have to overcome tremendous odds to be victorious — all for the glory of "Harry, England, and Saint George."

7.5.7 Summary and Analysis Act III: Scene 7 Summary It is the night before the battle in the French camp near Agincourt. The Constable, the Duke of Orleans, Lord Rambures, and the Dauphin (who is present against his father's orders) are boasting about who has the best armor and the best horses. When the discussion turns from the wonders of the Dauphin's horse to the splendors of the others' mistresses, the Dauphin exits to ready himself for the battle. The Constable then has a discussion with the Duke of Orleans concerning the Dauphin's bravery. A messenger enters to announce that the English are camped only fifteen hundred yards away. The Constable and Orleans contend that the small English army cannot be very smart if they mean to fight them, but Rambures reminds them of the courageousness of the English. Nevertheless, the Constable and Orleans are certain that it will be an uneven battle and that by ten o'clock they each will have captured a hundred Englishmen. Analysis In this scene, Shakespeare continues his satirical presentation of the French nobility by contrasting the seriousness and sobriety of the English with the superficiality and pretentiousness of the French. By doing so, Shakespeare continues to make the French appear rather ridiculous. On the night before a major battle, the French nobility join in an absurd banter concerning the value of their horses. The contrast between Henry, King of England, and the Dauphin, heir to the throne of France, is made obvious in the conversation of each man before the major battle. The Dauphin's main concern is with the beauty and perfection of his horse — a "beast for Perseus; he is pure air and fire; the dull elements of earth and water never appear in him. . . ." When the Dauphin then goes on to remind his comrades that he once wrote a sonnet to his horse, which began with the words "Wonder of nature," the Duke of Orleans sarcastically says that he has "heard a sonnet begin so to one's mistress." The Dauphin, however, is not even aware of the subtle reversal of values. Furthermore, to continue the contrast between Henry and the Dauphin, Shakespeare introduces the subject of the Dauphin's bravery; the Constable wonders if the Dauphin will stand and fight, or if he will be like a hawk, which, when released, will take flight. Throughout the scene, therefore, the French nobility reveal a rather fundamental moral carelessness which will be reflected in their resounding defeat at Agincourt. The Duke of Orleans and the other nobility speak of King Henry with utter contempt and of Henry's English soldiers as the king's "fat-brain'd followers" who, if they had any wits, must have "left their wits with their wives." In other words, Shakespeare is preparing his audience with reasons why the French nobility, outnumbering the English five to one and on horseback, are soon to be defeated by English yeoman, who are "with sickness much enfeebled." The French, believing in and relying on their inherent aristocratic superiority, will go to battle incompetently prepared and will meet their deaths at the hands of English soldiers who are inspired by the noble spirit of their king and thus, by perseverance, discipline, and a belief in "Harry, England, and Saint George" will win the battle against overwhelming odds.

7.6 Self-Assessment 1) Discuss the summary and analysis of the following: a. Act I: Prologue b. Act II: Prologue c. Act III: Scene 1

Unit 8: Shakespeare's Play: Henry V 8.0 Introduction 8.1 Unit Objective 8.2 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Prologue 8.2.1 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 1 8.2.2 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 2 8.2.3 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 3 8.2.4 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 4 8.2.5 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 5 8.2.6 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 6 8.2.7 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 7 8.2.8 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 8 8.3 Summary and Analysis Act V: Prologue 8.3.1 Summary and Analysis Act V: Scene 1 8.3.2 Summary and Analysis Act V: Scene 2 8.3.3 Summary and Analysis Act V: Epilogue 8.4 Character Analysis King Henry V 8.0 Introduction (Summary of the Play) As indicated at the close of Henry IV, Part II, King Henry V is planning on entering into a war with France over some disputed lands and titles. He has instructed the Archbishop to be sure that his claims are valid. When the play opens, the Archbishop explains to his Bishop how he plans to convince the king to enter into a war with France, thus protecting the church's property, which might otherwise be placed in the hands of the state rather than left in the church's control. After the king is convinced of the validity of his claims, an ambassador from France arrives with a rejection of the claims; he also delivers an insulting barrel of tennis balls from the French Dauphin, who still considers King Henry to be the silly and rowdy Prince Hal. As they are on the verge of leaving for France, King Henry is tending to some business releasing a prisoner for a minor offense and then he turns to three of his trusted advisors and has them executed for conspiring with the French to assassinate him. Meanwhile, in the French court, no one seems to take Henry seriously. The entire court is contemptuous of his claims and of his abilities. They are so overconfident that they do not send help to the town of Harfleur, which Henry easily conquers. After this victory, Henry gives strict instructions that all the citizens are to be treated with mercy and that his soldiers are not

to loot, rob, or insult the native population. However, a companion from Hal's youth, Bardolph, an inveterate thief, steals a small communion plate, and, as a result, he is executed. In spite of the English victory, the French still do not express concern, even though the Princess Katharine is involved; if Henry is victorious, she will become Queen of England; as a result, she feels the necessity to learn the English language, and so she begins taking instructions in that language. Meanwhile, the reports that the English are sick and tattered allow the French to prepare for the battle with complete confidence, especially since they outnumber the English 60,000 to 12,000 troops. Just before the crucial Battle of Agincourt, an emissary once again approaches King Henry with demands that he immediately surrender his person. His demands are rejected, and King Henry, in a patriotic speech, urges his troops to fight for "Harry, England, and St. George." By miraculous means, the English are victorious and the French are shamed into submission. At the end of the play, King Henry's demands are granted, and he is seen wooing and winning Princess Katharine as his future queen.

8.1 Unit Objective This Unit intends to inform the learners on - The character analysis of Henry V. - The summary and analysis of Prologues (IV & V) and their including Acts 8.2 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Prologue Summary The Chorus gives us a picture of the two opposing camps on the night before the battle; there are the whispers of the sentinels, the firelight from each camp, the neighing of the horses, the sounds of armor, some roosters crowing, and clocks striking in two nearby villages. Inside the French camp, the confident soldiers play dice while waiting anxiously for dawn; meanwhile, the English, aware of their small number and of their weakened condition, contemplate the morning's danger. The Chorus describes King Henry's walking from tent to tent talking to his soldiers ("a little touch of Harry in the night"), calling them "brothers, friends, and countrymen." He looks strong and confident, and he is a comfort to his men. The Chorus then apologizes once again for the inadequacies of the stage and urges his audience to be ready to imagine the battle of Agincourt in their minds.

Analysis As before, the Chorus makes another apology for the limitations of the stage and the need for imagination on the part of the audience. In conformance with the Elizabethan tradition and Shakespeare's custom, there is no absurd effort to present a battle on the stage. Throughout Shakespeare's history plays, a few soldiers represent entire armies, but here, where England's ideal king is being presented, Shakespeare resorts to using the Chorus, urging and reminding the audience that they must imagine the two opposing camps at nighttime on the eve of the crucial Battle of Agincourt. Shakespeare continues to depict the contrasting mood of the two camps. Again, as in the last act, the Chorus informs us that the French are overconfident and high spirited, whereas the English are so dejected that the king himself must wander through the camp, offering encouragement. In the last scene of Act III, we saw how frivolous the French were with their light-hearted talk of horses, mistresses, and love poetry. Now, Act IV will open by contrasting the situation in the English camp.

8.2.1 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 1 Summary In the English camp on the night before the battle, the king tells his brother Gloucester that he is worried about the outcome of the battle. When Sir Thomas Erpingham enters, the king, on an impulse, burrows Erpingham's cloak and is thus no longer identifiable as the king. He sends the others out to "commend [him] to the princes in our camp" and, since he wishes "no other company," he asks to be left alone to "debate" with himself. Pistol enters and does not recognize Henry; he extols the king and asks the "young man" his name, and Henry tells him that his name is "Harry, le Roy." When Pistol discovers that he is a Welshman and knows Fluellen, he tells him that he plans to fight Fluellen. "Harry" warns him he might be defeated, and Pistol becomes so incensed that he insults "Harry" with a vulgar gesture and leaves. As Henry steps aside, Fluellen and Gower enter, unaware of the king's presence. Fluellen is angry with Gower for speaking his name too loudly, afraid that the French might have overheard it. Gower maintains that "the enemy

is loud" and cannot hear him; in order to end the argument, Gower promises to speak lower and they exit. The king remarks that Fluellen is odd, but that he is a good soldier. Next, three common soldiers, John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams, enter. Henry, unrecognized, tells them he serves under Sir Thomas Erpingham. Bates asks him if he thinks that the king should be told how bleak the situation really is. Henry says no, that the king is "but a man," as they are, and if he exhibited fear, he would discourage the army. Bates personally thinks that the king would prefer to be back in London, but Henry disagrees; he believes that the king is content to be where he is. Then Bates says that the king should be ransomed to save the lives of the men in the army. Henry responds by saying that he himself would not want to leave his king alone to fight the battle because of the king's "cause being just and his quarrel honorable." Williams is unsure of the justness of the king's claim. Bates does not think it matters; if it is unjust, the guilt is upon the king's head and they will not have to share in the blame. When Williams suggests that those who die "unprovided" (unrepentant) will be a burden upon the king's conscience, Henry responds by saying that all who go to battle should be spiritually prepared, but that the king is not responsible to God for their deaths. When the discussion returns to the king's ransom, Henry says he overheard the king say it would never happen; Williams jokes that it could happen after they are all killed and they would not know the difference. After another exchange of quips, in which Henry intimates that if times were different, he might be angry at Williams, Williams takes up the idea and challenges "Harry" to a fight if they should both survive the battle. They agree to exchange gloves and wear them in their caps so they can find each other the next day. Bates calls them both fools and urges them to be friends, for there are plenty of Frenchmen for them to fight. After the three soldiers leave, Henry is left alone with his thoughts. He talks about the custom of blaming everything upon the king and concludes that a slave has a better life than a king, for he can sleep soundly at night and not worry about affairs of state. Sir Erpingham enters, finds the king, and tells him that his associates are waiting for him. He leaves, and alone once more, Henry prays to God, asking Him to fill his soldiers with courage. He also asks God not to recall the guilt of Henry's father concerning the death of Richard II because he has already made reparations and plans to do more. Henry's brother Gloucester enters, and the king leaves with him.

Analysis

As noted above in the commentary to the Prologue, this scene serves, first, to emphasize the contrasting attitudes between the French camp — their joviality and overconfidence and superficiality — with the prevailing seriousness of the English camp. In contrast to the frivolity of the French, the entire scene in the English camp is essentially serious. Yet, there is an anticipation of great humor when the disguised king exchanges gloves with Williams and promises to meet him in a duel if they both survive today's battle; we anticipate Williams finding out that he was arguing with the very monarch for whom he is fighting. The main purpose of this scene is to further illuminate the character of King Henry on the night before the significant and decisive Battle of Agincourt. Any time that a king wraps himself in a cloak and goes among his men incognito, talking with the common soldiers, we have a very dramatic situation. Continuing a dramatic device of the earlier Henry plays, the rowdy and rebellious Prince Hal had to, at first, disguise himself to become a king; now as king, he disguises himself to become a common man. Now wrapped in the obscurity of a commoner's cloak and further obscured by the darkness of night, the king is able to learn the feelings of his common soldiers, represented not by the comic Pistol (who knew the king as Prince Hal) and not by the dedicated, if peculiar, Fluellen (and Gower), but as seen in the personages of John Bates, Alexander Court (even though this character speaks only eleven words in the entire play), and Michael Williams. Even the names "John Bates" and "Williams" suggest something of the basic nature of these good English soldiers — that is, this is the stuff of which an ideal Englishman is made of and which will help Henry win military glory for England. Most critics value this scene as proof of the greatness of Henry as a king — that is, it exhibits the simplicity and modesty, the democracy and the deep religious nature of the king. But Shakespeare no doubt hoped that his audience would be aware of some ambiguity in a situation in which the king is in darkness and is in disguise, suggesting that a man's actions by day are different from his words concealed by night. In the first act, the king was ready to place the responsibility for the war on the shoulders of the

Archbishop; here, when a common soldier suggests that the responsibility for the deaths of many Englishmen must rest on the conscience of the king, Henry vehemently denies this possibility. Williams maintains: If the cause be not good, the king himself hath a heavy reckoning to make, when all those legs and arms and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day and cry all "We died at such a place . . ." it will be a black matter for the king that led them to it. (140-44) (Yet, at the same time that Williams makes this assertion, he also fully believes that it is the duty of the subject to obey: "To disobey were against all proportion of subjection.") To answer Williams, Henry eludes taking blame by this analogy: "So, if a son that is by his father sent about merchandise does sinfully miscarry upon the sea, the imputation of his wickedness, by your rule, should be imposed upon his father that sent him. . . ." He further adds that "every subject's duty is the king's; but every subject's soul is his own." We see also that Henry believes that "the king is but a man, as I am; the violet smells to him as it doth to me . . . his ceremonies laid by, in his nakedness he appears but a man, and though his affections are higher mounted than ours, yet, when they stoop, they stoop with the like wing." In other words, the king is like the common man except that he has more concerns, and when disaster or grief strikes, one man is the same as another. In his soliloquy, Henry expresses the suffering he endures, and he pours forth his anguish and his sense of guilt for the crown that his father usurped; particularly, we sense his sorrow when he utters a final prayer, beginning "God of battles. . . ." The sense of guilt which he feels for his father's crime against the preceding king (Richard II) is carefully scrutinized: Not to-day, O Lord, O, not to-day, think not upon the fault My father made in compassing the crown! (310-12) This passage alone, given in a soliloquy, ultimately attests to the deep religious nature of Henry V. 8.2.2 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 2 Summary The scene shifts to the French camp where everyone is ready to go to battle. The sun has risen and it is time to begin. There follows a brief scene in French, loosely translated as follows:

Orl. The sun doth gild our armour; up, my lords! Dau. Mount me on my horse; you, my valet, my lackey. ha! Orl. Oh noble spirit! Dau. Begone, water and earth. Orl. Nothing more? only air and fire. Dau. Heaven also, my cousin Orleans. (This scene is a continuation or a conclusion of the last scene in Act III, when the Dauphin was discussing the merits of his horse, which, according to him, possesses only fire and air; he now adds to those qualities that of heaven also.) A messenger enters and says that the English forces are also ready, and the Constable gives the call to mount up. He and the others pity the small, beleaguered English forces and hope that they have said their prayers. He has so much confidence in his superior force that he is sure that the mere appearance of his army will cause the English to "crouch down in fear and yield." A French lord, Grand-pré, enters and continues to ridicule the poor "bankrupt" and "beggar'd" condition of the Englishmen. Impatient for battle, the Constable grabs his banner and cries to his men to take the field. Analysis The remainder of this act reads, in part, like a pure chronicle — that is, Scene Two is set in the French camp, and then we shift to the English camp in Scene Three, and then we have a comic interlude, and then we return to the French forces on the battlefield, and then to the English forces. As noted earlier, the frivolity of the French is contrasted with the seriousness of the English. The extended insults heaped upon the English by the arrogant French officers prepare the audience to relish even more the defeat of the French forces, which have shown such utter contempt for the English. The dramatic irony is that the audience knows what is going to happen, and the French forces are totally ignorant of their fate. In the beginning of this scene, the Dauphin still speaks of his horse as being possessed of no such common elements as earth and water, but of being made of pure air and fire, the same sentiments that he expressed in his last speech. In doing so, we now realize that the night has passed and, with the dawn, the battle is about to begin, and the French are still overconfident

8.2.3 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 3 Summary In the English camp, Gloucester, Bedford, Exeter, Westmoreland, and Salisbury discuss the battle. There are five times as many French soldiers as there are Englishmen, and the French are fresh and rested. The Earl of Salisbury bids his friends goodbye, saying they may not meet again until they meet in heaven; he then exits to do battle. The king enters and hears Westmoreland wish for ten thousand more English troops. In answer to Westmoreland, Henry says that if God plans for them to win, there will be greater glory with no more troops than these to share the honors with. He urges anyone who does not wish to fight to leave. Today is a day set aside for the celebration of the "Feast of Saint Crispian," and all of those English soldiers who survive the battle will be honored and remembered every Saint Crispian's Day. Henry promises that all of their names shall become household words and their deeds remembered "to the ending of the world." Every Englishman who fights with him shall be his brother, and all Englishmen who do not take part in the battle will hold their manhoods cheap on Saint Crispian's Day. The Earl of Salisbury enters and warns the king that the French are ready to charge. Henry asks Westmoreland if he still wishes for more help. Westmoreland, inspired by the king's speech, is now willing to fight the French with only the king at his side. The French herald, Montjoy, sent from the Constable, asks King Henry to surrender now, before the slaughter begins. The king is impatient and his speech is meant more for his troops than for the French herald: Henry and his troops will either defeat the French or die. Montjoy exits, taking the king's message back to the Constable. King Henry grants his cousin, the Duke of York, the privilege of leading the troops into battle. Analysis The opening of this scene reestablishes for the audience the great odds against which the English are confronted. There are about sixty thousand French soldiers matched against somewhat less than twelve thousand Englishmen — five-to-one odds — and Westmoreland's wish for another ten thousand "of those men in England! That do no work to-day" (the battle was fought on a Sunday, and the majority of Englishmen would not be working on that day) allows Henry to enter and make his famous Saint Crispian's Day speech. (The battle was fought on the day set aside to honor two fourth-century saints — Saint Crispian and Saint Crispin — and both names are used by Henry during the course of his speech.) Henry's speech contrasts strongly in its dignity and manliness with the boastful frivolity of the French nobility. In his speech, which is a superb rhetorical vehicle for theatrical declamation, Henry is able to rouse his soldiers to a high pitch of patriotism. He would not want to share the honor of this day with other men. The fewer men there are, the greater the honor will be to those who do fight. Furthermore, if any man does not want to fight, then: Let him depart . . . We would not die in that man's company . . .

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; For he to-day that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother. . . . (36; 38; 60-62)

Westmoreland then expresses this response to Henry's rousing speech: "Would you and I alone, / Without more help, could fight this royal battle." Henry is again given the opportunity to give a rousing speech when the French herald demands that Henry surrender himself for ransom. Henry reminds the envoy of the man who sold a lion's skin in advance but was subsequently killed while hunting the lion. Likewise, this very day might provide his English soldiers with new coats of lion skins. And my poor soldiers tell me, yet ere night They'll be in fresher robes, or they will pluck The gay new coats o'er the French soldiers' heads And turn them out of service. (116-19) He assures the herald that the only ransom that the French will receive will be his bones ("joints"). On this note, the famous Battle of Agincourt begins. 8.2.4 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 4 Summary On the battlefield, Pistol enters with a captured French soldier who mistakes Pistol for a gentleman of high quality. When Pistol asks for the Frenchman's name, he hears only "O Seigneur Dieu!" (Oh, Lord God). Pistol mistakes the French word "Dieu" for the Frenchman's name — "Dew." Pistol then rants and raves, causing the Frenchman to say: "O, prenez miséricorde! ayez pitié de moi!" (Oh, take mercy on me! Have pity for me.)

Again, Pistol is confused; he thinks that the word "moi" means "moy," a coin of some denomination, and he asserts that he wants at least forty "moys" or else he will cut the Frenchman's throat. After further misunderstanding, Pistol calls for the Boy to come and translate. He then finds out that the man's name is Monsieur le Fer, and Pistol makes several puns on the English words "fer," "firk," and "ferret." Pistol then tells the Boy to tell the Frenchman that he is about to cut the Frenchman's throat immediately unless he is highly paid with English crowns. The Frenchman begs for mercy and his life, saying that he is from a good family who will pay well for his ransom — at least two hundred crowns. Pistol makes more threats and finally says that that amount will abate his passion. The Boy, however, translates Pistol's speech as follows: "[Pistol] says that it is against his oath to pardon any prisoner; however, for the sake of the two hundred crowns you have promised him, he is willing to allow you your freedom and your liberty." The French prisoner then responds: "I thank him on bended knees, a thousand thanks, and I consider myself lucky to have fallen into the hands of such a courtly gentleman — one who, I believe, must be the bravest, the most valiant, and the most distinguished nobleman in England." Pistol is satisfied and exits with his prisoner. Alone, the Boy comments upon the empty bravery and the hollow courage of Pistol, who roars like some devil from an old stage play. From the Boy, we also hear about the deaths of Nym and Bardolph, and the prediction that his own fate is precarious since only boys like himself are left to guard the equipment. Analysis This is the first scene we have that deals directly with the battle that is taking place. Four more scenes dealing with the battle will follow. It is ironic, therefore, that our first knowledge of this key battle comes in the form of a comic interlude — that is, if some braggart so low, incompetent, cowardly, and as rascally as Pistol can capture a French soldier, then we must assume that the French are in total disarray and that the English are initially successful. It is further ironic that one of the greatest of cringing cowards is praised so highly by the French captive and is able to extort two hundred crowns; one wonders what the other soldiers, truly brave soldiers, are accomplishing. This scene, a comic interlude, is inserted here apparently because Shakespeare wanted to further emphasize the poetic irony of the French officers' having viewed the entire battle in such a frivolous manner and their looking upon the English so derisively.

8.2.5 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 5 Summary In another part of the field, the Constable of France, the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, Lord Rambures, and the Dauphin realize that although they greatly outnumber the English forces, they are being defeated. There is much confusion on the battlefield, but they continue fighting, declaring their utter shame, realizing that in mere numbers, "We are enough yet living in the field / To smother up the English." Analysis This short scene is the second one dealing with the battle itself. It shows that the French are indeed being dispersed in spite of their great number. As is obvious, the main intent of the scene is to show the shame of the once boastful and arrogant French as they are being defeated by those "wretches that we played at dice for." The entire day, then, is nothing but "shame, and eternal shame, nothing but shame!" 8.2.6 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 6 Summary In another part of the battlefield, Henry notes that they seem to be winning ("Well have we done, thrice valiant countrymen"), and he asks about his kinsman, the Duke of York, whom he saw fighting and covered with blood. Exeter repeats York's last words and tells him in a moving speech how bravely York died. The Duke of York, wounded and dying, stumbled upon his noble cousin, the Earl of Suffolk, who lay dying. York took his cousin "by the beard, kissed the gashes," and called upon Suffolk to tarry for a moment so they could die together. Then: So did he turn and over Suffolk's neck He threw his wounded arm and kiss'd his lips; And so espoused to death, with blood he seal'd A testament of noble-ending love. (24-27) Exeter tells how he wept like a woman at the sight, and King Henry is about to join "with mistful eyes" when, hearing an alarm, he realizes that the French have reinforced their armies, and he orders his men to kill all of the French prisoners. Analysis First, this scene functions to announce the beginning of the English successes. Then it shifts its emphasis to narrate the deaths of the Duke of York, who has played only a small

role in the drama, and the death of the Earl of Suffolk, who has not even appeared in the drama. This might seem confusing to the modern viewer, but from our knowledge of many of Shakespeare's history plays, some of the greatest moments are associated with a description of love and death; added to this is the bloody gore of the battlefield. Thus, in order to give a depth to the deaths of two who have played virtually no role in the development of the drama, this scene must be rendered within the context of a grim battle atmosphere. Shakespeare's main purpose, here, is to show another aspect of Henry the King — one who can mourn and weep for his kinsmen and fellow soldiers fallen in battle, and then, in the next moment, put aside all sense of personal loss and sternly command the deaths of all the French prisoners in order to ensure the safety of the English soldiers. This quality of decisiveness is the stuff that all great field commanders are made of (at least Shakespeare seems to be saying this). We see evidence of the complete presence of mind and control that Henry has in the midst of a raging battle and in the throes of passion because of the deaths of his kinsmen. For many modern readers, Henry's command to kill all the French prisoners might seem extremely cruel and barbaric or savage, but unless Henry wants to be defeated and have all of his men put to death, he must execute the prisoners before they are freed or before they revolt. In terms of historical accuracy, Henry did not reportedly issue this order until he discovered that the French had massacred all of the young boys and lackeys left in charge of the English equipment in the camp. This massacre is covered in the next scene.

8.2.7 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 7 Summary In another part of the battlefield, Fluellen and Gower discuss Henry's order to kill all the French prisoners. Gower is delighted, and Fluellen compares the king to Alexander the Great. The king and several associates enter, along with the French herald, Montjoy, who admits the French defeat and describes the carnage of the battlefield in great detail. The king declares that this victory will be remembered as the Battle of Agincourt. Fluellen expresses his love and loyalty to the king, and Williams enters and explains to the king that he is looking for his glove in someone else's cap; he is ready to fight the rascal if only he can find him. The king mischievously hands Fluellen his glove, telling him that he took it from the French Duke of Alençon. To make sure that there is no serious trouble, Henry sends Gloucester and Warwick to watch Fluellen and Williams; he will follow to observe the fun.

Analysis This scene is rather diverse and diffused in structure. The opening discussion by Fluellen and Gower over the senseless and unheard of slaying of the sick, the unarmed, the wounded, and, worst of all, innocent young boys by the French soldiers causes Henry's men to remark upon the king's sense of justice. Both Fluellen and Gower feel that such measures are absolutely justified, and in justifying them, Fluellen compares King Henry to Alexander the Great, one of the most bloody conquerors of the ancient world. Here, however, we should remember that whereas Henry is trying to establish imperialism, Alexander was at a loss to know what to do when there were no more lands to conquer; for that reason, the analogy to Alexander is not necessarily a flattering one. King Henry's appearance on the stage shows his incensed rage over the massacre of the young English boys. I was not angry since I came to France Until this instant. (58-59) His anger leads him to utter threats of harshness and inhumanity, and he threatens to kill those not yet captured if his orders are not obeyed. However, when he is assured of victory, his humility is restored in the moment when he gives full and complete credit for the victory to God: Mont. The day is yours. K. Henry. Praised be God, and not our strength, for it. (89-90) At this point in the battle, Henry is still willing to carry on his private joke with Williams, the character he promised to do battle with if they were both alive after the day's battle. Instead, however, he gives the glove to Fluellen, a man whom he admires greatly, and then sends others to see that no real harm ensues.

8.2.8 Summary and Analysis Act IV: Scene 8 Summary In another part of the field, Williams and Gower enter and then Fluellen enters and tells Gower of the king's order concerning him and suggests the possibility of a promotion. At

the same time, Williams recognizes his glove in Fluellen's cap and strikes him. Examining the glove in Williams's hand, he recognizes it as the match to the glove of the French Duke of Alençon which King Henry has just given to him. He therefore assumes that Williams is some sort of traitor in league with Alençon, and they are about to fight when the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Gloucester enter and stop the fight. The king and Exeter appear also, and Henry admits his part in the charade. Williams bravely confronts the king by saying it was the king's fault since the king was in disguise. Henry orders Williams' glove to be filled with coins. An English herald enters with the casualty reports. Ten thousand French soldiers, including an exceptionally large number of French noblemen, have been slain. The English loss is miraculously light. Henry repeatedly gives all of the credit to God and orders a mass to be said. Afterward, he says, "To England then / Where ne'er from France arrived more happy men." Analysis This scene concludes the comic incident involving King Henry's encounter with the common soldier Williams before the battle when they swapped gloves and promised to fight. Many prudish critics, forgetting what a penchant for a practical joke Prince Hal formerly possessed, criticize Henry for his handling of this situation. After all, there was a promised rendezvous between Henry and Williams; if they both were alive after the battle, they would fight, and Williams is willing to uphold his promise, but King Henry makes light of his own promise. Those who object to Henry not living up to his word of honor have no sense of comedy, or the Renaissance, or no sense of the concepts of honor as they were understood by the Elizabethan audience. It would be completely out of character for the king to enter into combat with one of his own soldiers; furthermore, it would be treasonous for a soldier to enter into combat with the king. When the king accuses Williams of abusing the person of the king, Williams boldly defends himself before the king, saying: Your Majesty came not like yourself; you appeared to me but as a common man; witness the night, your garments, your lowliness; and what your Highness suffered under that shape, I beseech you take it for your own fault and not mine. (53-57) For such an honest answer, Henry awards the soldier a glove filled with crowns. Fluellen, who has just been struck by Williams, now realizes that the soldier "has mettle enough in his belly" and offers some additional money, but his offer is refused by the good, honest Williams. When the French and English dead are numbered and the tally is brought to King Henry, consistent with his character as Shakespeare has presented it, Henry once again takes no glory for himself but, instead, he dedicates his miraculous victory to the will of God. Here, then, is the Christian king, proud of his human victory, but still humble before God as he, in a single speech, gives all credit to God, four times: O God! thy arm was here. . . . Take it, God, For it is none but thine. . . . And be it death proclaimed through our host To boast of this or take the praise from God Which is His only. . . . God fought for us. (111; 116-17; 119-21; 125) In this scene, we again see King Henry as a multi-dimensional man — a man among men enjoying a good jest, as a royal king receiving the miraculous news of his overwhelming victory, and as a model Christian ruler, placing his honors subservient before the might of God.

8.3 Summary and Analysis Act V: Prologue

Summary As in the other four acts, the Chorus enters and asks the audience once again to imagine certain events. After the last act, Henry left France, crossed the English Channel, and set out for London. Many of his lords tried to convince him to let "his bruised helmet and his bended sword" go before him, as was the custom of the ancient Caesar upon returning victorious. Henry refused, believing that it might detract from the glory of God, to whom he attributes the victory. All of London poured out to acclaim him. The Holy Roman Emperor even came to England to try and arrange a peace, but he was unsuccessful, and now the audience must use its imagination once again and picture Henry now in France. Analysis For many critics, Act V is not an integral part of the drama of King Henry V. Many see the real intent and the true action of the play as having ended with the victory of the Battle of Agincourt and find the entire last act to be superfluous, an anticlimax to the real intent of the play. However, Shakespeare was approaching the very heights of his dramatic powers, and the act should be read for his intention and not for mere "plot."

8.3.1 Summary and Analysis Act V: Scene 1 Summary In the English camp, Gower asks Fluellen why he is wearing a leek when the Welsh national day to do so has passed. Fluellen explains that he is looking for that "rascally, scurvy, beggarly, lousy" Pistol, who made derogatory insinuations about the Welsh people's national custom of wearing leeks to commemorate "Davy," their patron saint. Pistol enters, and Fluellen immediately begins to berate him in fierce language; he orders him to eat the leek, and when Pistol refuses at first, he is roundly beaten by Fluellen until he agrees to eat it. When he falters, Fluellen spurs him on with more wallops, until Pistol has eaten the entire leek. After Fluellen leaves, Pistol says of him: "All hell shall stir for this." Gower then verbally scathes him and leaves in disgust. Alone, Pistol is dejected because he has just heard that his wife, Hostess Quickly, has died of "the French malady" (syphilis), and Pistol has no place to go — he is finished, he says, and decides to turn to a life of stealing. Analysis For the critics who object to the final act, one can only quote the famous eighteenth-century critic Dr. Samuel Johnson, who says of this scene: "The comic scenes of the history of Henry the Fourth and Fifth are now at an end, and all the comic personages are now dismissed. Falstaff and Mrs. Quickly are dead; Nym and Bardolph are hanged; Gadshill was lost immediately after the robbery; Poins and Peto have vanished since, one knows not how; and Pistol is now beaten into obscurity. I believe every reader regrets their departure." Seemingly, Shakespeare knew that his audience would feel suspended if he did not give an account of the last of the group, bringing to a conclusion his story of a group of the most delightful and some of the most depraved low people in all of his dramas. The final picture of Pistol makes us not want to see this surly braggart any more, and yet we feel some compassion toward him because of the depths to which he has fallen. He is left empty of purse and devoid of friends, contemplating a career of masquerading as a wounded veteran in order to cheat and wheedle and steal.

8.3.2 Summary and Analysis Act V: Scene 2 Summary This scene takes place in the French palace. King Henry and his court greet the King and Queen of France, Princess Katharine, and other French nobility. The queen urges that they talk of love and not of war. The Duke of Burgundy makes a long speech about the virtues of peace, to which Henry responds that only if all his demands are met is such a peace possible. Henry appoints a group to discuss his conditions with the King of France: Exeter, Clarence, Gloucester, Warwick, and Huntingdon. The queen volunteers to go along to help with the settlement, leaving King Henry alone with Katharine and her gentlewoman, Alice. In this love scene in which Henry woos Katharine, the king's tone is gently mocking, and yet it is apparent that he is quite serious in his courting. He tells Katharine that he is an athlete and a soldier, but he is not a poet who can speak cleverly to win her love. Katharine seems hesitant, so Henry tells her that they will rule all of England and France and bear a son. When Katharine finally agrees, Henry tries to kiss her hand, which she claims is unworthy. He then tries to kiss her lips but is told that it is not the custom for maids to kiss before marriage. The king tells Katharine that they will set the customs — not follow them — and with that, he kisses her lips. The French king and his advisors reenter. After some bantering exchanges between the Duke of Burgundy and Henry over Katharine's blushing, Henry asks if Kate shall be his wife. The acquiescence to this first demand must be met before any other aspects of the treaty can even be discussed. The French king agrees to the marriage, noting that Kate will bear sons to rule England and France. Henry seals the agreement by kissing Kate in front of all and orders preparations for the marriage to be made. Then there will be a gathering of all the other lords in order to work out the details of the treaty. Analysis Depending upon the mood of the reader or viewer, this love scene between Henry and Kate can either be the most charming reason for the existence of the fifth act, or it can be an absurd travesty on the theme of love. One possible objection to the scene is that the conditions for the treaty between France and England depend on Henry's insistence that Kate must first be his wife. No other terms are to be even considered until it is agreed that she will be his wife, and therefore, the wooing of Kate is an artificial pretense since it is a foregone conclusion before the wooing that Kate will be Henry's wife. Yet, for most people, this is one of the most delightful love scenes that Shakespeare ever wrote. Theater conventions demand that we forget that all sorts of political intrigues and machinations are going on; Burgundy, the French king and queen, and the English

counselors are tending to the political aspects, leaving Henry onstage to expose the audience to another side of his personality. We have seen Henry as a common man moving among men, as an administrator, as a judge both merciful and strict as the occasion demanded, and we have also seen him (or heard of him) as a superb warrior. Now, we see him in a new light — as the lover who woos and sues for the hand in marriage of the lovely young Katharine, Princess of France. Even if Henry knows that all conclusions are foregone in regard to Katharine, yet the thrill is in the lovemaking itself. He will win her to him regardless of the political affiliations, and it is to this purpose that he begins his direct and simple wooing, filled with charm and wit and good-natured teasing. He pretends that he is not the person to speak fancifully of love, and yet he wins the lady's heart with his fanciful speaking. Henry maintains that if Katharine's love depends on his performing some physical feat, then he would quickly win her, but he cannot muster up the proper words for doing so; yet his very words do win her over. Finally, he pretends to be plain spoken, and yet he uses language and ideas that dazzle the young lady. In conclusion, the final aspect of Henry which is presented to the audience is that of the successful lover. If the theater critics and drama analysts object to the fifth act, the audience leaves the theater wholly delighted with Henry's success in love.

8.3.3 Summary and Analysis Act V: Epilogue

Summary The Chorus enters and ends the play, explaining that the events on the stage were mightier than could be actually portrayed. Henry and Katharine did produce a son, Henry the Sixth, whose story is told in other plays.

Analysis The Chorus in the Epilogue

simply reminds the audience once again that the stage has not been adequate for the subject matter, but then no stage could be large enough for an adequate presentation of the man who is the ideal king, the mirror of all Christian kings.

8.4 Character Analysis King Henry V

While Henry V is not Shakespeare's best play, all of the three preceding history plays — Richard II and Henry IV, Parts I and II — lead up to Henry V and its depiction of Henry as the idealized Christian king. Whereas the earlier plays had shown Henry as the "madcap Prince Hal," a chap who was constantly in the company of lower-class types and who was constantly in some trouble of one sort or another, yet this earlier life ultimately becomes a preparation for his kingship, and his earlier knowledge of these low types allows him to understand his common subjects and to measure his own sense of worth by their lack of noble qualities. Each scene in Henry V is constructed either to illustrate some aspect of Henry V's character or to present some of the low characters as comic relief. Consequently, various scenes depict his religious nature, his mercy, pity, and compassion, his absolute sense of justice, his administrative skill, his fighting ability, his innate nobility, his ability to communicate with the common class of soldiers and people, and, in the final scene, his role as a romantic lover in the suit of Katharine's hand in marriage. In the opening scenes, he is characterized as being troubled over the religious rightness of his claim to the French lands and the French crown. He relies heavily on the advice of the Archbishop, with the idea that his (the king's) conscience will be clear. He charges the Archbishop "in the name of God" to "religiously unfold" the means by which he can lay claim to these lands. Throughout the play, Henry V's religious nature is constantly emphasized, and after the crucial Battle of Agincourt, he is the first to give all the credit of the victory to God. At his triumphant return to London, we hear that he is frightened that too many people will praise him and not give full credit to God. In one scene, Henry is presented in a situation where he must be a judge. First, we see him as merciful and forgiving as he releases a prisoner for a minor offense; he then turns to three conspirators and, with a sense of just majesty, dispenses stern justice to them. And even here, although he feels a deep personal insult because of the conspirators' plot, it is ultimately the threat to the peace of England that allows Henry to put aside personal feelings and execute the men for the sake of "the health of England." He can, then, in the same scene turn immediately from feeling a sense of personal betrayal and instantly administer to the needs of the kingdom and the conduct of the war. In addition, during the war, he demands that the conquered French be treated with respect while, at the same time, he allows one of his boon companions of his madcap days to go to his death because he stole from a church.

Even though we never see King Henry actually fighting on the stage, we are told repeatedly of his fighting prowess and of his battered armor and sword; in other scenes, we see him as the inspirational orator and leader of men, exhorting them to rise to the great demands put upon them by the nature of the wars. Due to his associations during his youth, Henry is also able to communicate well and naturally with the common soldiers, and, because of the carefree tenor of his youth, he still possess a penchant for a practical joke, as we see when he allows Williams and Fluellen to almost come to blows because of the gloves in their hats. Finally, as would be appropriate with the ideal king, we see Henry dressed in all his regal regalia, as the witty and urbane lover who is courting the charming Princess Kate. Therefore, in the above scene and others, many and various aspects of Henry's character are presented so as to demonstrate Shakespeare's point that here, indeed, is the ideal Christian king.

8.5 Self-Assessment Essay Questions

1. Comment upon the many different attributes of Henry V that are brought out in the various scenes in the play.
2. Why is Henry so much more lenient, apparently, with the captured French than he is with the English soldiers who are caught violating his instructions?
3. How does the Chorus function? How would the play be different if it were left out completely?
4. In a famous movie version of Henry V, starring Sir Laurence Olivier, the Battle of Agincourt is presented with both armies costumed in a splendid array of armor and filled with pageantry. How does this presentation romanticize Shakespeare and contradict the text?
5. Comment on how Shakespeare alters historical fact for the sake of dramatic appeal.
6. How does Fluellen function in the drama? How would the drama be altered if a director omitted this role from the drama?
7. What is the dramatic appeal of the king when he is in disguise, moving among his common soldiers?
8. Analyze Shakespeare's purpose in having a common soldier, such as Williams, stand up to the king and speak his views so forthrightly.
9. How do Pistol and the Boy function in the play?

10. How can we account for the total success of the English against such overwhelming odds at the Battle of Agincourt?

Unit 9: Shakespeare: Julius Ceasar-I

9.1 Introduction 9.2 Objectives 9.3 About the Author and his Works 9.3.1 Author and His Works 9.3.2 Shakespeare as a Playwright 9.4 Classification of Plays 9.4.1 Tragedies 9.4.2 Comedies 9.4.3 Romances 9.4.4 History Plays 9.5 Shakespeare's Style 9.6 The Play: Julius Caesar 9.6.1 Introduction 9.6.2 Complete Summary 9.6.3

Act wise summary

9.1 Introduction Shakespeare was living under the reign of Elizabeth I, the last monarch of the house of Tudor, and his history plays are often regarded as Tudor propaganda because they show the dangers of civil war and celebrate the founders of the Tudor dynasty. In particular, Richard III depicts the last member of the rival house of York as an evil monster ("that bottled spider, that foul bunchback'd toad"), a depiction disputed by many modern historians, while portraying his usurper, Henry VII in glowing terms. Political bias is also clear in Henry VIII, which ends with an effusive celebration of the birth of Elizabeth. However, Shakespeare's celebration of Tudor order is less

9.2 Objectives This unit will introduce you to the age of Shakespeare and his life. It will also give you an insight into the plays of Shakespeare. The history plays will be discussed with reference to the position of Julius Caesar in the in the category of plays of Shakespeare. A summary of the play shall be provided to make you familiar with the plot and the sequence of events in the play. Thus, in this unit you will study: a) the author and his plays b) the history plays c) the characteristics and themes of the plays of Shakespeare d) a summary of Julius Caesar e) suggested questions and answers

9.3 About the Author and his Plays 9.3.1 About the Author

Shakespeare is renowned as the English playwright and poet whose body of works is considered the greatest in history of English literature. Shakespeare

was baptized on April 26, 1564, and it is assumed that he was born on April 23, 1564. William was the third child of John and Mary Shakespeare. The first two were daughters and William was himself followed by Gilbert who died in 1612 and Richard who died in 1613. Edmund (1580-1607), sixth in the line was baptized on May the third, 1580 and William's oldest living sister was Joan who outlived her famous playwright brother. Of William's seven siblings, only Judith and four of his brothers survived to adulthood. William's father was a John Shakespeare, said to be a town official of Stratford and a local businessman who dabbled in tanning, leatherwork. William's mother was Mary Arden who married John Shakespeare in 1557.

The youngest daughter in her family, she inherited much of her father's landowning and farming estate when he died. In his younger years Shakespeare attended the Christian Holy Trinity church, the now famous elegant limestone cross shaped cathedral on the banks of the Avon river, studying the Book of Common Prayer and the English Bible. In 1605 he became lay rector when he paid £440 towards its upkeep, hence why he is buried in the chancel. Early on Shakespeare likely attended the Elizabethan theatrical productions of travelling theatre troupes, come to Stratford to entertain the local official townsmen, including the Queen's Men, Worcester's Men, Leicester's Men, and Lord Strange's Men. There is also the time when Queen Elizabeth herself visited nearby Kenilworth Castle and Shakespeare, said to have been duly impressed by the procession, recreated it in some of his later plays. Although enrolment registers did not survive, around the age of eleven Shakespeare probably entered the grammar school of Stratford, King's New School, where he would have studied theatre and acting, as well as Latin literature and history. When he finished school, he might have apprenticed for a time with his father, but there is also mention of

his being a school teacher. The next record of his life is in 1582, when still a minor at the age of eighteen and requiring his father's consent, Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway (1556– 1623) married in the village of Temple Grafton. Baptisms of three children were recorded; Susanna (1583-1649), who went on to marry noted physician John Hall, and twins Judith (1585-1662) who married Richard Quiney, and Hamnet (1585-1596) his only son and heir who died at the age of eleven. By 1593 the plague was haunting London and many who were able fled the teeming city for the cleansing airs of open country. While it was a time for many upstart theatres, the popular public entertainment of the day, they were often shut down and forbidden to open for stretches of time. Shakespeare probably spent these dark days travelling between London, Stratford, and the provinces, which gave him time to pen many more plays and sonnets. Among the first of his known printed works is the comedic and erotically charged Ovidian narrative poem *Venus and Adonis* (1593). It was wildly popular, dedicated with great esteem to his patron Henry Wriothesly, third earl of Southampton, the young man that some say Shakespeare may have had more than platonic affection for. It was followed by the much darker *The Rape of Lucrece* in 1594, *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599 and the allegorical *The Phoenix and the Turtle* (1601). At this time of prolific writing, Shakespeare began his association until his death with *The Lord Chamberlain's Men*. With the accession of James I they became the *King's Men*, who bought and performed most of Shakespeare's plays. The troupe included his friend and actor Richard Burbage. They performed frequently at court, and in the theatres that Shakespeare was coowner of including the Blackfriars, *The Theatre*, and *The Globe* in London until it burnt down during a performance of *King Henry VIII*. It is said that Shakespeare himself acted in a number of roles including the ghost in *Hamlet* and *Old Adam* in *As You Like It*. In the late 1590s he bought 'New Place' on Chapel Street in Stratford, one of his many real estate investments. Shakespeare wrote most of his plays as 'quarto texts', that being on a sheet of paper folded four ways. A few of his plays were printed in his lifetime, though they appeared more voluminously after his death, sometimes plagiarised and often changed at the whim of the printer. *First Folio* would be the first collection of his dramatic works, a massive undertaking to compile thirty-six plays from the quarto texts, playbooks, transcriptions, and the memories of actors. The approximately nine hundred page manuscript took about two years to complete and was printed in 1623 as *Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*. It also featured on the frontispiece the famous engraved portrait of Shakespeare said to be by Martin Droeshout (1601-c1651).

It is generally agreed that most of the Shakespearean Sonnets were written in the 1590s, some printed at this time as well. Others were written or revised right before being printed. 154 sonnets and "A Lover's Complaint" were published by Thomas Thorpe as *Shakespeare's Sonnets* in 1609. The order, dates, and authorship of the Sonnets have been much debated with no conclusive findings. Many have claimed autobiographical details from them, including sonnet number 145 in reference to Anne. The dedication to "Mr. W.H." is said to possibly represent the initials of the third earl of Pembroke William Herbert, or perhaps being a reversal of Henry Wriothesly's initials. Regardless, there have been some unfortunate projections and interpretations of modern concepts onto centuries old works that, while a grasp of contextual historical information can certainly lend to their depth and meaning, can also be enjoyed as valuable poetical works that have transcended time and been surpassed by no other.

9.3.2 Shakespeare as a Playwright By 1596,

Shakespeare was so successful as a playwright that his family was finally granted a Coat of Arms which amongst other things allowed Shakespeare to call himself a "gentleman". His first plays are believed to be the three parts of *Henry VI*; it is uncertain whether Part I was written before or after Parts II and III. *Richard III* is related to these plays and is usually grouped with them as the final part of a first tetralogy of historical plays. After these come *The Comedy of Errors*, *Titus Andronicus* (almost a third of which may have been written by George Peele),

The Taming of the Shrew, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*,
Love's Labour's Lost,
and

Romeo and Juliet. Some of the comedies of this early period are classical imitations with a strong element of farce. The two tragedies, *Titus Andronicus* and *Romeo and Juliet*, were both popular in Shakespeare's own lifetime. In *Romeo and Juliet* the main plot, in which the new love between Romeo and Juliet comes into conflict with the longstanding hatred between their families, is skillfully advanced, while the substantial development of minor characters supports and enriches it. After these early plays, and before his great tragedies, Shakespeare wrote *Richard II*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King John*, *The Merchant of Venice*, Parts I and II of *Henry IV*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*. The comedies of this period partake less of farce and more of idyllic romance, while the history plays successfully integrate political elements with individual characterization. Taken together, *Richard II*, each part of *Henry IV*, and *Henry V* form a second tetralogy of historical plays, although each can stand alone, and they are usually performed separately. The two parts of *Henry IV* feature Falstaff, a vividly depicted character who from the beginning has enjoyed immense popularity. The period of Shakespeare's great tragedies and the "problem plays" begins in 1600 with *Hamlet*. Following this are *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (written to meet Queen Elizabeth's request for another play including Falstaff, it is not thematically typical of the period),

Troilus and Cressida, All's Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, and Timon of Athens (the

last may have been partially written by Thomas Middleton). On familial, state, and cosmic levels, Othello, Lear, and Macbeth present clear oppositions of order and chaos, good and evil, and spirituality and animality. Stylistically the plays of this period become increasingly compressed and symbolic. Through the portrayal of political leaders as tragic heroes, Coriolanus and Antony and Cleopatra involve the study of politics and social history as well as the psychology of individuals. The last two plays in the Shakespearean corpus, Henry VIII and The Two Noble Kinsmen, may be collaborations with John Fletcher. The remaining four plays—Pericles (two acts of which may have been written by George Wilkins), Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale, and The Tempest—are tragicomedies. They feature characters of tragic potential, but resemble comedy in that their conclusions are marked by a harmonious resolution achieved through magic, with all its divine, humanistic, and artistic implications. Shakespeare's works are often divided into four periods beginning with what is referred to as an experimental period starting around 1591 and ending around 1593 which includes

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Titus Andronicus, Love's Labour's Lost, The Two Gentlemen of Verona,

The Comedy of Errors and The Taming of the Shrew. The second period ending around 1601, marks the establishment of Shakespeare and includes the tragedy Romeo and Juliet, the comedies, The Merchant of Venice,

A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Much Ado about Nothing,

The

Merry Wives of Windsor and

the history plays, Henry IV, Parts I and II, Henry V, Richard II, King John and Julius Caesar. The third period ending around 1610 marks perhaps the apex of Shakespeare's work with the tragedies, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear but also comedies such as Twelfth Night, All's Well that Ends Well and the epic history play, Antony and Cleopatra. The final period ends around 1611 with the plays, Cymbeline, Henry VIII and romances such as The Tempest and The Winter's Tale. The Shakespeare we read today comes from The First Folio of 1623 written by fellow

actors John Heminge and Henry Condell to preserve Shakespeare's legacy. Amazingly, no original manuscripts survive reflecting the fact that many of these manuscripts were written purely for performance and were not regarded as pieces of literary work. There is also no general consensus on when all the plays were first performed. It might surprise readers to know that many of Shakespeare's plays, especially in the experimental period were hardly original, borrowing plot features from earlier plays. Likewise with his history plays, Shakespeare compresses events and does not follow history too closely to add to the drama. However borrowing plots and taking liberties with historical facts was not uncommon in Shakespeare's time and his skill for language, imagery, pun and his creative adaptation of myth and history have set Shakespeare apart as arguably the greatest playwright of all time. Since his death Shakespeare's plays have been almost continually performed, in non- English-speaking nations as well as those where English is the native tongue; they are quoted more than the works of any other single author. The plays have been subject to ongoing examination and evaluation by critics attempting to explain their perennial appeal, which does not appear to derive from any set of profound or explicitly formulated ideas. Indeed, Shakespeare has sometimes been criticized for not consistently holding to any particular philosophy, religion, or ideology; for example, the subplot of A Midsummer Night's Dream includes a burlesque of the kind of tragic love that he idealizes in Romeo and Juliet. The strength of Shakespeare's plays lies in the absorbing stories they tell, in their wealth of complex characters, and in the eloquent speech—vivid, forceful, and at the same time lyric—that the playwright puts on his characters' lips. It has often been noted that Shakespeare's characters are neither wholly good nor wholly evil, and that it is their flawed, inconsistent nature that makes them memorable. Hamlet fascinates audiences with his ambivalence about revenge and the uncertainty over how much of his madness is feigned and how much genuine. Falstaff would not be beloved if, in addition to being genial, openhearted, and witty, he were not also boisterous, cowardly, and, ultimately, poignant. Finally, the plays are distinguished by an unparalleled use of language. Shakespeare had a tremendous vocabulary and a corresponding sensitivity to nuance, as well as a singular aptitude for coining neologisms and punning.

9.4 Classification of Plays

The plays of Shakespeare can broadly be put under four categories i.e. the comedies, the tragedies, the romances and the history plays.

9.4.1

Tragedies Shakespeare's tragedies are among the most powerful studies of human nature in all literature and appropriately stand as the greatest achievements of his dramatic artistry. Attention understandably has focused on his unforgettable tragic characters, such as Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth. Yet the plays also explore and extend the very nature of tragedy itself by discovering within it a structure that derives meaning precisely from its refusal to offer consolation or compensation for the suffering it traces

Shakespeare wrote his first tragedies in 1594 and 1595. But he left the field of tragedy untouched for at least five years after finishing *Romeo and Juliet*, probably in 1595, and turned to comedy and history plays. *Julius Caesar*, written about 1599, served as a link between the history plays and the mature tragedies that followed. The earliest tragedy attributed to Shakespeare is *Titus Andronicus* (published in 1594). In its treatment of murder, mutilation, and bloody revenge, the play is characteristic of many popular tragedies of the Elizabethan period. The structure of a spectacular revenge for earlier heinous and bloody acts, all of which are staged in sensational detail, derives from Roman dramatist Seneca. *Romeo and Juliet* (1595) is justly famous for its poetic treatment of the ecstasy of youthful love. The play dramatizes the fate of two lovers victimized by the feuds and misunderstandings of their elders and by their own hasty temperaments. *Julius Caesar* was written about 1599 and first published in 1623. Though a serious tragedy of political rivalries, it is less intense in style than the tragic dramas that followed it. Shakespeare based this political tragedy concerning the plot to overthrow Julius Caesar on *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* by 1st-century Greek biographer Plutarch. Plutarch's *Lives* had first appeared in English in 1579, in a version produced by Thomas North from a French translation of the original. The North translation provided Shakespeare and his contemporaries with a great deal of historical material. Shakespeare followed Plutarch closely in *Julius Caesar*; little of incident or character appears in the play that is not found in the *Lives* as well, and he sometimes used North's wording. Shakespeare's play centers on the issue of whether the conspirators were justified in killing Caesar. How a production answers that question determines whether the conspirator Brutus is seen as sympathetic or tragically self-deceived. The tragedies Shakespeare wrote after 1600 are considered the most profound of his works and constitute the pillars upon which his literary reputation rests. Some scholars have tied the darkening of his dramatic imagination in this period to the death of his father in 1601. But in the absence of any compelling biographical information to support this

theory, it remains only a speculation. For whatever reason, sometime around 1600 Shakespeare began work on a series of plays that in their power and profundity are arguably unmatched in the achievement of any other writer. *Hamlet*, written about 1601 and first printed in 1603, is perhaps Shakespeare's most famous play. It exceeds by far most other tragedies of revenge in the power of its ethical and psychological imagining. *Othello* was written about 1604, though it was not published until 1622. It portrays the growth of unjustified jealousy in the noble protagonist, Othello, a Moor serving as a general in the Venetian army. The innocent object of his jealousy is his wife, Desdemona. In this domestic tragedy, Othello's evil lieutenant Iago draws him into mistaken jealousy in order to ruin him. Othello is destroyed partly through his gullibility and willingness to trust Iago and partly through the manipulations of this villain, who clearly enjoys the exercise of evil-doing just as he hates the spectacle of goodness and happiness around him. *King Lear* was written about 1605 and first published in 1608. Conceived on a grander emotional and philosophic scale than *Othello*, it deals with the consequences of the arrogance and misjudgment of Lear, a ruler of early Britain, and the parallel behavior of his councilor, the Duke of Gloucester. *Antony and Cleopatra* was written about 1606 and first published in 1623. It deals with a different type of love than that in Shakespeare's earlier tragedies, namely the middle-aged passions of the Roman general Mark Antony and the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Their love, which destroys an empire, is glorified by some of Shakespeare's most sensuous poetry. *Macbeth* was written about 1606 and first published in 1623. In the play Shakespeare depicts the tragedy of a man torn between an amoral will and a powerfully moral intellect. Shakespeare's last tragedies, *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens*, both set in classical times, were written in 1607 and 1608 and first published in the 1623 Folio. Because their protagonists appear to lack the emotional greatness or tragic stature of the protagonists of the major tragedies, the two plays have an austerity that has cost them the popularity they may well merit.

9.4.2 The Comedies The early comedies of Shakespeare,

The Comedy of Errors, *Love's Labour Lost* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

are immature plays of the dramatist, and exhibit the early efforts of a writer who scaled high heights of success in his later dramatic career. The plots of these comedies lack originality. The characters of these plays are less finished and marked with artistic lapses in character portrayal. The style lacks the graces of the matured works of the dramatist. The mature comedies include *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *As You Like It*. In these comedies is to be

found the flower of Shakespeare's comic genius. These plays are full of vitality and vivacity and are marked with enlivening wit and pleasant humour. They are romantic in character and saturated with spirit of love.

All's Well that End's Well, Measure for Measure and Troilus and Cressida,

are

considered as comedies and end happily but their general tone is marked with a note of tragedy and somberness. 9.4.3 The Romances Toward the end of his career, Shakespeare created several experimental plays that have become known as tragicomedies or romances. These plays differ considerably from Shakespeare's earlier comedies, being more radical in their dramatic art and showing greater concern with reconciliation among generations. Yet like the earlier comedies the tragicomedies end happily with reunions or renewal. Typically, virtue is sorely tested in the tragicomedies, but almost miraculously succeeds. Through the intervention of magic and art—or their emotional equivalent, compassion, or their theological equivalent, grace—the spectacular triumph of virtue that marks the ends of these plays suggests redemptive hope for the human condition. In these late plays, the necessity of death and sadness in human existence is recognized but located within larger patterns of harmony that suggest we are “led on by heaven, and crowned with joy at last,” as the epilogue of *Pericles* proposes. The romantic tragicomedy *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* was written in 1607 and 1608 and first published in 1609. It concerns the trials and tribulations of the title character, including the painful loss of his wife and the persecution of his daughter. After many exotic adventures, *Pericles* is reunited with his loved ones; even his supposedly dead wife is discovered to have been magically preserved. The play's central themes are characteristic of the late plays. *Pericles* focuses particularly on the relationship between father and daughter, as do *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. Its backdrop of the sea also recalls the setting of *The Tempest*, while its concern with separation and reunion is reminiscent of *The Winter's Tale*. Although *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* was a great success in its own time, the play exists only in a somewhat corrupted text. *Pericles* is based on a medieval legend, *Apollonius, Prince of Tyre*, which had many English retellings, from *Confessio Amantis* (*Confessions of a Poet*) by John Gower in the late 14th century to a prose novella by Laurence Twine written in the 1570s. *Cymbeline* was written about 1610 and first published in the 1623 Folio, where it appears as the last of the tragedies. Like the other late plays, *Cymbeline* responds to the fashion of the time for colorful plots and theatrical display. It is packed with adventure, plot

reversals, and dramatic spectacle, and was perhaps intended to exploit the mechanical resources of Blackfriars, the new indoor theater of Shakespeare's company. 9.4.4 History Plays The “history plays” written by Shakespeare are generally thought of as a distinct genre: they differ somewhat in tone, form and focus from his other plays (the “comedies,” the “tragedies” and the “romances”). While many of Shakespeare's other plays are set in the historical past, and even treat similar themes such as kingship and revolution (for example, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Hamlet*, or *Cymbeline*), the eight history plays have several things in common: they form a linked series, they are set in late medieval England, and they deal with the rise and fall of the House of Lancaster—what later historians often referred to as the “War of the Roses. Shakespeare's most important history plays were written in two “series” of four plays. The first series, written near the start of his career (around 1589-1593), consists of *Henry VI, Parts 1, 2 & 3*, and *Richard III*, and covers the fall of the Lancaster dynasty—that is, events in English history between about 1422 and 1485. The second series, written at the height of Shakespeare's powers (around 1595-1599), moves back in time to examine the rise of the Lancastrians, covering English history from about 1398 to 1420. This series consists of *Richard II*, *Henry IV, Parts 1 & 2*, and *Henry V*. Although the events he writes about occurred some two centuries before his own time, Shakespeare expected his audience to be familiar with the characters and events he was describing. The battles among houses and the rise and fall of kings were woven closely into the fabric of English culture and formed an integral part of the country's patriotic legends and national mythology. It is important to remember, when reading the history plays, the significance to this genre of what we might call the “shadows of history.” One of the questions which preoccupies the characters in the history plays is whether or not the King of England is divinely appointed by the Lord. If so, then the overthrow or murder of a king is tantamount to blasphemy and may cast a long shadow over the reign of the king who gains the throne through such nefarious means. This shadow, which manifests in the form of literal ghosts in plays like *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Richard III*, also looms over *Richard II* and its sequels. The murder of the former King *Richard II* at the end of *Richard II* will haunt King *Henry IV* for the rest of his life, and the curse can only be redeemed by his son, *Henry V*. Similarly, *Richard II* himself, in the play which bears his name, is haunted by a politically motivated murder: not of a king, but of his uncle, *Thomas of Woodstock*,

Duke of Gloucester. This death occurs long before the beginning of the play, but, as we will see, it haunts *Richard*, just as his own death will haunt the usurper who is responsible for it. Sometimes Shakespeare

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ignored chronology and telescoped the events of years to fit his own dramatic time scheme. Above all, he used the power of his imagination and language to mold vivid and memorable characters out of the historical figures he found in his sources. The overall theme of the history plays is the importance of a stable political order, but also the heavy moral and emotional price that often must be paid for it. Shakespeare dramatized the great social upheaval that followed Henry IV's usurpation of the throne until the first Tudor king, Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, restored peace and stability. In addition to chronicling the often violent careers of England's great kings, Shakespeare's history plays explore the extreme pressures of public life, the moral conflicts that kings and queens uniquely face, and the potential tragedy of monarchy. Although Shakespeare

probably did not invent the genre of the history play, only a very few plays on English history had been written before he turned to it for his plots, and no contemporary playwright wrote more histories than his ten. Clearly Shakespeare learned from his few predecessors in English drama, especially Christopher Marlowe. Marlowe had initiated the early greatness of Elizabethan tragedy, placing a single monumental personality at the center of each of his major plays. By studying Marlowe's style and energetic protagonists, Shakespeare learned in Richard III to construct a play around a complex, dominating personality. But Shakespeare is as interested in the sweep of history itself, as it catches up personalities in rhythms they are unable to predict or control. Reference Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/shakespeareanhistory> 9.5

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Shakespeare's Style Shakespeare's first plays were written in the conventional style of the day.

He wrote them in a stylised language that does not always spring naturally from the needs of the characters or the drama. The poetry depends on extended, sometimes elaborate metaphors and conceits, and the language is often rhetorical—written for actors to declaim rather than speak. The grand speeches in *Titus Andronicus*, for example, often hold up the action; and much of the verse in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* is stilted. Soon, however, Shakespeare began to adapt the traditional styles to his own purposes. The opening soliloquy of Richard III has its roots in the self-declaration of Vice in medieval drama. At the same time, Richard's vivid self-awareness looks forward to the soliloquies of Shakespeare's mature plays. No single play marks a change from the traditional to the freer style. Shakespeare combined the two throughout his career, with *Romeo and Juliet* perhaps the best example of the mixing of the styles. By the time of *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard II*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the mid-1590s, Shakespeare had begun to write a more natural poetry. He increasingly tuned his metaphors and images to the needs of the drama itself. Shakespeare's standard poetic form was blank verse, composed in iambic pentameter. In practice, this meant that his verse was usually unrhymed and consisted of ten syllables to a line. The blank verse of his early plays is quite different from that of his later ones. It is often beautiful, but its sentences tend to start, pause, and finish at the end of lines, with the risk of monotony. Once Shakespeare mastered traditional blank verse, he began to interrupt and vary its flow. This technique releases the increased power and flexibility of the poetry in plays such as *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*.

After *Hamlet*, Shakespeare varied his poetic style further, particularly in the more emotional passages of the late tragedies. The literary critic A. C. Bradley described this style as "more concentrated, rapid, varied, and, in construction, less regular, not seldom twisted or elliptical". In the last phase of his career, Shakespeare adopted many techniques to achieve these effects. These included run-on lines, irregular pauses and stops, and extreme variations in sentence structure and length. In *Macbeth*, for example, the language darts from one metaphor to another ("was the hope drunk when you dressed yourself"; "pity, like a naked new-born babe").

The listener is challenged to complete the sense. The late romances, with their shifts in time and surprising turns of plot, inspired a last poetic style in which long and short sentences are set against one another, clauses are piled up, subject and object are reversed, and words are omitted, creating an effect of spontaneity. Shakespeare's poetic genius was allied

with a practical sense of the theatre. Like all playwrights of the time, Shakespeare dramatised stories from sources such as Petrarch and Holinshed. He reshaped each plot to create several centres of interest and show as many sides of a narrative to the audience as possible. This strength of design ensures that a Shakespeare play can survive translation, cutting and wide interpretation without loss to its core drama. As Shakespeare's mastery grew, he gave his characters clearer and more varied motivations and distinctive patterns of speech. He preserved aspects of his earlier style in the later plays, however. In his late romances, he deliberately returned to a more artificial style.

9.6

The Play: Julius Caesar 9.6.1 Introduction The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, more commonly known simply as Julius Caesar, is a tragedy by William Shakespeare written in 1600.

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It portrays the conspiracy against the Roman dictator, Julius Caesar, his assassination and

its aftermath. It is the first of his Roman plays, based on true events from Roman history. Although the title of the play is "Julius Caesar", he is not the central character in the action of the play, appearing in only three scenes and dying at the beginning of the third Act. The central protagonist of the play is Marcus Brutus and the central psychological drama is his struggle between the conflicting demands of honour, patriotism, and friendship. The play reflected the general anxiety of England due to worries over succession of leadership. At the time of its creation and first performance, Queen Elizabeth, a strong ruler, was elderly and had refused to name a successor, leading to worries that a civil war similar to that of Rome's might break out after her death. The play contains many elements from the Elizabethan period, making it anachronistic. The characters mention objects such as hats, doublets (large, heavy jackets), and clocks - none of which existed in ancient Rome. Caesar is mentioned to be wearing an Elizabethan doublet instead of a Roman toga Marcus Brutus is Caesar's close friend; his ancestors were famed for driving the tyrannical King Tarquin from Rome (described in Shakespeare's earlier *The Rape of Lucrece*). Brutus allows himself to be cajoled into joining a group of conspiring senators because of a growing suspicion—implanted by Gaius Cassius—that Caesar intends to turn republican Rome into a monarchy under his own rule. Traditional readings of the play maintain that Cassius and the other conspirators are motivated largely by envy and ambition, whereas Brutus is motivated by the demands of honour and patriotism; other commentators, such as Isaac Asimov, suggest that the text shows Brutus is no less moved by envy and flattery. One of the central strengths of the play is that it resists categorising its characters as either simple heroes or villains. The early scenes deal mainly with Brutus' arguments with Cassius and his struggle with his own conscience. The growing tide of public support soon turns Brutus against Caesar (This public support was actually faked. Cassius wrote letters to Brutus in different handwritings over the next month in order to get Brutus to join the conspiracy). A soothsayer warns Caesar to "beware the Ides of March," which he ignores, culminating in his assassination at the Capitol by the conspirators that day. Caesar's assassination is perhaps the most famous part of the play, about halfway through.

After ignoring the soothsayer as well as his wife's own premonitions, Caesar comes to the Senate. The conspirators create a superficial motive for the assassination by means of a petition brought by Metellus Cimber, pleading on behalf of his banished brother. As Caesar, predictably, rejects the petition, Casca grazes Caesar in the back of his neck, and the others follow in stabbing him; Brutus is last. At this point, Caesar utters the famous line "Et tu, Brute?" ("And you, Brutus?", i.e. "You too, Brutus?"). Shakespeare has him add, "Then fall, Caesar," suggesting that Caesar did not want to survive such treachery. The conspirators make clear that they did this act for Rome, not for their own purposes and do not attempt to flee the scene but act victorious. After Caesar's death, however, Mark Antony, with a subtle and eloquent speech over Caesar's corpse—the much-quoted Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears...— deftly turns public opinion against the assassins by manipulating the emotions of the common people, in contrast to the rational tone of Brutus's speech. Antony rouses the mob to drive the conspirators from Rome. Amid the violence, the innocent poet, Cinna, is confused with the conspirator Cinna and is murdered by the mob. The beginning of Act Four is marked by the quarrel scene, where Brutus attacks Cassius for soiling the noble act of regicide by accepting bribes ("Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake? / What villain touch'd his body, that did stab, / And not for justice?", IV.iii,19-21). The two are reconciled, but as they prepare for war with Mark Antony and Caesar's adopted son, Octavian (Shakespeare's spelling: Octavius), Caesar's ghost appears to Brutus with a warning of defeat. Events go badly for the conspirators during the battle; both Brutus and Cassius choose to commit suicide rather than to be captured. The play ends with a tribute to Brutus by Antony, who has remained "the noblest Roman of them all" and hints at the friction between Mark Antony and Octavius which will characterise another of Shakespeare's Roman plays, Antony and Cleopatra 'Julius Caesar' is one of the timeless creations of Shakespeare, the great master artist. This historical play is a great tragedy that ends in a huge waste of human lives. The play abounds in admirable and affecting passages, and is remarkable for the profound knowledge of character, in which Shakespeare could scarcely fail. It is as if he had been actually present, had known the different characters and what they think of one another, and had taken down what he hear and saw, their looks, words, and gestures as they happened. The truth of history in Julius Caesar is very ably worked up with dramatic effect. The councils of generals, the doubtful turns of battles are represented to life. With his superb language, Shakespeare has breathed life into a glorious chapter torn from the history of Rome dealing with the struggle of Monarchy and Republicanism and has given it a befitting place in the galaxy of his great plays

9.6.2 Complete Summary

Marcellus and Flavius criticize the commoners for celebrating Caesar's recent military defeat of Pompey since they feel it's actually a sad day. During a victory march, a soothsayer warns Caesar to "Beware the Ides of March" (March 15); Caesar ignores him. A race is run, wherein Marc Antony, in the course of competing, touches Caesar's wife Calphurnia in hopes of curing her infertility. During the race, Cassius tries to convince Brutus that Caesar has become too powerful and too popular. Brutus neither agrees nor disagrees. Caesar confers with Antony that he fears Cassius is evil and worth fearing. Casca explains to Brutus and Cassius that shouting they heard was caused by Caesar's thrice refusal of a crown offered to him by Antony (though confusing, the commoners rejoiced that he had refused it for it indicated he is a noble man). At the third offering, Caesar collapsed and foamed at the mouth from epilepsy. Afterward, Caesar exiled/executed Flavius and Marcellus for pulling scarves off of Caesar's images (statues). In a thunderstorm, Casca meets Cicero and tells him of many ominous and fearful sights, mostly of burning images, he has seen. Cassius then meets Cicero and tells him the storm is a good sign of the evil he and his other cohorts plan to do to Caesar. It seems the senators plan to crown Caesar King, but Cassius aims to prevent it, or else commit suicide. Casca agrees to help Cassius. Cinna informs Cassius that Decius Brutus (actually Decimus), Trebonius, and Metallus Cimber will help them to kill Caesar. Cassius is trying to convince Brutus to join too. Brutus, unable to sleep, tells himself that he fears Caesar will become a tyrant if crowned king. Cassius et al. come to Brutus and resolve to murder Caesar the next day (March 15). Metallus also convinces Caius Ligarius to join their cause. The men leave and Portia (Brutus' wife) begs Brutus to tell her what is happening, but he does not (though he does tell her before he leaves for the Senate). At Caesar's house, Calphurnia begs Caesar to stay home for fear of danger (based on a foreboding dream and the night's storm). Holy priests pluck the entrails of an animal and find no heart in it, another bad sign. Caesar declares he will stay home, to calm his wife's fears. Decius, though, convinces Caesar to come to the senate. On the way, the soothsayer Artemidorus tries to warn Caesar of impending death, to no avail. At the Senate, Trebonius leads Antony away from Caesar, then the conspirators murder Caesar. They cover themselves in his blood and go to the streets crying, "Peace, freedom, and liberty." Antony comes back and mourns Caesar's murder. Antony pretends to support the clan yet yearns for great havoc to occur as a result of the death. Brutus explains to the crowd that they killed Caesar because he was too ambitious. Antony replies with reverse psychology to incite the commoners to riot in grief over Caesar's murder. Antony also reads them Caesar's (supposed) will, wherein he leaves money to all the citizens, plus his private gardens. In the ensuing riots, Cinna the poet is wrongly killed by a mob that believes him to be Cinna the conspirator. Antony forms a triumvirate with Octavius Caesar and Lepidus,

to rule Rome. However, Brutus and Cassius are raising an army to defy them. Brutus learns that his wife Portia kills herself by swallowing hot coals. Messala tells Brutus that the triumvirate has killed 100 senators. Titinius, Messala, Brutus, and Cassius decide to confront Antony's army at Phillipi. At Brutus' tent, the ghost of Caesar comes and tells Brutus he will see him at Phillipi. The battle indeed ensues at Phillipi. Cassius confers to Messala that it is his birthday and that he fears defeat. In battle, Titinius is captured by Octavius. Cassius convinces Pindarus to help him commit suicide. Pindarus, in grief, flees after the deed is done. In a twist, Brutus overthrows Octavius and Cassius' army, defeating part of Antony's army. Titinius, in grief over Cassius' death, kills himself with Cassius's sword. The battle turns again, this time against Brutus' army. Cato is killed and Lucilius is captured, while pretending to be Brutus. Brutus successively asks Clitus, Dardanius, and Volumnius to help him commit suicide, yet all refuse. Brutus finally convinces Strato to hold the sword while he (Brutus) runs onto it and dies. Thus, Antony and Octavius prevail, while Cassius and Brutus both commit suicide, assumedly partly in grief over murdering Caesar.

9.6.3 Act wise Summary Act I. Shakespeare's famous Roman play opens to the scene of two Tribunes, Marullus and Flavius scolding Roman citizens for blindly worshipping Caesar. Their conversation reveals deep-seated fears that Caesar is growing too powerful, too arrogant and must be stopped. Hoping to reduce the blind hero worship of Caesar, the two men remove ceremonial decorations off Caesar's "images" (statues) despite the obvious dangers of doing so... A little later, we see Caesar leading a procession through the streets of Rome. A Soothsayer or fortune teller tells Caesar to beware the "ides of March [the 15th of March]" a warning that Caesar will die on this day. It is ignored. Cassius, who fears Caesar's ever growing power, begins to recruit Brutus, a close friend of Caesar's, towards his conspiracy by implying that Caesar is becoming too powerful... We also learn that Marullus and Flavius, the two tribunes pulling decorations off Caesar's statues have been put to silence for "pulling scarfs off Caesar's images [statues]." Brutus is suspicious of Cassius' motives but tells Cassius that he will think it over... Casca, another conspirator, reveals information to Brutus that suggests Caesar may be getting more ambitious... Cassius' conspiracy gains momentum when he recruits a suspicious Casca to their cause against Caesar by pointing out that several recent strange occurrences are omens warning them against Caesar... To ensure Brutus joins his conspiracy, Cassius has Cinna place some forged letters where Brutus will find them convincing Brutus to join their cause. Cinna reveals that Brutus' good name will be an asset to their conspiracy... Act II. Brutus cannot sleep, revealing for the first time his own true fears that Caesar may be growing too powerful. A letter is discovered, which Brutus reads, convincing him to join the conspiracy. The complete group of conspirators meets at Brutus' house, discussing Caesar's assassination. Brutus argues against Caesar's right hand man, Mark Antony being assassinated as well. Cassius and Trebonius have their doubts but go along with Brutus. Brutus' troubled wife Portia tries to find out what her husband is planning, worried for him... Calphurnia, Caesar's wife, wakes Caesar up after herself awakening from a terrible nightmare. She tells Caesar, that her dream foretells doom and succeeds in convincing Caesar does not go to the Senate (also referred to as The Capitol) on the "ides of March" which is tomorrow. Decius Brutus arrives and hearing that Caesar will not be at the Senate tomorrow, flatters Caesar into going so as not to show fear (allowing Brutus and company to kill him there). Artemidorus waits in a street with a letter warning Caesar of the conspiracy, hoping to avert Caesar's assassination... Portia worries for her husband, hoping his "enterprise" today will succeed. The Soothsayer who warned Caesar about the "ides of March" in Act I, waits in a narrow street hoping to warn Caesar of his imminent danger... Act III. Caesar arrogantly tells the Soothsayer that today is the "ides of March", but the Soothsayer tells him the day is not over yet... Artemidorus nearly warns Caesar but Decius Brutus prevents this. Popilius wishes the conspirators good luck, scaring them that Caesar may already know their plans.

Metellus Cimber petitions Caesar to lift his brother's banishment order. Caesar refuses and the conspirators kill Caesar. Mark Antony flees. Mark Antony pretends to treat Caesar's murderers as friends. He asks to speak at Caesar's funeral. Cassius thinks this is dangerous, Brutus, disagreeing, lets Mark Antony speak at the funeral. Mark Antony reveals his true hatred for the conspirators. Octavius, Mark Antony's ally is remain safely outside of Rome a little longer... Brutus and Cassius explain to the citizens of Rome why they killed Caesar, gaining their support. Using the immortal words, "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;" Mark Antony turns the citizens of Rome against Brutus and Cassius by making the citizens feel remorse for Caesar's cruel death and by bribing them with the news that Caesar's will gifts each citizen money from his will. Mark Antony uses this fact to suggest Caesar was a great man who should not have been murdered. The crowd, now an angry, crazed mob, go after the conspirators including Brutus and Cassius who flee in fear... A poet called Cinna who bears the same name as one of the conspirators is killed by the angry mob which shows Shakespeare's insight into the senselessness of the mob mentality... Act IV. The Triumvirs (Octavius, Mark Antony and Lepidus) decide which of the conspirators shall live and which shall die. Mark Antony assures Octavius that Lepidus does not and will not ever have any serious power... The two men start planning their attack on Brutus' and Cassius' forces. Brutus learns that Cassius has finally arrived. Brutus is angry with Cassius, Cassius saying he has done his friend no wrong. Brutus wanting privacy from his troops, tells Cassius to step into his tent where he will discuss the issue further... Brutus angrily attacks Cassius first for contradicting his order to remove Lucius Pella for taking bribes and then Cassius himself for his own dishonesty. Cassius is upset by this but eventually Brutus chooses to forgive his friend. We learn that Portia, Brutus' wife has died, over one hundred senators have been put to death by the Triumvirs and that a large army led by Mark Antony and Octavius is approaching their position... Brutus is greeted by Caesar's Ghost which tells Brutus he will see Caesar again at Philippi. Act V. On the Plains of Philippi, Mark Antony's and Octavius' forces face Brutus' and Cassius' forces. The two sides insult each other, Mark Antony and Octavius then leaving with their army. Later in battle with Mark Antony and Octavius, Brutus sends orders via messenger Messala to Cassius' forces on the other side of the battlefield. Cassius' forces are losing ground to Mark Antony's forces. Brutus has defeated Octavius' forces but instead of reinforcing Cassius' forces, have instead sought out spoils or bounty from the field. Needing information, Cassius sends Titinius to a nearby hill to report if it is friendly or not. Cassius instructs Pindarus to go atop a hill to report Titinius' progress to him. Pindarus sees Titinius pulled off his horse and fears Titinius has been captured. This would mean Brutus' forces have been beaten so Cassius kills himself on Pindarus' sword. Titinius now returns realizing that Titinius was not captured but was greeted by Brutus' victorious forces. Brutus learns of Cassius' death. Titinius, mourning Cassius, kills himself. Brutus inspires his men to keep fighting. Lucilius who is mistaken for Brutus is captured. Eventually Mark Antony realizes this. The battle rages on and Antony issues orders for Brutus to be captured, dead or alive... Tired, weary, but still alive, Brutus finds a place to catch his breath with his few remaining followers. One by one, Brutus asks first Clitius, Dardanius and Volumnius to kill him but each refuses. Finally Brutus gets his wish by falling on his sword, killing himself. Octavius, Mark Antony, Messala and Lucilius now arrive. Strato explains how Brutus died. Mark Antony pays tribute to Brutus' noble spirit by famously saying, "This was the noblest Roman of them all..." Octavius tells his soldiers to stand down, as the battle was over. Reference Source: www.william-shakespeare.info/william Questions Q1. Write an essay on Shakespeare's conception of tragedy and the nature of Shakespearean tragedy. Q2. Under what groups can Shakespeare's dramas be classified? Q3. Write a short note on Shakespeare's Historical Plays. Q4. Write a brief note on Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Let us Sum Up In this unit you have acquired knowledge and have been given practice : · to know about the life and works of Shakespeare · to know about Shakespeare as a playwright · to know and understand the classification of Shakespeare's plays · to understand the history plays of Shakespeare · to understand and summarize the play, Julius Caesar · to answer the questions. Answers Ans. 1 A tragedy is essentially a tale of death or suffering and Shakespeare's tragedy reflects the same. Tragedy as perceived by Shakespeare is concerned with the ruin or restoration of the soul and the life of man. Shakespeare wrote tragedies from the beginning of his career. One of his earliest plays was the Roman tragedy Titus Andronicus, which he followed a few years later with Romeo and Juliet. The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, more commonly known simply as Julius Caesar, is a tragedy by William Shakespeare written in 1599.

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It portrays the conspiracy against the Roman dictator, Julius Caesar, his assassination and

its aftermath. It is the first of his Roman plays, based on true events from Roman history. However, his most admired tragedies were written in a seven-year period between 1601 and 1608. These include his four major tragedies Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth, along with Antony & Cleopatra and the lesser-known Timon of Athens and Troilus and Cressida. Many have linked these plays to Aristotle's precept about tragedy: that the protagonist must be an admirable but flawed character, with the audience able to understand and sympathize with the character. Certainly, each of Shakespeare's tragic protagonists is capable of both good and evil. Romeo and Juliet, Antony & Cleopatra, and Othello could all be considered love tragedies. These tragedies differ from the other tragedies in that the lovers are not doomed through any fault of their own, but because of some barrier in the world around them. In these tragedies, death is almost a kind of consummation of their love — as if love can not properly succeed in a tragic world. Shakespeare's tragedies are concerned with the fate of person's of high degree often with kings or princes and with leaders of the state. The dramatist does not concentrate on the lives of ordinary persons nor does he recall the sufferings of the layman. The cause of tragedy in his plays is some fatal flaw in the character of the hero or the heroine. Shakespeare believed in the principle that, 'Character is Destiny' and this is evident in his tragedies.

Ans 2.

Shakespeare's works include the 36 plays printed in the First Folio of 1623, according to their folio classification they are classified as, comedies, histories and tragedies.

Shakespeare's early plays were mainly comedies and histories. Next he wrote mainly tragedies until 1608, producing plays, such as

Hamlet, King Lear, and Macbeth, considered some of the finest in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote romances or tragicomedies. The

early comedies including, Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour Lost and The two Gentlemen of Verona are immature plays of the dramatist, and exhibit the early efforts of a writer. The plots of these plays lack originality. The characters of these plays are less finished and marked with artistic lapses. The style lacks the graces of the matured works of the dramatist. These plays are full of wit and word play. The mature comedies include Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night, The Merchant of Venice and As You Like It. These comedies reflect Shakespeare's comic genius. These plays are full of vitality and vivacity and are marked with wit and pleasant humour. The great tragedies of Shakespeare are Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth and King Lear. His tragedies are the most powerful studies of human nature. Shakespeare's Hamlet tells the story of the prince's effort to revenge the murder of his father, who has been poisoned by Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, the man who then becomes Hamlet's stepfather and the king. Othello, portrays the growth of unjustified jealousy in the noble protagonist i.e. Othello, a Moor serving as a general in the Venetian army. King Lear deals with the consequences of the arrogance and misjudgment of Lear, a ruler of early Britain, and the parallel behavior of his councilor, the Duke of Gloucester. Macbeth, depicts the tragedy of a man torn between an amoral will and a powerfully moral intellect. In intensity of emotion, depth, psychological insight and power of style these tragedies stand supreme. Julius Caesar contemporary with the English histories, show the same concern with political security, and in its depth of character studies approaches the great tragedies. Shakespeare's tragicomedies or romances including Cymbeline, The Winter's Tale and The Tempest bring forth a mellowed maturity in the works of the writer. They are based on the theme of forgiveness and reconciliation. The English Histories include Henry VI, Parts 1, 2 & 3, Richard III, Richard II, Henry IV, Parts 1 & 2, Henry V and King John. These historical plays present British history of three hundred years and provides portraits of English kings, these plays serve as guides to kings of England. In these plays we witness a rapid maturing of Shakespeare's skill in plot construction and characterization.

Ans 3. Shakespeare wrote ten plays about English kings (from John to Henry VIII), as well as several plays based upon Roman history (the most famous of these are Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra). The main source for the Roman plays was Plutarch. For the English histories, his primary source was Holinshed's Chronicles (1587), but he also drew on other sources, e.g. the anonymous history play The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth (1598) and Hall's The Union of the Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York (1542). The English history plays reflect the nationalism of England under Queen Elizabeth. The Roman histories reflect the Renaissance admiration of classical Greece and Rome and taste for classical (Greek and Latin) learning. There is an audience for both Roman and English history plays in Shakespeare's time because humanists felt that "modern" (16th century) England had inherited the torch from classical antiquity. For the English humanists, Elizabeth's England is the "rebirth" of the glories of the Roman Empire.

Ans.4 Julius Caesar is a play about political power and how it may be legitimately and illegitimately wielded. It also shows the role of what we now call public opinion, which in this play is embodied in the gut responses of the common folk. Shakespeare presents a many-sided picture in which all the characters' strengths and weaknesses are clearly shown. Caesar is the authoritarian, arrogant leader, who rules with a firm although not unjust hand; Brutus is the man of conscience, concerned about his public duty and willing to take action that he feels is for the common good. But he is not suited to running a government; he is too concerned with upholding his sense of his own nobility and honor, and he makes many tactical errors. Cassius is the intellectual who is aware of the dangers presented by an authoritarian leader who concentrates power in his own hands, yet Cassius is also tainted by the ignoble sentiment of envy. As for Antony, he is loyal to his friend Caesar, but he is also ruthless and cunning. Shakespeare also shows the fickleness of public opinion. One moment the crowd is cheering Caesar, but it does not take long for Brutus to persuade them that Caesar was too hungry for power and deserved his fate. But then Antony soon manipulates the crowd into the opposite belief, and the mob goes on a rampage against the conspirators. This shows how politicians may shape and use the sentiments of ordinary people in service of their own goals. No one in the play shows any respect for the common people. Cassius and Brutus commit an act of violence to keep Rome free; they end up with chaos and civil war. In effect, they go to war (by killing Caesar) to keep the peace. Although Caesar is presented as arrogant, and he shows no mercy or flexibility when petitioned by responsible Romans to end a banishment, he is also a man who knows how to wield power. He is a formidable military commander, and

most people, except for Cassius, respect him. Brutus himself can think of no accusation to charge Caesar with, except an imagined fear of what Caesar might do if his power continued to grow. This is surely a weak argument. And Brutus, for all his nobility, does not seem to realize that he continually allows himself to be manipulated by stronger or more ruthless personalities, first Cassius and then Antony. As so often in such situations, the conspirators fall victim to what is called the law of unintended consequences. No one can predict with certainty the consequences of such a momentous act as the assassination of a powerful political and military leader. Certainly, history has judged Brutus and Cassius harshly as traitors.. No one knows, of course, how Caesar would have behaved had he lived. And Shakespeare leaves us with such a full sense of the humanity of all the characters that definitive judgments about who is right and who is wrong may not do justice to the complexities of life, politics, and human motivation. Books Recommended Mundra & Mundra, A History of English Literature. Prakash Book Depot, Bareilly

Unit 10: Shakespeare - Julius Caesar-II 10.1 Introduction 10.2 Objectives 10.3 Important Characters of Julius Caesar 10.4 Glossary 10.5 Important Quotes from the play 10.6 Act wise questions 10.1 Introduction In Unit 14 you have been given an introduction to the author and his plays. You have also read the summary of the play Julius Caesar. Now in this Unit you will study the role of different characters and their important speeches. Some important quotes from the play shall be explained in details. Meanings of difficult words will be explained for your benefit. This Unit will reinforce your understanding of Unit 14 . The quotes explained will help you to understand the play in a far better manner. 10.2

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Objectives After going through this unit you will be able to • understand

the role of different characters of the play • understand the issues presented in the play • understand the meanings of the words used in the play • understand the important quotes for reference to context • answer the questions based on explanations of the quotes/ important speeches 10.3 Important Characters Julius Caesar is a highly successful but ambitious political leader of Rome and his goal is to become an unassailable dictator. Caesar is warned that he must "beware the Ides of March". The prophecy comes true and Caesar is assassinated. Marcus Brutus is a well- respected Roman senator who helps plan and carry out Caesar's assassination, which he believes, will rid Rome of a tyrant. Caesar's friend Mark Antony provides the famous funeral oration ("Friends, Romans, and countrymen...") Brutus and Cassius meet their inevitable defeat. Brutus, the noble Roman, whose decision to take part in the conspiracy for the sake of freedom, plunges his country into civil war.

Julius Caesar Julius Caesar is a great Roman general and senator who has recently returned to Rome in triumph after a successful military campaign. While his good friend Brutus worries that Caesar may aspire to dictatorship over the Roman republic, Caesar seems to show no such inclination, declining the crown several times. Yet while Caesar may not be unduly power-hungry, he does possess his share of flaws. He is unable to separate his public life from his private life, and, is deeply affected by the populace's increasing idealization and idolization of his image, he ignores ill omens and threats against his life, believing himself as eternal as the North Star. He eventually suffers the repercussions of this attitude and is murdered. Brutus Brutus is a supporter of the republic who believes strongly in a government guided by the votes of senators. While Brutus admires and loves Caesar as a friend, he opposes the accession of any single man to the position of dictator, and he fears that Caesar aspires to such power. Brutus's inflexible sense of honor makes it easy for Caesar's enemies to manipulate him into believing that Caesar must die in order to preserve the republic. While the other conspirators act out of envy and rivalry, only Brutus truly believes that Caesar's death will benefit Rome. Unlike Caesar, Brutus is able to separate completely his public life from his private life; by giving priority to matters of state, he epitomizes Roman virtue. Torn between his loyalty to Caesar and his allegiance to the state, Brutus becomes the tragic hero of the play. Antony Antony is a friend of Caesar. He claims allegiance to Brutus and the conspirators after Caesar's death in order to save his own life. Later, however, when speaking a funeral oration over Caesar's body, he spectacularly persuades the audience to withdraw its support of Brutus and instead condemn him as a traitor. With tears on his cheeks and Caesar's will in his hand, Antony engages masterful rhetoric to stir the crowd to revolt against the conspirators. Antony's desire to exclude Lepidus from the power that he himself and Octavius intend to share hints at his own ambitious nature. Cassius Cassius is a talented general and longtime acquaintance of Caesar. Cassius dislikes the fact that Caesar has become godlike in the eyes of the Romans. He slyly leads Brutus to believe that Caesar has become too powerful and may misuse his power, thus he must die; finally converting Brutus to his cause by sending him forged letters claiming that the Roman people support the death of Caesar. Impulsive and unscrupulous, Cassius harbors no illusions about the way the political world works. A shrewd opportunist, he proves successful but lacks integrity. Octavius Caesar's adopted son and appointed successor. Octavius, who had been traveling abroad, returns after Caesar's death; he then joins with Antony and sets off to fight Cassius and Brutus. Antony tries to control Octavius's movements, but Octavius follows his adopted father's example and emerges as the authoritative figure, paving the way for his eventual seizure of the reins of Roman government. Casca Casca is the most important character of the minor characters in the play. A public figure opposed to Caesar's rise to power. Casca relates to Cassius and Brutus how Antony offered the crown to Caesar three times and how each time Caesar declined it. He believes, however, that Caesar is the consummate actor, lulling the populace into believing that he has no personal ambition. Casca is intensely superstitious. The unnatural disturbances in nature unnerve him. Casca proves worthy of the confidence and trust reposed in him. He strikes the first blow on Caesar from back. Calphurnia Calphurnia is Caesar's wife. She was very superstitious and terrified of potent; though not for herself but for her husband, Caesar. She was also a loving and a dutiful wife. Calphurnia invests great authority in omens and portents. She warns Caesar against going to the Senate on the Ides of March, since she has had terrible dreams and heard reports of many bad omens. Nevertheless, Caesar's ambition ultimately causes him to disregard her advice. Portia Portia is Brutus's wife; the daughter of a noble Roman Cato, who took sides against Caesar. Portia is stoic, brave and assertive. She has a strong will and determination. She was a heroic wife, who gives full support to her husband, Brutus. Portia, accustomed to being Brutus's confidante, is upset to find him so reluctant to speak his mind when she finds him troubled. Brutus later hears that Portia has killed herself out of grief that Antony and Octavius have become so powerful. Flavius Flavius is a tribune (an official elected by the people to protect their rights). He hates Julius Caesar. Flavius condemns the plebeians for their fickleness in cheering Caesar, when once they cheered for Caesar's enemy Pompey. Flavius is punished along with Marullus for removing the decorations from Caesar's statues during Caesar's triumphal parade. Marullus Like Flavius, Marullus is also a tribune who condemns the plebeians for their fickleness in cheering Caesar, when once they cheered for Caesar's enemy Pompey. He gets angry very quickly. Marullus and Flavius are punished for removing the decorations from Caesar's statues during Caesar's triumphal parade. Cicero Cicero is a great orator, an intellectual and a skeptic. He is widely respected in Rome. He is dissatisfied with most of the things and people. A Roman senator renowned for his oratorical skill. Cicero speaks at Caesar's triumphal parade. He later dies at the order of Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus. Cinna - The Conspirator Cinna is one of the main conspirators and docs important duties concerning the conspiracy. He is considered responsible and loyal to Cassius. He proves himself to be worthy of his confidence. He sends anonymous letters to Brutus to influence him. He is also a close friend and trusted supporter of Cassius. Cinna was also a strong republican. He was the most hated among the conspirators by the roman mob. Lepidus The third member of Antony and Octavius's coalition. He is a triumvir. He is seen to be active only once. He lacks worldly wisdoms. Though Antony has a low opinion of Lepidus, Octavius trusts his loyalty and praises him as a tried and valiant soldier. Ligarius Although a sick man, Ligarius is strong in mind. He is devoted to Brutus. His grudge against Caesar is the result of a rebuke received from the latter for speaking well of Pompey. He has fiery enthusiasm.

Decius A member of the conspiracy and a cunning flatterer. Decius convinces Caesar that Calpurnia misinterpreted her dreams and that, in fact, no danger awaits him at the Senate. Decius leads Caesar right into the hands of the conspirators.

Artemidorus A teacher of rhetoric, Artemidorus helps in increasing the dramatic tension. He tries to save Caesar with the help of a petition, notifying him of a danger, but fails. He is a well wisher of Julius Caesar.

Metellus Cimber Metellus Cimber is one of the prominent conspirators. He is given the task of starting the action on the day of murder of Julius Caesar. He pleads to Caesar with a very humble manner for repealing of banishment of his brother. After the murder of Caesar he advises the other conspirators to remain close to each other so that the friend of Caesar can not hurt them.

Trebonius He is one of the conspirators. In the play he draws aside Antony when he was entering the senate. Cassius also praises him for his work on the day of the murder.

Volumnius He is an old friend of Brutus and fights on the side of the conspirators. He has a high sense of friendship. He refuses to help Brutus in committing suicide after his defeat.

Strato A servant of Brutus, he follows his master's stoic philosophy and he requires very little coaxing to agree to hold a sword while Brutus runs on it. He has too much self respect to accept employment with Octavius until Messala recommends him.

Lucius A servant of Brutus, he brings out the gentler side of his master's nature. He makes a deep impression of with his sweetness and gentleness towards his master, Brutus. He is a very dutiful, thoughtful and careful person.

Lucilius He is Brutus's friend. He tries to protect Brutus by personating himself as Brutus. He bribes the soldiers to kill him. Lucilius remains very friendly and faithful till his death.

Titanium He is devoted to Cassius. He does not care for his personal safety and goes out to ascertain whether a squadron of horsemen in the distance were friend or enemies. When he returns, he finds Cassius dead. Then he kills himself with Cassius's sword. He cannot bear to live without his friend.

Pindarus Pindarus was a slave of Cassius and was taken as a prisoner at Parthia. He has to follow his master like a dog. He even had to promise that he will obey what his master said. When Cassius heard then Titinius has been captured by the enemy, he thinks everything is lost. So, he called Pindarus to kill him and be a free man and Pindarus do so.

Reference Source: <http://absoluteshakespeare.com>

10.4 Glossary of the play A Accoutered - fully clothed Afeard - afraid ague - (pron : 'eig-yoo')

Alarum - trumpet signal for attack An - if Apparent prodigies - wonders that have appeared Appertain - pertain Apt - ready Art - are / theory Aside - by side of stage As lief not be - rather not live Aught - anything awhile - for a while Augurers - priests who interprets omens Ay - yes B Bade - commanded

Be - is/are Become - suit Beest - is/are Behold - see Beholding - indebted Belike - probably Be'st - is/are Beseech - request/beg Bestride - stand with one leg on each side Bestow - distribute Bethink - change Betimes - early Betwixt - between Bid - tell Bootless - vainly Break'st - break Bring'st - bring Brother - brother/brother-in-law But- only/except But soft- slowly C Can'st - can Carrion - living carcasses Chafing with - beating on Charactery - writing Chidden - scolded Common proof - common experience Concave shores - overhanging banks Construe - explain Coronets - small crown made of laurel wreath Couldst - could Cridest - cried Crossed - opposed D

Dar'st - dare Diest - die Distract - mad/upset Dost - do Doth - does Dropping fire - thunder Durst not - dare not E Envy - malice Ere - before Erns - grieves Even - evening Exeuent - plural of "exit" Exit - one person when leaves F Factious - active Fain - gladly Falling Sickness - epilepsy Favour - feature Fond- foolish Forth - out Fleering - the Elizabethan meaning combined of our "fawning" and "sneering" Flourish - loud sound Fly - escape Furthest - farthest G Gamesome - sportive Glazed - a combination of glared and gazed Go to (IV,iii,33) - nonsense H

Hail - welcome Hark - listen Hart - deer (pun heart) Hast - has Hath - has Hence - go away Hie - hurry Hinds - deer Hither - here Humour - influence/mood/manner I Ides - the 15th day of the month Increasest - increases Ingrafted - deep-rooted Insuppressive - unsuppressable, indomitable Intermit - hold off K Knave (I,i,16) - rascal (IV,iii,240) - fellow (IV,iii,268) -boy L Lethe - according to mythology Lethe was a river in Hades, the waters of which induced forgetfulness. Here death. Like - likely Lo - look Lover - friend Lov'st - love M Marry - an oath Masters - friends Mayest - may Meanest - mean Meet - fitting Merrily - happily Methinks - I think Moe - more N Naughty - insolent, wicked Nay - no Niggard - satisfy economically Nor ... nor - neither ... nor O Oft - often Ope - open Or ... or - either ... or P Palter - quibble or deceive Partake - share Praetor - magistrate Prick - spur Prithce - request you Prodigies - unnatural events Put on - incite, reveal Put to silence - execution Q Quick mettle - mentally sharp R Rated - upbraided Rheumy - moist Riv'd - torn S Saucy - cheeky Save except

Say'st - say Sick offence - harmful illness Sirrah - fellow Soft You! - Hold on, wait Sounded - proclaimed Stricken - struck Strucken - struck Suitor - practitioner Sufficeth - sufficient Swounded - fainted T Tapers - candles Tarry - wait Thee - you Therein - in this Thither - there Thorough - through Thou - you Three-and-thirty - three-thirty Thy - your Thyself - your self Tidings - news Train - followers Trod - walked ' Twixt - between U Unbraced - with doublet untied, open Ungently - discourteously Unto - to Untrod - unknown Usest - uses Uttermost - uppermost V

Vexeth - vex Vouchsafe - allow/accept Vulgar - the common people W Wafter - wave Want - lack Wast - was Wenches - young women Wert - were Whe'r - frequent in Shakespeare for whether Wherefore - why Whilst - where Whither - where Wilt - will Withal - also Wont - used to Would he were - I wish he were Wrought - worked Y Ye - you Yea - yes Yesternight - last night Yon - those Yond - over there Yonder - that/those

10.5 Important Quotes From The Play Act 1 Scene 1 Line 35-59 MARULLUS Wherefore rejoice? What conquest brings he home?

What tributaries follow him to Rome, To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels? You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things! O you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome, Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements, To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops, Your infants in your arms, and there have sat The livelong day, with patient expectation, To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome: And when you saw his chariot but appear, Have you not made an universal shout, That Tiber trembled underneath her banks, To hear the replication of your sounds Made in her concave shores? And do you now put on your best attire? And do you now cull out a holiday? And do you now strew flowers in his way That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? Be gone! Run to your houses, fall upon your knees, Pray to the gods to intermit the plague That needs must light on this ingratitude. The play opens with Flavius and Marullus noting the fickle nature of the public's devotion—the crowd now celebrates Caesar's defeat of Pompey when once it celebrated Pompey's victories—loyalty to Caesar nonetheless appears to be growing with exceptional force. The two Tribunes scold Roman citizens for worshipping Caesar almost blindly. Their conversation reveals deep-seated fears that Caesar is growing too powerful, too arrogant and must be stopped. Hoping to reduce the blind worship of Caesar by Roman citizens, the two men remove scarves off Caesar's images or statues despite the obvious danger. Marullus in this speech, sums up the fear other tribunes and officials like himself are having of Caesar's growing popularity. He reminds the commoners of the days when they used to gather to watch and cheer for Pompey's triumphant returns from battle. Now, however, due to a mere twist of fate, they rush out to celebrate his downfall. Marullus scolds them further for their disloyalty. He asks why the people of Rome should be rejoicing, asking, "What conquest brings he home? What tributaries follow him to Rome / To grace in captive bonds his chariot wheels?" He then asks why the people of Rome have so quickly forgotten Pompey, remarking on how so many a times, these very same citizens would climb walls, their infants in their arms, waiting to hear this great man speak. Marullus then recalls how Roman citizens would roar their approval so loudly of Pompey, that the "Tiber [a river inside Rome] trembled underneath her banks," and yet these same people now come out in their best attire or best clothes to "strew flowers" in the way of the man who killed Pompey, i.e. Julius Caesar. Marullus says such people should be gone and that these cruel Romans should run to their houses and fall upon their knees and beg to the gods for mercy and to hold off the spread of plague. That needs must light on this act of ingratitude. Act 1 Scene 2 Line 18 Soothsayer Beware the ides of March. In another public place in Rome, Caesar, accompanied by his followers, encounters a soothsayer who makes a prophecy, which is dismissed. While Caesar leads a procession through the streets of Rome, the Soothsayer or fortune-teller tells Caesar to beware the "ides of March" i.e. the 15th of March, a warning that Caesar will die on this day. It is ignored. Casca immediately dismissed these prophetic words as the words of a "dreamer;" and the procession continues along its way. Line 86-89 Brutus Set honor in one eye and death i' th' other, And I will look on both indifferently; For let the gods so speed me, as I love The name of honor more than I fear death. After Caesar and his entourage exit, leaving Cassius and Brutus to engage in conversation, Cassius mentions that recently Brutus has not seemed so friendly towards him as he usually is. Brutus replies that it is nothing personal; he is troubled by some private business and this is affecting his behavior towards others. Cassius hints that he knows Brutus better than Brutus himself does. He suggests that others in Rome who are suffering under Caesar's oppression have wished that Brutus would open his eyes to their plight and (Cassius implies) do something about it. He promises to tell Brutus something about himself that he is as yet unaware of. As shouts are heard from the crowd offstage, Brutus says he fears that the people will choose Caesar for their king. Even though he loves Caesar, Brutus does not want him to be crowned king. When Cassius asks, Brutus affirms that he would rather that Caesar not assume the position. The above speech, gives a major insight into the character of Brutus. He says that if the assassination or removal of Caesar from a powerful position is for the common good, he is supportive. Brutus says, that he loves Caesar but that he also loves honor, and that he loves honor even more than he fears death. Line 139-142 Cassius Men at times are masters of their fates: The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings. When Brutus conveys his fears related to the rising power of Caesar, Cassius gives a long speech in which he explains that Caesar is not fit to hold the great office that he does. He expresses his frustration at the inferior position he occupies in relation to Caesar, even though he was born just as free as the man who now rules. In the above lines Cassius tells Brutus not to blame fate. Caesar stands like a Colossus over the world, Cassius continues, while Cassius and Brutus creep about under his legs. He tells Brutus that they owe their underling status not to fate but to their own failure to take action. He says it does not matter what you believe, but what forces are in effect in the universe of the play. He says that the fault does not lie in their stars or their fate or destiny but in themselves that they have agreed to become underlings or subordinates to Caesar.

Line 192-195 Caesar Let me have men about me that are fat, Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a nights. Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look; He thinks too much: such men are dangerous. Caesar and his entourage return. Caesar tells Mark Antony that Cassius is a dangerous man, although he hastens to add that he is not afraid of him, since he fears no one. But men like Cassius, Caesar observes, are never at rest while someone else holds power over them. In the above lines Caesar conveys his wish to have fat and sleek headed men around him. He sees Cassius and comments to Antony that Cassius looks like a man who thinks too much; such men are dangerous, he adds noting that Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He feels that he thinks too much and such men could cause harm. This is important, since it shows that even Caesar has reason to fear Cassius. Interestingly, in the next few lines, Brutus assures his friend Caesar that this is not the case. Line 201-210 Caesar

He reads much; He is a great observer and he looks Quite through the deeds of men: he loves no plays, As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music; Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd his spirit That could be moved to smile at any thing. Such men as he be never at heart's ease While they behold a greater than themselves, And therefore are they very dangerous. Caesar shows much more perceptiveness in his analysis of Cassius; he observes both Cassius's private and public personas and notices a discord. He is made uneasy by what appears to be Cassius's lack of a private life—Cassius's seeming refusal to acknowledge

his own sensibilities or nurture his spirit suggest a coldness, a lack of human warmth. Caesar says these lines to Antony in which he expresses his opinion about Cassius. He says that he prefers to avoid Cassius: Cassius reads too much and finds no enjoyment in plays or music, he never smiles and if he does it seems he is mocking or making fun—such men are never at ease while someone greater than themselves holds the reins of power, thus they are dangerous. Thus, Cassius remains merely a public man, without any suggestion of a private self. Such a man, Caesar properly recognizes, is made uncomfortable by others' power. Line 284 Casca Nay, an I tell you that, Ill ne'er look you i' the face again: but those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads; but, for mine own part, it was Greek to me. I could tell you more news too: Marullus and Flavius, for pulling scarfs off Caesar's images, are put to silence. Fare you well. There was more foolery yet, if I could remember it. After Caesar exits, Brutus and Cassius take Casca aside to ask him what happened at the procession.. Casca explains that Antony just offered Caesar a crown three times. Each time Caesar rejected it, but each time he did so with greater reluctance. While the crowd cheered for him, Caesar fell to the ground in a fit. Brutus speculates that Caesar has "the falling sickness" (a term for epilepsy in Elizabethan times). Casca notes, however, that Caesar's fit did not seem to affect his authority: although he suffered his seizure directly before the crowd, the people did not cease to express their love. Later, when Caesar regained his composure, he told Casca to write off his actions to the people as infirmity. In the above lines Casca adds that the great orator Cicero spoke in Greek, but that he couldn't understand him at all, saying "it was Greek to me". But he said that those who understood his speech smiled at each other. He concludes by reporting that Flavius and Marullus were deprived of their positions as civil servants for removing decorations from Caesar's statues. Casca's mention of Caesar's hesitation suggests that, no matter how

noble his motivations, Caesar is capable of being seduced by power and thereby capable of becoming a dictator. Casca then departs, followed by Brutus. Act II Scene 1 Line 32-34 BRUTUSAnd therefore think him as a serpent's egg Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous, And kill him in the shell. Cassius's words to Brutus in Act I, scene ii have proved powerful in turning him against Caesar. While alone in his garden, Brutus has come to the conclusion that Caesar must be killed Brutus cannot sleep, revealing for the first time his own true fears that Caesar may be growing too powerful. He knows with certainty that Caesar will be crowned king; what he questions is whether or not Caesar will be corrupted by his power. Although he admits that he has never seen Caesar swayed by power in the past, he believes that it would be impossible for Caesar to reach such heights without eventually coming to scorn those lower in status. Brutus compares Caesar to the egg of a serpent "which, hatched, would as his kind grow mischievous"; thus, he determines to "kill him in the shell". Thus, he conveys that if Caesar attains power, he might misuse it and therefore should be killed before he grows more powerful. Act II Scene 2 Line 33-38 Caesar Cowards die many times before their deaths; The valiant never taste of death but once. all the wonders that I yet have heard.

It seems to me most strange that men should fear; Seeing that death, a necessary end, Will come when it will come. This scene emphasizes the many grave signs portending Caesar's death, as well as his stubborn refusal to heed them. Initially,

Caesar does agree to stay home in order to please Calpurnia. Calpurnia, who has

never heeded omens before, speaks of the strange things that happened in the city earlier that night which were signs of true danger, she says; Caesar cannot afford to ignore them. Caesar counters that nothing can change the plans of the gods. Calpurnia says that the heavens proclaim the death of only great men, so the omens must have to do with him. In the above lines, Caesar replies that while cowards imagine their death frequently, thus dying in their minds several times over, brave men, refusing to dwell on death, die only once. He cannot understand why men fear death, which must come eventually to all. Act III Scene 1 Line 58-65 Caesar I could be well moved if I were as you. If I could pray to move, prayers would move me. But I am constant as the Northern Star, Of whose true fixed and resting quality There is no fellow in the firmament. The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks; They are all fire, and every one doth shine; But there's but one in all doth hold his place. These lines are a part of Caesar's speech just before his assassination. The conspirators have come to Caesar in the Senate under the pretense of pleading for amnesty for Metellus's banished brother, Publius Cimber. Caesar replies that he will adhere to his word and not change his earlier decision. Comparing himself to the North Star, Caesar boasts of his constancy, his commitment to the law, and his refusal to waver under any persuasion. This comparison implies more than steadfastness, however: the North Star is the star by which sailors have navigated

since ancient times, the star that guides them in their voyages, just as Caesar leads the Roman people. So, too, is the North Star unique in its fixedness; as the only star that never changes its position in the sky, it has "no fellow in the firmament." Thus, Caesar also implies that he is peerless among Romans. Caesar declares that he alone remains "unassailable" among men, and his strictness in Publius Cimber's case illustrates this virtue. As it comes mere moments before the murder, the speech adds much irony to the scene: having just boasted that he is "unassailable," Caesar is shortly assailed and killed. In announcing his "constancy," Caesar claims permanency, immortality even. The assassins quickly prove Caesar mortal, however. But as the later events of the play reveal, Caesar's influence and eternity are undeniable. His ghost seems to live on to avenge the murder: Brutus and Cassius directly attribute much of their misfortune to Caesar's workings from beyond the grave; so, too, does the name "Caesar" undergo metamorphosis from an individual man's name to the title of an institution—the empiric rule of Rome—by the end of the play. In these more important ways, Caesar's lofty estimation of himself proves true. Act III Scene 1 Line 76 Caesar "Et tu, Brute!" In the murder scene Decius and Ligarius, followed by Casca, come forward to kneel at Caesar's feet. Casca stabs Caesar first, and the others quickly follow, ending with Brutus. Recognizing that Brutus, too, has joined with the conspirators, Caesar speaks his last words: "Et tu, Brute?—Then fall Caesar". Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans served as Shakespeare's source. It was Plutarch who asserted that Caesar ceased to defend himself upon recognizing Brutus among the conspirators, and Plutarch who first gave Caesar his famous last words, which Shakespeare preserves in the original Latin, "Et tu, Brute?" ("And you, Brutus?"). With these words, Caesar apprehends the immensity of the plot to kill him—a plot so total that it includes even his friends—and simultaneously levels a heartbroken reproach at his former friend.

Act III Scene 2 Line 75-254 Mark Antony Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears..... Brutus and Cassius explain to the Citizens of Rome why they killed Caesar, gaining their support. Mark Antony turns the citizens of Rome against Brutus and Cassius by making the Citizens feel remorse for Caesar's cruel death and by bribing them with the news that Caesar's will gives each citizen a share in his wealth. Mark Antony uses this fact to suggest Caesar was a great man who should not have been murdered. The crowd, now an angry, crazed mob, go after the conspirators including Brutus and Cassius who flee in fear. Explanation of some lines from this famous speech Line 82-96

He was my friend, faithful and just to me. But Brutus says he was ambitious, And Brutus is an honourable man. ...

When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept. ... Yet Brutus says he was ambitious, And Brutus is an honourable man. ... I thrice presented him a kingly crown, Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition? Yet Brutus says he was ambitious, And sure he is an honourable

man. Antony speaks these lines in his funeral oration for Caesar. He has asked Brutus's permission to make the speech, and Brutus foolishly allows him the privilege, believing that the boost in image that he and the conspirators will receive for this act of apparent magnanimity will outweigh any damage that Antony's words might do. Unfortunately for the conspirators, Antony's speech is a rhetorical tour de force, undermining the conspirators even while it appears deferential to them.

Antony ascends to the pulpit while the plebeians discuss what they have heard. They now believe that Caesar was a tyrant and that Brutus did right to kill him. But they wait to hear Antony. He asks the audience to listen, for he has come to bury Caesar, not to praise him. He acknowledges Brutus's charge that Caesar was ambitious and maintains that Brutus is "an honourable man," but he says that Caesar was his friend. He adds that Caesar brought to Rome many captives, whose countrymen had to pay their ransoms, thus filling Rome's coffers. He asks rhetorically if such accumulation of money for the people constituted ambition. Antony continues that Caesar sympathized with the poor: "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept". He reminds the plebeians of the day when he offered the crown to Caesar three times, and Caesar three times refused. Again, he ponders aloud whether this humility constituted ambition. He claims that he is not trying to disprove Brutus's words but rather to tell them what he, i.e. Antony, knows; he insists that as they all loved Caesar once, they should mourn for him now. Antony pauses to weep. The plebeians are touched; they remember when Caesar refused the crown and wonder if more ambitious people have not stepped into his place. Antony speaks again, saying that he would gladly stir them to mutiny and rebellion, though he will not harm Brutus or Cassius, for they are— again—honorable men. The speech draws much of its power from repetition. Each time Antony cites Brutus's claim that Caesar was "ambitious," the claim loses force and credibility. Similarly, each time Antony declares how "honourable" a man Brutus is, the phrase accrues an increasingly sarcastic tone until, by the end of the speech, its meaning has been completely inverted. The speech wins over the crowd and turns public opinion against the conspirators; when Antony reads Caesar's will aloud a few moments later, the dead Caesar's words join with Antony's in rousing the masses against the injustice of the assassination. Line 263-264 Antony Now let it work: Mischief, thou art afoot, Take thou what course thou wilt. Antony says these words after the mob has left. These lines give an insight into the heart of Antony. He has set chaos to work and he does not care what happens. The mob was only a tool achieve his ends. The very next scene is about the death of Cinna the poet.

Shakespeare is placing the responsibility for the actions of the crowd with Antony. Everyone feared Caesar's ambition, but everyone else had ambitions of his own. Here Antony nakedly shows a callous disregard for the actions of a violent mob that he has created. Not only does he watch, but he takes pleasure in watching. Act IV Scene 1 Line 31-40 Antony [My horse] is a creature that I teach to fight, To wind, to stop, to run directly on, His corporal motion governed by my spirit; And in some taste is Lepidus but so. He must be taught, and trained, and bid go forth— A barren-spirited fellow, one that feeds On objects, arts, and imitations, Which, out of use and staled by other men, Begin his fashion. Do not talk of him But as a property. The Triumvirs (Octavius, Mark Antony and Lepidus also known as The Second Triumvirate) decide which of the conspirators shall live and which shall die. Mark Antony assures Octavius that Lepidus does not and will not ever have any serious power. The two men start planning their attack on Brutus' and Cassius' forces. In this passage Antony and Octavius (with Lepidus, who has just left the room) are making plans to retake Rome, the audience gains insight into Antony's cynicism regarding human nature: while he respects certain men, he considers Lepidus a mere tool, or "property," whose value lies in what other men may do with him and not in his individual human dignity. Comparing Lepidus to his horse, Antony says that the general can be trained to fight, turn, stop, or run straight—he is a mere body subject to the will of another. The quote raises questions about what qualities make for an effective or valuable military man, politician, and ally. By this criticism he means that Lepidus centers his life on insubstantial things, prizing what other men have long since discarded as "stale" or devoid of flavor and interest; that is, Lepidus lacks his own will and convictions. He on to compares Lepidus to a mere animal, calling him a "barren-spirited fellow" and a mere tool. While Lepidus's weak sense of selfhood means that he can easily be used as a tool by other men, it also means that he can be counted on to be obedient and loyal. Lepidus is thus absorbed into the threesome (with Antony and Octavius) that rules Rome after Caesar's death, ultimately coming into power and political prestige with little effort or sacrifice. In Julius Caesar, men such as Brutus and Caesar are punished in the mortal realm for their inflexible commitment to specific ideals. Though Antony criticizes Lepidus, perhaps Shakespeare is subtly suggesting that a man such as Lepidus, "barren-spirited" and seemingly lacking in ambition, will be as satisfied in the political realm as his more directed counterparts. Antony then turns the conversation to Brutus and Cassius, who are reportedly gathering an army; it falls to Octavius and Antony to confront them and halt their bid for power. Act IV Scene 2 Line 269-276 Brutus We at the height are ready to decline. There is a tide in the affairs of men Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; Omitted, all the voyage of their life Is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat, And we must take the current when it serves, Or lose our ventures Brutus learns that Cassius has finally arrived. Brutus is angry with Cassius. He says he has done his friend no wrong. Brutus wanting privacy from his troops, tells Cassius to step into his tent where he will discuss the issue further. Brutus's words to Cassius proclaiming their readiness for battle are significant in that they emphasize Brutus's belief in the power of the will over fate. Throughout the play, the theme of fate versus free will proves important. In the above lines, Brutus suggests that

both exist and that one should take advantage of fate by asserting one's will. While subsequent events demonstrate that the force of fate (or perhaps just Antony and Octavius's superior maneuvering) is stronger than Brutus's individual actions, his speech still makes for a graceful, philosophic axiom, showing Brutus to be a man of deep reflection. He speaks these words in order to convince Cassius that it is time to begin the battle against Octavius and Antony. He speaks figuratively of a "tide" in the lives of human beings. If one takes advantage of the high tide, one may float out to sea and travel far; if one misses this chance, the "voyage" that one's life comprises will remain forever confined to the shallows, and one will never experience anything more glorious than the mundane events in this narrow little bay. Brutus reproaches Cassius that if they do not "take the current" now, when the time is right, they will lose their "ventures," or opportunities. The passage elegantly formulates a complex conception of the interplay between fate and free will in human life. Throughout the play, the reader frequently contemplates the forces of fate versus free will and ponders whether characters might be able to prevent tragedy if they could only understand and heed the many omens that they encounter. This musing brings up further questions, such as whether one can achieve success through virtue, ambition, courage, and commitment or whether one is simply fated to succeed or fail, with no ability to affect this destiny. Here, Brutus conceives of life as influenced by both fate and free will: human beings must be shrewd enough to recognize when fate offers them an opportunity and bold enough to take advantage of it. Thus, Brutus believes, does man achieve a delicate and valuable balance between fate and free will. This philosophy seems wise; it contains a certain beauty as well, suggesting that while we do not have total control over our lives, we do have a responsibility to take what few measures we can to live nobly and honorably. The only problem, as the play illustrates over and over again, is that it is not always so easy to recognize these nudges of fate, be they opportunities or warnings. The characters' repeated failures to interpret signs correctly and to adapt themselves to events as they unfold form the basis for most of the tragedy that occurs in the play. Act V Scene 5 Line 68-75 ANTONY This was the noblest Roman of them all:

All the conspirators save only he

Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;

He only, in a general honest thought And common good to all, made one of them. His life was gentle, and the elements So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up And say to all the world 'This was a man!' These are the last memorable lines of the play. Brutus preserves his noble bravery to the end: unlike the cowardly Cassius, who has his slave stab him while he, i.e., Cassius, covers his face, Brutus decides calmly on his death and impales himself on his own sword. Antony's speech over Brutus's body, it finally becomes clear who the true hero—albeit a tragic hero—of the play is. In the above lines, Antony speaks over the body, stating that Brutus was the noblest Roman of all: while the other conspirators acted out of envy of Caesar's power, Brutus acted for what he believed was the common good. Brutus was a worthy citizen, a rare example of a real man. Thus, Brutus kills his friend and later dies himself. But in the end, Antony, the master rhetorician, with no trace of the sarcasm that suffuses his earlier speech about Brutus, still honors him as the best Roman of them all. As Antony observes, Brutus's decision to enter into the conspiracy does not originate in ambition but rather in his inflexible belief in what the Roman government should be. His ideal proves too rigid in the political world of the play, in which it appears that one succeeds only through chameleon like adaptability, through bargaining and compromise—skills that Antony masterfully displays. Brutus's mistake lies in his attempt to impose his private sense of honor on the whole Roman state. In the end, killing Caesar does not stop the Roman republic from becoming a dictatorship, for Octavius assumes power and becomes a new Caesar. Brutus's beliefs may be a holdover from earlier ideas of statesmanship. Unable to shift into the new world order, Brutus misunderstands Caesar's intentions and mistakes the greedy ambition of the conspirators for genuine civic concern.

10.6 Act Wise Questions Act 1 1) Why are the tribunes Flavius and Marullus so upset at the opening of the play? 2) What holiday are the Roman masses celebrating at the time of Caesar's return? 3) Describe Caesar's encounter with the soothsayer.

4) What is most significant about the meeting between Cassius and Brutus in Act1 Scene2? 5) How does Cassius trick Brutus into joining the conspirators? Act 2 6) How does Portia prove she is worthy to hear the plans of her husband, Brutus? 7) After an ominous dream, Calpurnia begs Caesar to stay away from the senate and, at first, he agrees. But soon he changes his mind? Act 3 8) What is the significance of Caesar's dying words, "Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Caesar!"? 9) Who turns the people of Rome against Brutus? 10) Describe the encounter between Brutus and Caesar's ghost. Act 5 11) Cassius asks Brutus what he plans to do if they should lose the battle. What is Brutus's response? 12) How does Cassius die? 13) Explain the significance of Antony's final speech, beginning with the line, "This was the noblest Roman of them all" (Act 5 Scene5).

10.7 Let us Sum up In this unit we have made you familiar with some important scenes from the play. These scenes will enable you to: -understand the play in a better way. makes you familiar with the Style of Shakespeare. understand the meaning of the vocabulary used by Shakespeare in the play understand the meaning of the important quotations understand the reference in which the speeches occur in different acts understand the characters in a better way

10.8 Answers Act 1 Ans1. Flavius and Marullus are angry that the working class citizens of Rome gather to celebrate Caesar's victory, while forgetting Pompey, the Roman hero (and a part of the

First Triumvirate that ruled Rome) who was killed in battle alongside Caesar. Their hostility toward Caesar serves to introduce the deep political divide that will become the central issue of the play. Ans2. Caesar's triumph coincides with the feast of Lupercal, which was celebrated on February 15th. Ans3. As Caesar passes through the crowd the soothsayer cries out to him, warning him to "beware the ides of March." Caesar dismisses the soothsayer as a dreamer and continues on. Caesar's encounter with the soothsayer foreshadows his assassination in the senate which would take place soon. Ans4. Cassius presents his best argument to convince Brutus, his close friend and brother-in-law, to conspire with him to assassinate Caesar. Brutus reveals he has concerns about the state of the Republic, but will not commit outright to join with Cassius. Ans5. Cassius fabricates a petition, pretending it is from the angry citizens demanding Caesar's removal, and he throws it in Brutus's window. The welfare of Rome drives Brutus, and Cassius knows Brutus will give the people what they desire. Act 2 Ans6. Portia cuts herself in the thigh and suffers the pain of both the wound and the infection it causes in silence. Her show of bravery and self-control convinces Brutus she is "stronger than her sex" (Act2 Scene1) and he agrees to confide in her, only to be interrupted before he has a chance. Ans7. Decius, a conspirator whose role is to guarantee Caesar is in the Capitol that day, favorably interprets Calpurnia's dream and then chides Caesar for yielding to his wife's whims. Decius adds that the senate is planning again to offer Caesar a crown, and Caesar gives in to vanity. He leaves Calpurnia and accompanies Decius to the Capitol. Act 3 Ans 8. The conspirators gather around Caesar and he sees his trusted friend Brutus among them. Stunned that Brutus is among his assassins, Caesar cries out, "and you too, Brutus?" This famous line is important because it sets Brutus apart from the other conspirators. There is no doubt that Brutus's self-serving and ambitious accomplices have committed an indefensible act, but with Caesar's final utterance we recognize that the self-sacrificing and noble Brutus has perpetrated the same heinous crime – his motivation is rendered immaterial. For this moment, Brutus the idealist becomes Brutus the murderer. Ans 9. After Brutus addresses the Plebeians, successfully assuring them that Caesar's murder was necessary to preserve their freedoms (3.2.13-37), Antony delivers his cleverly crafted speech in defense of Caesar. While making sure not to condemn Brutus and the conspirators, he argues that Caesar had no plan to turn Rome into a dictatorship. He reminds the crowd that Caesar was offered a "kingly crown" (Act3 Scene2) three times and refused each time. Ans10. Cassius retires for the evening and Brutus calls two of his servants, Claudio and Varro, to stay with him through the night. The boys quickly fall asleep and Brutus starts to read. With the flicker of the candle Brutus's eyes are distracted upward, to see the ghost of Caesar standing beside him. The ghost tells Brutus that they will meet again at Philippi and vanishes. Act 5 Ans11. Brutus says that, since he finds the act of suicide cowardly and vile (5.1.104), he will have little choice but to be patient and yield to whatever fate dictates (Act5 Scene1). He adds that he will never return to Rome as a prisoner. That Brutus nevertheless dies by his own hand at the end of the play adds to his tragedy. Ans12. Cassius knows that he too will soon be captured by Antony and Octavius and will certainly be dragged through the streets of Rome in chains. He orders Pindarus to hold his sword while he impales his chest on the blade. Ans13. Antony's speech serves to restore Brutus to the position of tragic hero. Antony can see in Brutus the morality he does not himself possess - the capability to act selflessly for the common good. Brutus's pride and political naivety have led to his destruction, but his ideals are etched into the memory of his enemies.

Unit 11: Shakespeare Julius Caesar-III 11.1 Introduction 11.2 Objectives 11.3 Critical Analysis of the play by 11.4 Shakespeare's Soliloquies 11.5 Theme Analysis of the play 11.6 Analysis of important characters of the play 11.7 Important scenes of Julius Caesar 11.8 Julius Caesar's Rise to Power and Elizabethan Age 11.1 Introduction In Unit 09 you have been given an insight into the author and his works with special emphasis on Julius Caesar. You have also read a brief summary of the play Julius Caesar. In Unit 10 you have read some important passages from the play along with their explanations. Now in Unit 11 you will study the theme, significance, the important characters and the important scenes of the play. Thus, this Unit will reinforce your understanding of Units 09 and 11 and enhance your understanding of the play further. It consists of essay type note on the various aspects considered. 11.2

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Objectives After going through this unit you will be able to-understand

the issues presented in the play -understand the characters of the play -understand the significance of the play -
understand the theme of the
play -

understand the important scenes of the play 11.3 Critical Analysis of the Play by: H.S. Taylor Julius Caesar marks an interesting stage in the evolution of Shakespeare's style. In no other play, perhaps, does he show such a relaxed command of the blank verse form, originally inherited from Marlowe and now considerably refined and sophisticated in the course of writing some fifteen plays, that is, about half of his work. The verse runs smoothly in the pentameter form, without any sense of forcing : ideas and imagery remain well within the dramatist's control. There is no grasping after the inexpressible, or bursting through the limitations of syntax and usage such as characterize the most powerful passages of the later work. In Julius Caesar we have the style of limited perfection, as Bradley observed : fluent, lucid and flexible, responding easily to a wide range of rhetorical and dramatic demands. Sir Thomas North published his version of Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans in 1579. This collection of historical biographies, widely read in Elizabethan England, provided the raw material from which Shakespeare constructed his Roman plays, in this instance from the lives of Caesar, Brutus and Antony. The Penguin Shakespeare's Plutarch, or the extracts in the appendix to the Arden edition of the play, render this source material easily available to the student, who might well begin by comparing the original material for the Forum scene with what Shakespeare eventually makes of it, as a measure of the dramatist's creative genius. In some parts, the debt to Plutarch is much greater, and occasionally even extends to phrasing, Because he had recently completed his study of a successful general and politician in the name-part in Henry V, Shakespeare may well have welcomed the chance to make Brutus, rather than Caesar, the protagonist of his first Roman tragedy. The idea of a man of thoughtful disposition and good intentions caught up in a current of violent political action clearly interested Shakespeare, who had begun to explore the theme in Henry VI and (minus the good intentions) Richard II, and was, of course, to crown his study of it in Hamlet. As he read through the life of Brutus in North's book, he must have seen at once that here was a situation not only interesting as a study in human nature, but wonderfully suited to dramatization, both in terms of conflict within the mind of the 'hero', and of the external conflicts naturally surrounding a political assassination. I use the term 'hero' because, whatever the title may appear to say on the subject, the play is more rightly understood as the tragedy of Brutus than of Caesar. The criteria of Shakespearian tragedy synthesized by Bradley are entirely applicable : a man with enormous potential for good brought to an evil and through some weakness in his own temperament, coupled with the implication of man's nobility and worth even when thus driven to self-destruction. Furthermore, it is largely in Bradley's terms of character issuing in action that this play may most profitably be studied. A general word of caution, however. This is a political play, and it is therefore appropriately constructed in terms of propaganda and subjective comment, which we must beware of taking at its face value. Cassius' passionate condemnation of Caesar in the second scene, for instance, where the speaker is pressing all his rhetorical art into service to win Brutus over to his cause, yields negligible motives for assassination when the passion is filtered off and the residue subjected to logical analysis -as Cassius goes more than half way towards confessing, in his short soliloquy after Brutus' exit. The reader must constantly consider the motives behind each speech, as well as the surface meaning. With this proviso in mind, let us consider some of the major actors in this political drama. Widely differing accounts of Shakespeare's Caesar have been given. It is possible, by selecting only details that fit the case and ignoring other evidence, to show the Caesar of this play as physically decrepit, superstitious, vacillating, vain and bombastic; in other words, a Caesar in decline. However, an overall consideration of his actions in the play reveal a magnanimous leader whose authority rests on competence, but is human enough to share some of the common failings of mankind. The opening speeches of Flavius and Marullus are, of course, loaded against him, as these two are strong adherents of the recently defeated Pompey. Caesar has little chance, in his short first appearance in procession, of establishing a very positive image of himself, although Shakespeare is at pains to make clear his absolute authority in Antony's words : 'When Caesar says "Do this," it is performed', and in the instant response of the procession to Caesar's wishes. After Caesar has moved off, it is Cassius' turn to paint a Picture of him in a series of passionate tirades, as brilliant in their way as anything that Shakespeare has written. Stripped of their passion and rhetoric, however, what remains? That Cassius was a better swimmer than Caesar, and that once when Caesar was lying fever-stricken, he felt thirsty. We really learn more of the true nature of Cassius than of Caesar from this invective, and he comes very near to an explicit admission of his jealousy in the speech beginning, 'Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world...'. Indeed, Brutus' failure to penetrate to the hollow core of this argument is a severe comment on his powers of reasoning, and Cassius in his final soliloquy declares that he would not have been moved by such argument if the situations were reversed. Meanwhile Caesar returns from the games, and in ten lines or so to Antony tells us more truth about Cassius than the latter gave us about Caesar in nearly a hundred. It is a penetrating analysis, worth careful study, not less because it rounds off with a characteristic touch of vanity I always tell thee what is to be feared Than what I fear, for always I am Caesar. At the same time, we must recognize that Caesar's belief in his courage is nowhere at variance with his conduct. Again, however, he is only given the barest chance to establish himself before the procession passes on, and it is now Casca's turn to paint him in an unfavourable,

even ludicrous, light which, by means of his blunt and highly subjective account, he does superbly enough. We should not be deceived by this tart humour into thinking other than that a man suffering from epilepsy had one of his accustomed bouts at a very awkward moment, from which he recovered to make a public apology which was well received. Up to this point I have considered Shakespeare's presentation of Caesar in some detail in order to demonstrate the discriminatory technique required to form a fair estimate, but I must now pass on to his final appearance in the Senate, where a different question is at issue. The charge here is that of an extreme arrogance, almost amounting to megalomania. His last two speeches certainly show that he had a very high opinion of his own determination and are couched in grandiloquent, if poetically very effective, terms: But I am constant as the northern star... and so forth. Here I think a different sort of allowance must be made, arising from two factors. The first is a dramatic one : Shakespeare had to combine suspense with the arousal of a certain sympathy for the conspirators, if the full emotional possibilities of the situation were to be realized. Secondly, a dislike for flattery is in keeping with Caesar's character (I place little weight on Decius' cheap sneer) and Shakespeare certainly makes Metellus Cimber in his florid address and prostrated attitude, go out of his way to earn the rebuke that he receives in such heavy measure. So Caesar dies, but not his influence, which remains dominant until the end of the play. Even while the assassins stand round him with their weapons thick with Caesar's blood, Antony cannot forbear reminding them of his former triumphs, and he later apostrophizes the corpse as 'the ruins of the noblest man that ever lived. . .'. His prophecy that Caesar's spirit shall return from Hades to inflict a bitter revenge is entirely true of the remainder of the action, for it can be argued that Caesar dead, dramatically speaking, has a greater influence than Caesar living. His name is constantly invoked during the rest of the play ; even Brutus and Cassius in their private bickering, for instance, find occasion to make appeal to his memory three times. Brutus' first words on learning of Cassius' death are Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet I Thy spirit walks abroad... and he himself dies with Caesar's name upon his lips. Brutus wins our admiration by the unquestioned sincerity of his regard for honour and the welfare of the Roman state. Even the cynical cases does not imply that his reputation among the Romans is anything but deserved : 'O, he site high in all the people's hearts. . .'. He is an idealist, unsuited to the world of realpolitik; once he assumed direction of the conspirators his idealism ceased to be a source of strength and became a disability, leading him to make two disastrous decisions: first, allowing Antony to live, and second, letting him speak at the funeral. Idealism, however, was not the quality that led to his downfall, but rather a failure to reason clearly, and to see that he was being manipulated by others to serve their own private ends. In the important soliloquy 'it must be by his death...' no adequate reason is given for killing Caesar, the whole basis of the argument is hypothetical. The speech is eloquent, perhaps at first sight plausible, but it cannot bear analysis: it is as if Brutus' own powers of reasoning were blinded for the moment by his clever use of imagery and rhetoric. He even admits that he has never known Caesar's emotions to get the better of his reason, in the light of which his conclusion, 'Then lest he may, prevent...' is pitifully inadequate. It is not disputed that he thinks he is choosing the more honourable alternative in killing his friend : the tragic error is that he should make the wrong choice. Nor is he always even consistent in the high moral attitude that he adopts ; in the quarrel scene, for instance, he chides Cassius for raising money by corrupt methods, and in the next breath upbraids him for not sending him funds to pay his soldiers, because he, Brutus, cannot bring himself to raise the money; By heaven. I had rather coin my heart, And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash By any indirection. Later, he makes some moving observations about the cowardice of suicide, and then tells Cassius that he has determined to kill himself rather than face capture and disgrace. A certain complacency in his rectitude apparently blinds him to the bitter irony of his own last words, My heart doth joy that yet, in all my life, I found no man but he was true to me... a complacency which may be observed earlier in his taking for granted that he knows best ('Good reasons must of force give way to better. . .'), and which becomes irritatingly obtrusive in the attitude he adopts towards Cassius in the quarrel scene.

Considered in the mass in this way, these shortcomings might seem to discount the feeling of pity for Brutus which is essential if the emotions proper to tragedy are to be generated, but in the context of the play they are continually mitigated by our sympathy for the dilemma of divided loyalty, regard for his motives, admiration for his kindly solicitude in his relations with Portia and the boy Lucius, and commiseration towards the end of the play when he has to bear the loss of his wife among so many other blows of fortune, Shakespeare leaves us in no doubt as to where he wishes Brutus to stand in our final estimation when, taking a hint from Plutarch, he gives Antony his final lines: This was the noblest Roman of them all;

All the conspirators save only he Did that they did in envy of great Caesar;

He only, in a general honest thought And common good to all, made one of them. His life was gentle, and the elements So mixed in him that Nature might stand up And say to all the world, 'This was a man I' Until Caesar's death, Antony is deliberately held in the background. The few lines he speaks give nothing away, but Shakespeare is careful to distribute hints in the mouths of others as to what kind of man this is, for he is hoping to create a powerful effect when Antony is launched into the action of the drama, and anticipation is a useful weapon. Shakespeare's mastery of the dramatic craft is nowhere better illustrated than in the consummate skill with which Antony is introduced as a figure to be reckoned with in the power contest, from the point of his arrival among the conspirators to the end of the Forum scene. Ignoring the sequence of events in Plutarch, he brings the introduction forward to create a second major wave of tension after the excitement of the murder, and he increases the suspense by preceding Antony's entry with the arrival of his messenger, whose words in some measure outline the nature of the dramatic situation: if Antony is to live, how is he to reconcile his love of Caesar with friendship for his murderers? He has, however, one strong card in addition to his own native-wit : Brutus has sent assurance of safe-conduct. This allows Antony, Immediately on his appearance, to establish his sincerity towards the conspirators by an outburst of implied protest at what they have done. even offering himself as a second sacrifice upon their swords. This is a calculated risk, as he cannot be certain that Brutus, in such a crisis, is in a position to enforce his promise, and he softens the request with a subtle appeal to their self-esteem in the last line: ' . . . by you cut off, The choice and master spirits of the age'. The bluff works, and Brutus characteristically offers to appease Antony with reason, and Cassius with an offer of a place in the cabinet. The complex three-cornered relationship between the principals is brilliantly presented, adding its own tensions to those already implicit in the situation. Antony, having established that the conspirators are willing to accept him, has now to win consent to the request that will eventually lead to their downfall. He cleverly makes this point almost as an afterthought, something so much to be taken for granted that no reasonable person could refuse: That's all I seek; And am moreover suitor that I may Produce his body to the market-place And in the pulpit, as becomes a friend, Speak in the order of his funeral. Never can those simple words 'and am moreover' have been used to carry greater weight. The opportunist in Antony has saved him for the moment: it now remains to see what he can make of his chance. He is also, however, a warm-hearted human figure, as Shakespeare allows us to see in his soliloquy over Caesar's body when the conspirators have withdrawn. These two qualities added to a powerful command of rhetoric, will presently enable him to get his way with the crowd. First, however, there is Brutus' speech, which gives an excellent illustration of Shakespeare's ability to suit the manner to the man. It is in prose, the language of reason, and reason is, as we have seen, everything to Brutus. Here again the reasoning is unimpressive, objectively considered, but it is good enough for the crowd, and, working rapidly through tersely-worded antitheses and climaxes to a series of unanswerable rhetorical questions, gains the required effect. It is typical of Brutus to consider that that is the end of the matter: his line 'Then none have I offended' has the conclusive certainty of a geometrical theorem: I have given them reasons; they have accepted these reasons; there is no more to be said; and he is sufficiently confident to depart and leave the stage to Antony, a mistake that one cannot imagine Cassius making, Antony begins slowly; after all, he does not know whether he can sway the crowd against the conspirators or not and, if he cannot, then he had better not say anything to make his

position in post-Caesarian Rome any more desperate than it is. His chief weapons are irony, logic and appeal to emotion, always supported by a sure feeling for rhetoric form. The logic is reasonable as far as it goes, but it is in reality nothing more than a polished demonstration of argument from selected instances. The two-sided weapon of irony enables him to feel his way without committing himself: there is nothing in his long first speech that he will have to retract if his audience remains loyal to Brutus. Indeed, with a skill in manipulation that outshines even that of Cassius, he is able to play on the emotions of the crowd for a further seventy lines or so, without actually involving himself in accusations against the conspirators. Up to line 165, 'Room for Antony; most noble Antony' he could still withdraw if it seemed tactically expedient. But as he steps down preparatory to making play with Caesar's mantle, he knows that he is not going to withdraw: he senses strongly that the mood of the crowd is now ready for anything that he will give them, and he has a master-stroke in hand. Lifting a corner of the mantle, he moves insidiously past the implications of such terms as 'envious' Casca, 'cursed' steel, 'ingratitude more strong than traitors' arms' to an inspired climax in which he tears off the robe to reveal the mutilated body, and in the shock of silence which follows, pours out his message with all the power he can command: marred, as you see, with traitors'. There is no going back from this. Space forbids consideration of how much of Antony's rhetoric derives from calculation and how much from genuine emotion for his friend: clearly there are strong elements of both, and the two flowing in the same direction give enormous power to Antony's persuasion. His words to himself as the citizens stream off in a mutinous mob should not be overlooked, and at the beginning of the next act we gain a further insight into his nature as he coldly trades his nephew's life against that of Lepidus' brother, and later confesses to Octavius his cynical proposal to get what he can out of Lepidus and then discard him. Here is the naked heart of revolutionary politics crystallized for all time. Can we draw any conclusion about Shakespeare's own attitude to politics from the fact that not one of the characters in this play who are drawn into the political arena emerges from the experience unsullied?

11.4 Shakespeare's Soliloquies

A soliloquy is a dramatic or literary form of discourse in which a character talks to himself or herself or reveals his or her thoughts without addressing a listener. It is a specific speech or piece of writing in this form of discourse. In Shakespeare's plays it is a part of the dramatization of consciousness, especially the turning point passage in which the character finally admits culpability. Usually it is the dramatization of consciousness— what a character on the stage reveals. Shakespeare made the soliloquy more of a psychological device than an expository one. A soliloquy may be addressed to the audience, a thing, nature, or another character. It may be in the form of a meditation and the expression of emotion, it is a reflection of the inner conflict. A soliloquy helps in the identification of the personality. Shakespeare's soliloquies became an organic part of his dramatic compositions. The soliloquy expresses something which has all the appearance of inevitability and credibility. Shakespeare lets his soliloquies confirm what the audience and reader already know, fulfilling at once the expectations of the audience and the demands of dramatic art. Shakespeare's soliloquies were designed to be interior monologues or audience addresses, performers and critics have had to disregard the conspicuous evidence in Shakespeare's plays themselves clearly demonstrating that soliloquies represented self-addressed speeches. Instead, performers and critics have relied on the fact that interior monologues or audience addresses seem natural to them and to their audiences.

Relevance of some important soliloquies of Julius Caesar

Act 2 Scene 1 Brutus

Since Cassius first did whet me against Caesar, I have not slept. Between the acting of a dreadful thing And the first motion, all the interim is Like a phantasma or a hideous dream: The genius and the mortal instruments Are then in council; and the state of man, Like to a little kingdom, suffers then The nature of an insurrection. Cassius tries to convince Brutus to join too. Cassius's words to Brutus in Act 1, scene 2 have proved powerful in turning him against Caesar: while alone in his garden he thinks about him. He knows with certainty that Caesar will be crowned king; what he questions is whether or not Caesar will be corrupted by his power. Although he admits that he has never seen Caesar swayed by power in the past, he believes that it would be impossible for Caesar to reach such heights without eventually coming to scorn those lower in status. Brutus, unable to sleep, tells himself that he fears Caesar will become a tyrant if crowned king. In the above soliloquy he thinks about the dreadful consequences of the act which have left him sleepless. The period between the actual act and the planning seems like a horrible dream to him.

Act 3 Scene 1 Antony

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, That I am meek and gentle with these butchers! Thou art the ruins of the noblest man That ever lived in the tide of times. Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood! Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,— Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips, To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue— A curse shall light upon the limbs of men; Domestic fury and fierce civil strife Shall cumber all the parts of Italy; Antony mourns Caesar's murder. He pretends to support the clan, yet yearns for great havoc to occur as a result of the death. Antony addresses Caesar's departed spirit, asking to be pardoned for making peace with the conspirators over his dead body. In his soliloquy in the Capitol, Antony reveals that he intends to create civil strife throughout Italy, and in his oration he sets it off to a promising start. He is

a thoroughly the politically expedient man in his speech.

He wants to create rebellion and overthrow the republicans so that he and Octavius can fill the vacuum, and he

succeeds to the fullest measure. From his soliloquy in the Capitol until the end of the play, he is constantly ambitious, confident, successful, and exceptionally ruthless.

He has no concern for the welfare of the citizens of Rome who will suffer in the civil strife he has instigated, he is willing to have a nephew put to death rather than argue for his life, he seeks to keep as much as he can of Caesar's legacy to the poor of Rome, and he openly acknowledges that he will remove Lepidus from power as soon as Lepidus is no longer of use to him. 11.5

Theme Analysis of Julius Caesar The main focus of Julius Caesar is on political power and how it may be legitimately and illegitimately wielded. The play reflected the general anxiety of England due to worries over succession of leadership. It also portrays the role of public opinion, which in this play is embodied in the gut responses of the common folk. The play leaves the readers wondering about who may be the play's central character and whether it is Caesar, the great leader; Brutus, the idealist and man of honor who faces an ethical dilemma or Antony, the loyal henchman and brilliant manipulator of the mob. It also raises questions like whether the conspirators were justified in their actions or not? Or how should Rome- or any other society-be governed? Shakespeare presents a many-sided picture in which all the characters' strengths and weaknesses are clearly shown. Caesar is the authoritarian, arrogant leader, who rules with a firm although not unjust hand; Brutus is the man of conscience, concerned about his public duty and willing to take action that he feels is for the common good. But he is not suited to running a government; he is too concerned with upholding his sense of his own nobility and honor, and he makes many tactical errors. Cassius is the intellectual who is aware of the dangers presented by an authoritarian leader who concentrates power in his own hands, yet Cassius is also tainted by the ignoble sentiment of envy. As for Antony, he is loyal to his friend Caesar, but he is also ruthless and cunning. Today we might call him a demagogue, willing and able to use his oratorical powers to fire up the mob and get them to do what he wants. If the major characters are all flawed in one way or another, Shakespeare also shows the fickleness of public opinion. One moment the crowd is cheering Caesar, but it does not take long for Brutus to persuade them that Caesar was too hungry for power and deserved his fate. But then Antony soon manipulates the crowd into the opposite belief, and the mob goes on a rampage against the conspirators. This shows how politicians may shape and use the sentiments of ordinary people in service of their own goals. No one in the play shows any respect for the common people. It is noted that Cassius and Brutus commit an act of violence to keep Rome free; they end up with chaos and civil war. In effect, they go to war (by killing Caesar) to keep the peace,

which when used by politicians is usually a specious argument. Although Caesar is presented as arrogant, and he shows no mercy or flexibility when petitioned by responsible Romans to end banishment, he is also a man who knows how to wield power. He is a formidable military commander, and most people, except for Cassius, respect him. Brutus himself can think of no accusation to charge Caesar with, except an imagined fear of what Caesar might do if his power continued to grow. This is surely a weak argument. And Brutus, for all his nobility, does not seem to realize that he continually allows himself to be manipulated by stronger or more ruthless personalities, first Cassius and then Antony. As so often in such situations, the conspirators fall victim to what is called the law of unintended consequences. No one can predict with certainty the consequences of such a momentous act as the assassination of a powerful political and military leader. Certainly, history has judged Brutus and Cassius harshly as traitors. But then, as someone once remarked, the winners write history. No one knows, of course, how Caesar would have behaved had he lived. And Shakespeare leaves us with such a full sense of the humanity of all the characters that definitive judgments about who is right and who is wrong may not do justice to the complexities of life, politics, and human motivation. Throughout the play, the theme of fate versus free will proves important. The various omens and portents in Julius Caesar also raise questions about the force of fate versus free will. The function and meaning of omens in general is puzzling and seemingly contradictory: as announcements of an event or events to come, omens appear to prove the existence of some overarching plan for the future, a prewritten destiny controlled by the gods. On the other hand, as warnings of impending events, omens suggests that human beings have the power to alter that destiny if provided with the correct information in advance. This is evident in Caesar's refusal to heed to the warnings of the Soothsayer and his wife. In Brutus's case it is evident in his easily being manipulated by the conspirators and not going into the reality behind the letters posted to him by the citizens. At the end of the play, in, Act IV, Scene2,Line 269276, Brutus suggests that both fate and will exist and that one should take advantage of fate by asserting one's will. While subsequent events demonstrate that the force of fate (or perhaps just Antony and Octavius's superior maneuvering) is stronger than Brutus's individual actions. His speech still makes for a graceful, philosophic axiom, showing Brutus to be a man of deep reflection.

Another aspect that comes forth in the play is that both Cesar and Brutus are perceived to be heroes and villains in Julius Caesar. At the opening of the play, Caesar is hailed for his conquests and is admired for his apparent humility upon refusing the crown. However, once murdered, Caesar is painted (by Brutus et al) as a power hungry leader with the intentions of enslaving all of Rome. Brutus' speech, which follows Caesar's death, successfully manipulates the plebeian perspective. By the end of his speech, the crowd is hailing Brutus for killing Caesar, whom they now perceive as a great villain. But, the crowd is easily swayed once again when Antony speaks. Following Brutus' remarks, Antony gives Caesar's eulogy, manipulating the crowd with stories of Caesar's kindness, and sharing the details of Caesar's will, which leaves money to every Roman. At the end of Antony's speech, the crowd is once again supportive of Caesar, mourns his death, and seeks to kill Brutus, Cassius, and the other murderers. The swaying opinions of the plebeians, and the great differences in opinion that the play presents leave the audience to determine who, if anyone, is the hero of the play, and who, if anyone, is the villain. The omens brought forth in the play reveal the seriousness with which Romans looked to them and they are evident throughout Julius Caesar; however ominous warnings and negative omens are often overlooked or misinterpreted. For example, Caesar ignores the soothsayer's warning to "beware the ides of March", ignores Calpurnia's detailed dream of his death, and ignores the negative omen of the sacrificial animal who has no heart. After ignoring these omens, Caesar dies. In addition, after the festival of Lupercalia, Casca sees many strange omens, such as a man with a burning hand, a lion roaming the streets, and an owl screeching during the day time. Cicero, with whom Casca confers regarding these matters, explains that people with interpret omens as they see fit, inventing their own explanations. True to form, Casca interprets these strange omens as warnings of Caesar's wish to rule all of Rome with an iron hand, and to destroy the Republic. Other omens that play important roles in the play include the appearance of Caesar's ghost and when eagles abandon Cassius' and Brutus' camp and are replaced by vultures. The idealism portrayed in the character of Brutus is another relevant aspect of the play. Brutus wishes for an ideal world. He is happily married, lives in a beautiful home, and is successful according to all measures of Roman living. However, Brutus wishes for

perfection in his life, and although he loves Caesar, Brutus fears Caesar is too power hungry, and might possibly destroy the Republic. Cassius understands Brutus' idealism and takes advantage of it in order to manipulate Brutus into joining the conspiracy against Caesar. At heart, it is Brutus' idealism that causes his ultimate downfall. Antony recognizes this fact when addressing Brutus' dead body at the conclusion of the play, saying "This was the noblest Roman of them all". The public and private identities of the characters are important in the play. In Julius Caesar, the audience is able to see both the private and public sides of Caesar and Brutus. Caesar is a powerful confident man who leads great armies and effectively rules the Roman empire, yet he is not without weakness. He is highly superstitious, suffers from epilepsy, and ultimately proves to be human when murdered by his closest friends. Similarly, Brutus is strong and refuses to show weakness when in public, whether it be speaking to the plebeians or leading an army into battle. However, we see through his intimate conversations with his wife Portia and with Cassius, that Brutus is often unsure and greatly pained. Specifically, after fleeing Rome, Brutus learns that his wife has committed suicide, and is heartbroken when discussing it with Cassius. However, as soon as soldiers enter his tent, he pretends to not know of her death, and when told of it, does not react with great emotion. The role of Caesar is a great man, and an ambitious man. His ambition is what worries Brutus, and ultimately leads to Brutus joining the conspiracy to murder Caesar. Cassius is also a very ambitious man, and because he is so jealous of Caesar's power, wishes to kill him to gain more power for himself. Ultimately, the ambition of these two men leads to their downfalls and to virtual anarchy in the streets of Rome. Great ambition leads to great conflict.

16.5 Analysis of important characters of the play Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar is one of the important characters. The great conqueror Julius Caesar is shown here as a pompous autocrat, a man weak both in body and mind. He is only the titular hero of the play. Although the title of the play is "Julius Caesar", he is not the central character in the action of the play, appearing in only three scenes and dying at the beginning of the third Act. In Act 1 Scene 2, Cassius compounds Brutus's alarm about Caesar's growing power with references to his weak physical state: he lacks stamina and is probably epileptic. Cassius recalls a windy day when he and Caesar stood on the banks of the Tiber River, and Caesar dared him to swim to a distant point. They raced through the water, but Caesar became weak and asked Cassius to save him. Cassius had to drag him from the water. Cassius also recounts an episode when Caesar had a fever in Spain and experienced a seizure. Cassius marvels to think that a man with such a feeble constitution should now stand at the head of the civilized world. He swoons, his left ear is deaf. He is haughty and braggart. He is devoid in physical powers. Caesar is also superstitious. He instructs Antony to touch Calpurnia so that she may shake off sterility.

The conspirators charge Caesar with ambition, and his behavior substantiates this judgment: he does vie for absolute power over Rome, reveling in the homage he receives from others and in his conception of himself as a figure that will live on forever in men's minds. However, his faith in his own permanence—in the sense of both his loyalty to principles and his fixture as a public institution—eventually proves his undoing. At first, he stubbornly refuses to heed the nightmares of his wife, Calphurnia, and the supernatural omens pervading the atmosphere. Though he is eventually persuaded not to go to the Senate, Caesar ultimately lets his ambition get the better of him, as the prospect of being crowned king proves too glorious to resist.

Julius Caesar was also full of arrogance and pride.

Caesar's conflation of his public image with his private self helps bring about his death, since he mistakenly believes that the immortal status granted to his public self somehow protects his mortal body. Still,

Caesar was the darling of the citizens.

Still, in many ways, Caesar's faith that he is eternal proves valid by the end of the play: by Act V, scene iii, Brutus is attributing

his and Cassius's misfortunes to Caesar's power reaching from beyond the grave. Caesar's aura seems to affect the general outcome of events in a mystic manner, while also inspiring Octavius and Antony and strengthening their determination. As Octavius ultimately assumes the title Caesar, Caesar's permanence is indeed established in some respect.

Brutus The central protagonist of the play is Marcus Brutus and the central psychological drama is his struggle between the conflicting demands of honour, patriotism, and friendship.

Brutus emerges as the most complex character in Julius Caesar and is also the play's tragic hero.

Marcus Brutus is Caesar's close friend; his ancestors were famed for driving the tyrannical King Tarquin from. Brutus allows himself to be cajoled into joining a group of conspiring senators because of a growing suspicion—implanted by Gaius Cassius—that Caesar intends to turn republican Rome into a monarchy under his own rule. The growing tide of public support soon turns Brutus against Caesar.

In his soliloquies, the audience gains insight into the complexities of his motives. He is a powerful public figure, but he appears also as a husband, a master to his servants, a dignified military leader, and a loving friend. The conflicting value systems that battle with each other in the play as a whole are enacted on a microcosmic level in Brutus's mind. Even after Brutus

has committed the

assassination with the other members of the conspiracy, questions remain as to whether, in light of his friendship with Caesar, the murder was a noble, decidedly selfless act or proof of a truly evil callousness, a gross indifference to the ties of friendship and a failure to be moved by the power of a truly great man. Brutus's rigid idealism is both his greatest virtue and his most deadly flaw. In the world of the play, where self-serving ambition seems to dominate all other motivations, Brutus lives up to Antony's elegiac description of him as "the noblest of Romans." However, his commitment to principle repeatedly leads him to make miscalculations: wanting to curtail violence, he ignores Cassius's suggestion that the conspirators kill Antony as well as Caesar. In another moment of naïve idealism, he again ignores Cassius's advice and allows Antony to speak a funeral oration over Caesar's body. As a result, Brutus forfeits the authority of having the last word on the murder and thus allows Antony to incite the plebeians to riot against him and the other conspirators. Brutus later endangers his good relationship with Cassius by self-righteously condemning what he sees as dishonorable fund-raising tactics on Cassius's part. In all of these episodes, Brutus acts out of a desire to limit the self-serving aspects of his actions; ironically, however, in each incident he dooms the very cause that he seeks to promote, thus serving no one at all.

Antony Antony is a sportsman turned statesman and proves strong in all of the ways that Brutus proves weak. He is an eloquent orator and a quick-witted schemer. He has a great knowledge of men and affairs. There can be no doubt about his love towards Caesar.

His impulsive, improvisatory nature serves him perfectly, first to persuade the conspirators that he is on their side, thus gaining their leniency, and then to persuade the plebeians of the conspirators' injustice, thus gaining the masses' political support. Not too scrupulous to stoop to deceit and duplicity, as Brutus claims to be, Antony proves himself a consummate politician, using gestures and skilled rhetoric to his advantage.

After Caesar's murder

he disposes off the threat of Cassius by directing his attention to the more powerful and gullible Brutus, whom he keeps on the defensive by repeating that he will be friends if he receives a satisfactory explanation.

He disposes of the remaining conspirators by boldly raising the subject of his apparent hypocrisy in making friends with his friend's murderers and by then shrewdly diverting his comments to the nobility of Caesar.

This is much in the manner that he later turns the citizens to rebellion by professing that he does not want to stir them up. Antony, in reality, wants two things: to avenge Caesar's murder and to rule Rome. In order to do both, he first undermines public confidence in the republicans, and second, he drives them from power by creating a chaotic situation that will allow him to seize power in their place.

He responds to subtle cues among both his nemeses and his allies to know exactly how he must conduct himself at each particular moment in order to gain the most advantage. In both his eulogy for Caesar and the play as a whole, Antony is adept at tailoring his words and actions to his audiences' desires.

After Caesar's death, however, Mark Antony, with a subtle and eloquent speech over Caesar's corpse— the much-quoted Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears...—deftly turns public opinion against the assassins by manipulating the emotions of the common people, in contrast to the rational tone of Brutus's speech. Antony rouses the mob to drive the conspirators from Rome. Antony, each with the aim of persuading the crowd to his side. We observe the effect of his witty speech on the crowd and see the power that words can have—how they can stir emotion, alter opinion, and induce action.

Unlike Brutus, who prides himself on acting solely with respect to virtue and blinding himself to his personal concerns, Antony never separates his private affairs from his public actions.

He is the "masker and a reveler." (Cassius ActV. Scene1.) He has passion and can go to excesses and still remain in character. He is underestimated by everyone and therefore can blossom in plain view of the audience. Brutus is the difficult, but thankless part of the play. He is full of inner struggle and his philosophy is that of a man whose emotions must never show. Yet, he must have enough weight behind him to make the audience believe that he could be a central figure in a government and be able to sway a crowd with force of words and personality.

At the conclusion of the play, when Brutus and Cassius are dead and the republicans thoroughly defeated, he publicly praises Brutus in order to set about healing the political wounds of Rome.

The question is, How to judge Marc Antony? He has admirable loyalty to Julius Caesar. He bravely meets the conspirators and offers his life at their hands. Yes, he did send a servant first to ask permission to come, but it was still a brave act.

Moreover, he has genuine regard for the safety of Octavius. He tells Octavius' servant to tell Octavius not to come into the city because it is not safe. (Act III Scene1) His sadness at the death of Caesar is real and so is his anger. And yet, . . . is he noble? By the end of the speech to the

Romans, he has set a wild and murderous mob out to create the havoc he sought. He knows the mob may do "mischief," but he cares not. (Act III, Scene2) When scene four begins, we see a cold, calculating Antony who damns his nephew

"with a spot." (Act IV Scene1) He happily cuts Lepidus out of the political pie all the while confidently teaching Octavius the ways of politics. (Act IV Scene1) Antony is nakedly ambitious. Caesar dies for his ambition, yet every man in the play has to suffer the consequences of the actions. Cassius: Cassius is clearly a contradictory character. He is envious of Caesar and wants to move up in the Roman world by eliminating Caesar and putting in the more malleable Brutus into power. He is deceitful and lying and he knows it. If he were Brutus and Brutus Cassius, he would not listen to Cassius.

And yet, weak of moral character though he is, he does seem to love Brutus and admire him. With Brutus he feels noble and brave. Cassius is a man who thought he could manipulate Brutus, but it turns out that Brutus turns on him and contradicts every one of Cassius' decisions from March 14 on to the end of the play. Yet he seems to truly love Brutus and wants his good opinion. He is one of Shakespeare's great complicated characters. Casca: Shakespeare presents

different visions of Casca to the audience and then leaves them to imagine what it might mean to play this character on stage. In Act I, Scene 2, Casca shouts for the crowd to be quiet when Caesar speaks. He is an obsequious courtier that an Elizabethan audience would have recognized. He kisses up to Caesar at every chance. "Peace, ho, Caesar speaks!" he shouts. Later in that same scene Cassius gets his attention and speaks to him privately and we learn that Casca hates Caesar and scorns him to his friends. Thus a dual personality is revealed by his actions. Casca brags that he wishes he could have cut Caesar's throat when he had the chance. With his friends he is cynical and sarcastic and no longer the toady. The Elizabethans would recognize this character also. In Act I, Scene 3, Casca is afraid of the lightening and tells mad and wild stories about what he has seen that night. He is craven and cowardly, yet by the end of the scene he tells Cassius, "I will set this foot of mine as far/As who goes farthest." This is the third personality of a character in one act.

They are all consistent with a type of person that Casca is, but they are each different from the others. When we next see Casca, he is with the conspirators at Brutus' house. There he is confident and brave, though they talk of killing the emperor. Finally, Casca is the first to stab Caesar.

11.7 Important Scene of the Play Scene of Caesar's Murder Act III Scene 1 Caesar's assassination is perhaps the most famous part of the play, about halfway through. After ignoring the soothsayer as well as his wife's own premonitions, Caesar comes to the Senate. The conspirators create a superficial motive for the assassination by means of a petition brought by Metellus Cimber, pleading on behalf of his banished brother. His refusal to pardon Metellus's banished brother serves to show that his belief in the sanctity of his own authority is unwavering up to the moment that he is killed. Caesar, predictably, rejects the petition, Casca grazes Caesar in the back of his neck, and the others follow in stabbing him; Brutus is last. At this point, Caesar utters the famous line "Et tu, Brute?" ("And you, Brutus?", i.e. "You too, Brutus?"). Shakespeare has him add, "Then fall, Caesar," suggesting that Caesar did not want to survive such treachery. The conspirators make clear that they did this act for Rome, not for their own purposes and do not attempt to flee the scene but act victorious. This scene begins with Caesar's refusal to Artemidorus's pleas to speak with him, saying that he gives last priority to his nearest, most personal concerns. He thus again demonstrates a split between his public and private selves, endangering himself by believing that his public self is so strong that his private self cannot be harmed. This sense of invulnerability manifests itself clearly when Caesar compares himself to the North Star, which never moves from its position at the center of the sky: "constant as the Northern Star, / Of whose true fixed and resting quality / There is no fellow in the firmament. / [the] one in all [that] doth hold his place" (Line 60-65). He not only considers himself steadfast but also infallible, beyond the questioning of mortal men, as he compares the foolish idea of him being persuaded of something to the impossible act of hefting the weight of Mount Olympus. In positioning himself thus as a divine figure (the Romans deified certain beloved figures, such as popular leaders, and believed that, upon dying, these figures became ensconced in the firmament), Caesar reveals his belief that he is truly a god. His refusal to pardon Metellus's banished brother serves to show that his belief in the sanctity of his own authority is unwavering up to the moment that he is killed. Cassius suggests that future generations will remember, repeat, and retell the conspirators' actions in the years to come. The statement constitutes a self-referential moment in the play, since Shakespeare's play itself is a retelling of a retelling. It was Plutarch who asserted that Caesar ceased to defend himself upon recognizing Brutus among the conspirators, and Plutarch who first gave Caesar his famous last words, which Shakespeare preserves in the original Latin, "Et tu, Brute?" ("And you, Brutus?" [Line76]). With these words, Caesar apprehends the immensity of the plot to kill him— a plot so total that it includes even his friends—and simultaneously levels a heartbroken reproach at his former friend. By Shakespeare's time, Plutarch's lines had already achieved fame, and an Elizabethan audience would likely have anticipated them in the murder scene. It is Shakespeare's deft hand of creation, however, that brings Antony to the scene. Despairing over Caesar's death, Antony knows that he poses a danger to the conspirators and that he must pretend to support them if he wants to survive. He assures them that they have his allegiance and shakes their hands, thus smearing himself with Caesar's blood and marking Trebonius with blood as well. By marking Trebonius, Antony may be silently insisting on Trebonius's guilt in the murder, even if his part was less direct than that of the other conspirators. Yet he does so in a handshake, an apparent gesture of allegiance. While the blood on Trebonius's hands marks him as a conspirator, the blood on Antony's hands, like war paint, marks him as the self-appointed instrument for vengeance against Caesar's killers. Cassius's worries about Antony's rhetorical skill prove justified. The first scene of the play clearly illustrates the fickleness of the multitude, which hastens to cheer Caesar's triumph over a man whom it once adored. Surely the conspirators run a great risk by letting such a fickle audience listen to the mournful Antony. Yet, blinded by his conception of the assassination as a noble deed done for the people and one that the people must thus necessarily appreciate, Brutus believes that the masses will respond most strongly not to Antony's words but to the fact that the conspirators have allowed him to speak at all. Because he feels that he himself, by helping to murder a dear friend, has sacrificed the most, Brutus believes that he will be respected for giving priority to public matters over private ones. We will see, however, that Brutus's misjudgment will lead to his own downfall: he grossly underestimates Antony's oratorical skill and overestimates the people's conception of virtue.

11.8 Julius Caesar's Rise To Power and Elizabethan Age Caesar's meteoric rise to power reflects English sentiment during the Elizabethan age about the consolidation of power in other parts of Europe. The strengthening of the absolutist monarchies in such sovereignties as France and Spain during the sixteenth century threatened the stability of the somewhat more balanced English political system, which, though it was hardly democratic in the modern sense of the word, at least provided

nobles and elected representatives with some means of checking royal authority. Caesar's ascendance helped to effect Rome's transition from republic to empire, and Shakespeare's depiction of the prospect of Caesar's assumption of dictatorial power can be seen as a comment upon the gradual shift toward centralization of power that was taking place in Europe. In addition, Shakespeare's illustration of the fickleness of the Roman public proves particularly relevant to the English political scene of the time. Queen Elizabeth I was nearing the end of her life but had neither produced nor named an heir. Anxiety mounted concerning who her successor would be. People feared that without resort to the established, accepted means of transferring power—passing it down the family line— England might plunge into the sort of chaotic power struggle that had plagued it in the fifteenth century, during the Wars of the Roses. In the play, Flavius and Marullus's interest in controlling the populace lays the groundwork for Brutus's and Antony's manipulations of public opinion after Caesar's death. Shakespeare thus makes it clear that the struggle for power will involve a battle.

11.9 Let us Sum up In this unit you have acquired knowledge and have been given practice :

- to know about the various issues presented in the play
- to know about the important characters of the play
- to know and understand the important soliloquies in the play
- to understand relevance of Julius Caesar with respect to Elizabethan Age
- to understand the Most important scene of the play
- to deal with the essay type questions related to the topics considered.

Module III Shakespearean Criticism

Unit 12: Dollimore Jonathan: "Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism" 12.0 Introduction

12.1 Unit Objective 12.2 Essay: "Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism" 12.2.1 History Versus the Human Condition 12.2.2 The Politics of Renaissance Theatre 12.2.3 Consolidation, Subversion, Containment 12.4 Key Words 12.0 Introduction This Unit presents an essay titled "

Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism " adopted from the book "Political Shakespeare, Essays in Cultural Materialism"

edited by Dollimore Jonathan & Alan Sinfield. It shall help the learners to develop a viewpoint and understanding on Shakespeare's drama further. 12.1 Unit Objective This unit presents the essay titled: titled "Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism ". 12.2 Essay: "Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and New Historicism" One of the most important achievements of 'theory' in English studies has been the making possible a truly interdisciplinary approach to - some might say exit from - the subject. Actually, such an objective had been around for a long time, though largely unrealised outside of individual and often outstanding studies. With the various structuralisms, Marxism, psychoanalysis, semiotics, and post-structuralism, there occurred a significant dismantling of the barriers (barriers of exclusion as well as of containment) and many critics discovered what they had wanted to know for some time - how, for example, history and philosophy could be retrieved from their 'background' status and become part of both the content and the perspective of criticism. At the same time this was possible only because quite new conceptions of philosophy and history were

involved. In utilising theory in the field of literary studies we find that it has made possible far more than it has actually introduced. By this criterion alone it proves itself a major intellectual contribution. But not everyone approves, as the anti-theoretical invective of recent years has shown. We don't propose to dwell on this reaction, nor on the much vaunted 'crisis' in English studies, except to remark that if there is a crisis it has more to do with this reaction than with theory itself. But of course, 'theory' is as erroneous a title as 'structuralism', both giving a misleading impression of unity where there is in fact enormous diversity. We are concerned here with one development of recent years, cultural materialism; it preceded the advent of theory but also derived a considerable impetus from it. The term 'cultural materialism' is borrowed from its recent use by Raymond Williams; its practice grows from an eclectic body of work in Britain in the post-war period which can be broadly characterised as cultural analysis. That work includes the considerable output of Williams himself, and, more generally, the convergence of history, sociology and English in cultural studies, some of the major developments in feminism, as well as continental Marxist-structuralist and post-structuralist theory, especially that of Althusser, Macherey, Gramsci, and Foucault. The development of cultural materialism in relation to Renaissance literature has been fairly recent although there is already a diverse and developing field of work relating literary texts to, for example, the following: enclosure and the oppression of the rural poor; State power and resistance to it; reassessments of what actually were the dominant ideologies of the period and the radical counter tendencies to these; witchcraft; the challenge and containment of the carnivalesque; a feminist recovery of the actual conditions of women and the altered understanding of their literary representations which this generates; conflict between class fractions within the State and, correspondingly, the importance of a nonmonolithic conception of power. Much of this work is explicitly concerned with the operations of power. But it is in the United States that most attention has been given to the representations of power in Renaissance Literature. This work is part of an important perspective which has come to be called the new historicism, a perspective concerned generally with the interaction in this period between State power and cultural forms and, more specifically, with those

genre and practices where State and culture most visibly merge - for example, pastoral, the masque and the institution of patronage. An analysis by the new historicism of power in early modern England as itself deeply theatrical - and therefore of the theatre as a prime location for the representation and legitimation of power - has led to some remarkable studies of the Renaissance theatre as well as of individual plays, Shakespeare's included. According to Marx, men and women make their own history but not in conditions of their own choosing. Perhaps the most significant divergence within cultural analysis is that between those who concentrate on culture as this making of history, and those who concentrate on the unchosen conditions which constrain and inform that process of making. The former allows much human agency, and tends to privilege human experience; the latter concentrates on the formative power of social and ideological structures which are both prior to experience and in some sense determining it, and so opens up the whole question of autonomy. A similar divergence is acknowledged in Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, an outstanding instance of the new historicism. In an epilogue Greenblatt tells how he began with an intention to explore 'the role of human autonomy in the construction of identity. But as the work progressed the emphasis fell more and more on cultural institutions - family, religion, and the State - and 'the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree, the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society'.

12.2.1 History Versus the Human Condition

Materialist criticism refuses to privilege 'literature' in the way that literary criticism has done hitherto; as Raymond Williams argued in an important essay, 'we cannot separate literature and art from other kinds of social practice, in such a way as to make them subject to quite special and distinct laws'. This approach necessitates a radical contextualising of literature which eliminates the old divisions between literature and its 'background', text and context. The arts 'may have quite specific features as practices, but they cannot be separated from the general social process' (Williams, *Problems*, p.44). This attention to social process has far-reaching consequences. To begin with it leads us beyond idealist literary criticism - that preoccupied with supposedly universal truths which find their counterpart in man's essential nature; the criticism in which history, if acknowledged at all, is seen as inessential or a constraint transcended in the affirmation of a transhistorical human condition. It would be wrong to represent idealist criticism as still confidently dominant in Shakespeare studies; in fact it is a vision which has been failing for some time, and certainly before the advent of theory. In recent decades its advocates have tended to gesture towards this vision rather than confidently affirm it; have hesitated over its apparent absence, often then to become preoccupied with the tragic sense of life as one which recuperated the vision as absence, which celebrated not man's transcendent consciousness but his will to endure and to know why transcendence was itself an illusion. In short, an existentialist-tragic sense of life was in tension with a more explicitly spiritual one, the former trying to break with the latter but being unable to because it had nowhere to go; a diminished metaphysic, etiolation became the condition of its survival. Materialist criticism also refuses what Stephen Greenblatt calls the monological approach of historical scholarship of the past, one 'concerned with discovering a single political vision, usually identical to that said to be held by the entire literate class or indeed the entire population' (*The Power of Forms*, p.5). E.M.W. Tillyard's very influential *The Elizabethan World Picture*, first published in 1943 and still being reprinted, is perhaps the most notorious instance. Tillyard was concerned to expound an idea of cosmic order 'so taken for granted, so much part of the collective mind of the people, that is hardly mentioned except in explicitly didactic passages'. The objection to this is not that Tillyard was mistaken in identifying a metaphysic of order in the period, nor even that it had ceased to exist by the turn of the century (two criticisms subsequently directed at him). The error, from a materialist perspective, is falsely to unify history and social processes in the name of 'the collective mind of the people'. And such a perspective would construe the 'didactic passages' referred to by Tillyard in quite different terms: didacticism was not the occasional surfacing, the occasional articulation, of the collective mind but a strategy of ideological struggle. In other words, the didactic stress on order was in part an anxious reaction to emergent and (in)-subordinate social forces which were perceived as threatening. Tillyard's world picture, to the extent that it did still exist, was not shared by all; it was an ideological legitimation of an existing social order, one rendered the more necessary by the apparent instability, actual and imagined, of that order. If this sounds too extreme then we need

only recall Bacon's remark to some circuit judges in 1617: 'There will be a perpetual defection, except you keep men in by preaching, as well as law doth by punishing'. Sermons were not simply the occasion for the collective mind to celebrate its most cherished beliefs but an attempt to tell sectors of an unruly populace what to think in order to keep them in their place. Historians who have examined the effects of social change and reactions to it present a picture quite opposite to Tillyard's: In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries ... This almost hysterical demand for order at all costs was caused by a collapse of most of the props of the mediaeval world picture. The unified dogma and organisation of the Catholic Church found itself challenged by a number of rival creeds and institutional structures ... the reliance upon the intellectual authority of the Ancients was threatened by new scientific discoveries.. Moreover in England there occurred a phase of unprecedented social and geographical mobility which at the higher levels transformed the composition and size of the gentry and professional classes, and at the lower levels tore hundreds of thousands of individuals loose from their traditional kinship and neighbourhood backgrounds. In making sense of a period in such rapid transition, and of the contradictory interpretations of that transition from within the period itself, we might have recourse to Raymond Williams's very important distinction between residual, dominant, and emergent aspects of culture. Tillyard's world picture can then be seen as in some respects a dominant ideology, in others a residual one, with one or both of these perhaps being confronted and displaced by new, emergent cultural forms. Nor is this threefold distinction exhaustive of cultural diversity: there will also be levels of culture appropriately described as subordinate, repressed and marginal. Non-dominant elements interact with the dominant forms, sometimes coexisting with, or being absorbed or even destroyed by them, but also challenging, modifying, or even displacing them. Culture is not by any stretch of the imagination - not even the literary imagination - a unity. Tillyard was not entirely unaware of this, though it is presumably with unwitting irony that he writes of 'the educated nucleus that dictated the current beliefs of the Elizabethan Age' and of cosmic order as 'one of the genuine ruling ideas of the age, italics. Because, for Tillyard, the process of ideological legitimation was itself more or less legitimate, it is a process which in his book - and much more so than his claims about the Elizabethan world picture itself - is accepted to the point of being barely recognised. Further, because Tillyard revered the period ("the Elizabethan age - the quarter century from 1580-1605 - was after all the great age', p. 130) what he discerned as its representative literature is presented as the legitimate object of study. And those literary forms wherein can be glimpsed the transgression of the world picture - where, that is, we glimpse subordinate cultures resisting or contesting the dominant - these are dismissed as unworthy of study because unrepresentative: '(Hooker) represents far more truly the background of Elizabethan literature than do the coney-catching pamphlets or the novel of low-life' (p.22). But whose literature, and whose background? There are several ways of deploying the concept of ideology, and these correspond to its complex history. One which in particular concerns materialist criticism traces the cultural connection between signification and legitimation: the way that beliefs, practices, and institutions legitimise the dominant social order or status quo - the existing relations of domination and subordination. Such legitimation is found (for example) in the representation of sectional interests as universal ones. Those who rule may in fact be serving their own interests and those of their class, but they, together with the institutions and practices through which they exercise and maintain power, are understood as working in the interests of the community as a whole. Secondly, through legitimation the existing social order - that is, existing social relations - are 'naturalised', thus appearing to have the unalterable character of natural law. History also tends to be invested with a law of development (teleology) which acts as the counterpart of natural law, a development leading 'inevitably' to the present order and thereby doubly ratifying it. Legitimation further works to efface the fact of social contradiction, dissent and struggle. Where there things present themselves unavoidably they are often demonised as attempts to subvert it from without (by the 'alien'), that order strengthens itself by simultaneously repressing dissenting elements and eliciting consent for this action: the protection of society from subversion. This combined emphasis on universal interests, society as a 'reflection' of the 'natural' order of things, history as a 'lawful' development leading up to and justifying the present, the demonising of dissent and otherness, was central to the age of Shakespeare.

12.2.2 The Politics of Renaissance Theatre I want to consider next why the socio-political perspective of materialist criticism is especially appropriate for recovering the political dimension of Renaissance drama. This entails a consideration of the theatre as an institution and, more generally, literature as a practice. Analysts of literature in the Renaissance were much concerned with its effect. The almost exclusive preoccupation in traditional English studies with the intrinsic meaning of texts leads us to miss, ignore, or underestimate the importance of this fact. Effect was considered not at the level of the individual reader in abstraction, but of actual readers - and, of course, audiences. Rulers and preachers were only two groups especially concerned to determine, regulate, and perhaps exploit these effects. As regards the theatre there were two opposed views of its effectiveness. The one view stressed its capacity to instruct the populace - often, and quite explicitly, to keep them obedient. Thus Heywood, in an *Apology for Actors*, claimed that plays were written and performed to teach 'subjects' obedience to their king' by showing them 'the untimely end of such as have moved tumults, commotions, and insurrections'. The other view claimed virtually the opposite, stressing the theatre's power to demystify authority and even to subvert it; in 1605 Samuel Calvert had complained that plays were representing 'the present Time, not sparing either King, State, or Religion in so great Absurdity, and with such Liberty that any would be afraid to hear them'. In an often-cited passage from *Basilikon Doron* James I likened the king to 'one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly do behold; any 'dissolute' behaviour on his part breeds contempt in his subjects and contempt is 'the mother of rebellion and disorder'. The theatre could encourage such contempt by, as one contemporary put it in a description of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, making 'greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous'. A year after *Basilikon Doron* appeared, a French ambassador recorded in a dispatch home that James was being held in just the contempt that he feared and, moreover, that the theatre was encouraging it. A famous attempt to use the theatre to subvert authority was of course the staging of a play called *Richard II* (probably Shakespeare's) just before the Essex rising in 1601; Queen Elizabeth afterwards anxiously acknowledged the implied identification between her and *Richard II*, complaining also that 'this tragedy was played 40 times in open streets and houses'. As Stephen Greenblatt points out, what was really worrying for the Queen was both the repeatability of the representation - and hence the multiplying numbers of people witnessing it - and the locations of these repetitions: 'open streets and houses'. In such places the 'conventional containment' of the playhouse is blurred and perhaps relinquished altogether with the consequence that the 'saft' distinction between illusion and reality itself blurs: 'are the "houses" to which Elizabeth refers public theatres or private dwellings where her enemies plot her overthrow? Can "tragedy" be a strictly literary term when the Queen's own life is endangered by the play? (The Power of Forms, p.4) Jane P. Tompkins has argued that the Renaissance inherited from the classical period a virtually complete disregard of literature's meaning and a correspondingly almost exclusive emphasis on its effect: what mattered, ultimately, was action emphasis on its effect: what mattered, ultimately, was action not significant, behaviour not discourse. In a sense yes: Tompkins emphasis on effect is both correct and important, especially when she goes on to show that this pragmatic view of literature made its socio-political dimension obviously significant at the time. But Thompkin draws a distinction between effect and signification which is too extreme, even for this period: effectively is both decided and assessed in the practice of signification. If we ignore this then we are likely to ignore also the fact that socio-political effects of literature are in part achieved in and through the practice of appropriation. Thus what made Elizabeth I so anxious was not so much a retrospectively and clearly ascertained effect of the staging of *Richard II* (the uprising was, after all, abortive and Essex was executed) but the fact of the play having been appropriated - been given significance for a particular cause and in certain 'open' contexts. This period's pragmatic conception of literature meant that such appropriations were not a perversion of true literary reception, they were its reception. This applies especially to tragedy, that genre traditionally thought to be most capable of transcending the historical moment of inception and representing universal truths. Contemporary formulations of the tragic certainly made reference to universal truths. Contemporary formulations of the tragic certainly made reference to universals but they were also resolutely political, especially those which defined it as a representation of tyranny. Such accounts, and of course the plays themselves, were appropriated as both defences of and challenges to authority.

Thomas Elyot, in *The Governor*, asserted that, in reading tragedies, a man shall be led to 'execrate and abhor the intolerable life of tyrants', and for Sidney tragedy made 'Kings fear to be tyrants'. Puttenham in *The Art of English Poesy* had said that tragedy revealed tyranny to 'all the world', while the downfall of the tyrant disclosed (perhaps incongruous) both historical vicissitude ('the mutability of fortune') and God's providential order (his 'just punishment'). In contrast Fulke Greville explicitly disavowed that his own tragedies exemplified God's law in the form of providential retribution. Rather, they were concerned to 'trace out the highways of ambitious governors'. He further stressed that the 'true stage' for his plays was not the theatre but the reader's own life and times - 'even the state he lives in'. This led Greville actually to destroy one of his tragedies for fear of incrimination - it could, he said, have been construed as 'personating ... vices in the present Governors, and government'. (It seems he had in mind the events of the Essex rebellion.) Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, warns of the danger of writing in general when the subject is contemporary history: if the writer follows it too closely 'it may happily strike out his teeth'. Those like Greville and Raleigh knew then that the idea of literature passively reflecting history was erroneous; literature was a practice which intervened in contemporary history in the very act of representing it. This essay does not give so much new readings of Shakespeare's texts as a historical relocation of them, which radically alters the meanings traditionally ascribed to them by a criticism preoccupied with their textual integrity. Thus Leonard Tennenhouse proposes that the opposition between a political and a literary use of language is largely a modern invention and that Shakespeare's plays, like Renaissance 'literature' generally, 'displayed its politics as it idealised or demystified specific forms of power and that such a display rather than the work's transcendence or referentiality was what made it aesthetically successful. Especially illuminating is the way Tennenhouse relates the textual representations of authority to each other and to the institutions and actual power struggles of Elizabethan and Jacobean England without thereby assuming a simple correspondence of the text to the preexistent real. The recovery of history becomes, inescapably, a 'theoretical' procedure too.

12.2.3 Consolidation, Subversion, Containment

Three aspects of historical and cultural process figure prominently in materialist criticism: consolidation, subversion and containment. The first refers, typically, to the ideological means whereby a dominant order seeks to perpetuate itself; the second to the subversion of that order, the third to the containment of ostensibly subversive pressures. The metaphysics of order in the Elizabethan period has already been briefly considered. Those of Tillyard's persuasion saw it as consolidating, that is socially cohesive in the positive sense of transcending sectional interests and articulating a genuinely shared culture and cosmology, characterised by harmony, stability and unity. In contrast, materialist criticism is likely to consider the ideological dimension of consolidation - the way, for example, that this world picture reinforces particular class and gender interests by presenting the existing social order as natural and God-given. Interestingly, ideas approximating these contrasting positions circulated in the period. Those Elizabethan sermons which sought to explain social hierarchy as a manifestation of Divine Law, and which drew analogies between hierarchy in the different levels of cosmos, nature, and society, would be an example of the first, and the assertion in Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* that 'tis place,/Not blood, discerns the noble, and the base' of the second. Important differences exist within materialist criticism of Renaissance literature between those who emphasise the process of consolidation and those who discover resistance to it. Here the disagreement tends to be at distinct but overlapping levels: actual historical process and its discursive representation in literature. So, for example, within feminist criticism of the period, there are those who insist on its increasing patriarchal oppressiveness, and moreover, insist on its increasing patriarchal oppressiveness, and moreover, insist that the limiting structures of patriarchy are also Shakespeare's. Kathleen McLuskie summarises this perspective as follows: Shakespeare...gave voice to the social views of his age. His thoughts on women were necessarily bound by the parameters of hagiography and misogyny'. Conversely, other feminist critics want to allow that there were those in the period, including Shakespeare, who could and did not think beyond these parameters, and participated in significant resistance to such constructions of women. But this second perspective, at least in its materialist version, is united with the first in rejecting a third position, namely that which sees Shakespeare's women as exemplifying the transhistorical qualities of 'woman', with Shakespeare's ability to represent these being another aspect of a genius who transcends not only his time but also his sex. McLuskie's essay insists on the constraints of the literary tradition, the ideological and material conditions from which the plays emerge. A materialist feminism, rather than simply co-opting or writing off Shakespeare, follows the

unstable constructions of, for example, gender, and patriarchy back to the contradictions of their historical moment. Only thus can the authority of the patriarchal bard be understood and effectively challenged. In considering in that same historical moment certain representations of authority, along with those which ostensibly subvert it, we discover not a straightforward opposition but a process much more complex. Subversiveness may for example be apparent only, the dominant order not only containing it but, paradoxical as it may seem, actually producing it for its own ends. An important article arguing this position is that by Stephen Greenblatt, who takes as his example the Machivellian proposition that religion was a kind of false consciousness perpetuated by the rulers to keep the ruled in their place. If authority does indeed depend on such mystifications for its successful operation, then the Machiavellian demystification of such a process is also a subversion of authority. Yet, in Thomas Harriot's account of the first Virginia colony the reverse seems to be the case. One conclusion in a sophisticated argument extended to Shakespeare's history plays is that 'the power Harriot both serves and embodies not only produces its own subversion but is actively built upon it: in the Virginia colony, the radical undermining of Christian order is not the negative limit but the positive condition for the establishment of that order'. To some extent the paradox disappears when we speak not of a monolithic power structure producing its effects but of one made up of different, often competing elements, and these not merely producing culture but producing it through appropriations. The importance of this concept of appropriations. The importance of this concept of appropriation is that it indicates a process of making or transforming. If we talk only of power producing the discourse of subversion we not only hypostatise power but also efface the cultural differences - and context - which the very process of containment presupposes. Resistance to that process may be there from the outset or itself produced by it. Further, although subversion may indeed be appropriated by authority for its own purposes, once installed it can be used against authority as well as used by it. Thus the demonised elements in Elizabethan culture - for example, masterless men - are, quite precisely, identified as such in order to ratify the exercise of power, but once identified they are also there as a force to be self-identified. But this didn't make them a power in their own right; on the contrary, for masterless men to constitute a threat to order it was usually - though not always - necessary that they first be mobilised or exploited by a counter-faction within the dominant. But appropriation could also work the other way: subordinate, marginal or dissident elements could appropriate dominant discourses and likewise transform them in the process. I have already suggested what Essex may have been trying to do with Richard II: another recently rediscovered instance is recounted in Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*. This book relates Menocchio, an Italian miller and isolated heretic, interpreted seemingly very orthodox texts in a highly challenging way - construing from them, for example, a quite radical materialist view of the universe. Ginzburg emphasises the 'one sided and arbitrary' nature of Menocchio's reading, and sees its source as being in a peasant culture, oral, widespread and at once sceptical, materialist and rationalist. It is this culture and not at all the intrinsic nature of the texts which leads Menocchio to appropriate them in a way subversive enough to incur torture and eventually death by burning for heresy. The subversion-containment debate is important for other reasons. It is in part a conceptual or theoretical question: what, for example, are the criteria for distinguishing between, say, that which subverts and that which effects change? Stephen Greenblatt provides a useful working definition here: radical subversiveness is defined as not merely the attempt to seize existing authority but as a challenge to the principles upon which authority is based. But we are still faced with the need for interpretation simply in making this very distinction: theoretical clarification of necessity involves historical enquiry and vice versa. And the kind of inquiry at issue is inextricably bound up with the question of perspective: which one, and whose? How else for example can we explain why what is experienced as subversive at the time may retrospectively be construed as a crucial step towards progress? More extremely still, how is it that the same subversive act may be later interpreted as having contributed to either revolutionary change or anarchic disintegration? Nothing can be intrinsically or essentially subversive in the sense that prior to the event subversiveness can be more than potential; in other words it cannot be guaranteed a priori, independent of articulation, context and reception. Likewise the mere thinking of a radical idea is not what makes it subversive: typically it is the context of its articulation: to whom, how many and in what circumstances; one might go further and suggest that not only

does the idea have to be conveyed, it has also actually to be used to refuse authority or be seen by authority as capable and likely of being so used. It is, then, somewhat misleading to speak freely and only of 'subversive thought'; what we are concerned with is a social process. Thus the Machiavellian demystification of religion was circulating for centuries before Machiavelli; what made it actually subversive in the Renaissance was its being taken up by many more than the initiated few. Even here interpretation and perspective come into play: we need to explain why it was taken up, and in so doing we will almost certainly have to make judgments about the historical changes it helped precipitate. Explicitness about one's own perspective and methodology become unavoidable in materialist criticism and around this issue especially: as textual, historical, sociological, and theoretical analysis are drawn together, the politics of the practice emerges. The essays by Leonard Tennenhouse, Paul Brown and Jonathan Dollimore all attend to representations of subversiveness. Tennenhouse is partly concerned with the complex relations in the Henry plays and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* between authority and the figures of misrule, carnival and festival. Concentrating on *The Tempest*, Brown, like Greenblatt, addresses the power and complexity of colonial discourse. His analysis of the way it constructs the threatening 'other' is especially revealing. This production of otherness is seen as essential to colonialism yet fraught with internal contradiction since 'it produces the possibility of ... resistance in the other precisely at the moment when it seeks to impose its captivating power'. The radical ambiguity of the colonial stereotype, and the instability of the civil/ savage opposition so central to the colonial project, help to focus the ideological contradictions of the play's political unconscious. If, then, as Jonathan Goldberg has argued, contradictions are the very means by which power achieves its aims, they also generate an instability which can be its undoing. Dollimore also considers the construction of the other, now in the form of the sexual deviant. In this period deviancy is regarded by many as radically subversive. Yet here too, especially in *Measure for Measure*, that which apparently threatens authority seems to be produced by it. An apparent crisis in the State is attributed to its deviant population whose transgressions, far from undermining authority, enable its re-legitimation. At the same time those whose exploitation permits this reaction are endlessly spoken of and for, yet never themselves speak; they have no voice, no part.

All the contributors to this book would endorse Frank Lentricchia's contention that 'Ruling culture does not define the whole of culture, though it tries to, and it is the task of the oppositional critic to re-read culture so as to amplify and strategically position the marginalised voices of the ruled, exploited, oppressed, and excluded. Lentricchia, here quoting Raymond Williams, rightly insists that cultural domination is not a static unalterable thing; it is rather a process, one always being contested, always having to be renewed. As Williams puts it: 'alternative political and cultural emphases, and the many forms of opposition and struggle, are important not only in themselves but as indicative features of what the hegemonic process has in practice had to work to control'. At the same time, 'the mere pluralisation of voices and traditions (a currently fashionable and sentimental gesture) is inadequate to the ultimate problem of linking repressed and master voices as the agon of history, their abiding relations of class conflict'. Arguably an oppositional criticism will always be deficient, always liable to despairing collapse, if it underestimates the extent, strategies and flexible complexity of domination. The instance of low-life sexuality in *Measure for Measure* suggests that we can never find in a repressed subculture that is most utopian of fantasies: an alternative to the dominant which is simultaneously subversive of it and self-authenticating. Of course one can, sometimes, recover history from below. But to piece together its fragments may be eventually to disclose not the self-authenticating other, but the self-division intrinsic to (and which thereby perpetuates) subordination. At other times we will listen in vain for voices from the past or search for their traces in a 'history' they never officially entered. And in the case of those who sexually transgressed in the early seventeenth century, what we recover may well tell us more about the society that demonised than about the demolished themselves. But even to be receptive to that fact involves a radical shift in awareness which is historically quite recent. And it is a shift which means that if we feel - the need to disclose the effectiveness and complexity of the ideological process of containment, this by no means implies a fatalistic acceptance that it is somehow inevitable and that all opposition is hopeless. On the contrary the very desire to disclose that process is itself oppositional and motivated by the knowledge that, formidable though it be, it is a process which is historically contingent and partial - never necessary or total. It did not, and still does not, have to be so.

12.4 Key Words

- **Invective**: insulting, abusive, or highly critical language
- **'Structuralism'**: a method of interpretation and analysis of aspects of human cognition, behavior, culture, and experience that focuses on relationships of contrast between elements in a conceptual system that reflect patterns underlying a superficial diversity
- **cultural materialism**: Cultural materialism is an anthropological research orientation first introduced by Marvin Harris in his 1968 book *The Rise of Anthropological Theory*, as a theoretical paradigm and research strategy. It is said to be the most enduring achievement of that work
- **Articulation**: the formation of clear and distinct sounds in speech
- **Didactic**: intended to teach, particularly in having moral instruction as an ulterior motive.

Unit 13: Neil, Michael: "Post-colonial Shakespeare? Writing Away From the Centre" 13.0 Introduction 13.1 Unit Objective 13.2 "Post-colonial Shakespeare? Writing Away From the Centre" 13.3 check Your Progress 13.0 Introduction This Unit presents an essay titled "Post-colonial Shakespeare? Writing Away From the Centre " adopted from the book Postcolonial Shakespeare, edited by Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin. It shall help the learners to develop a viewpoint and understanding on Shakespeare's drama further. 13.1 Unit Objective This unit presents the essay titled: titled "Post-colonial Shakespeare? Writing Away From the Centre " 13.2 "Post-colonial Shakespeare? Writing Away From the Centre" 'Shakespeare-Post-coloniality-Johannesburg, 1996' - by the very syntactical abruptness of their title, the organisers of the Witwatersrand conference appeared to register a certain scepticism about its improbably yoked terms. Was there, or could there ever be such a thing as 'postcolonial Shakespeare'? The history of colonial Shakespeare is by now well documented; and the work of Ania Loomba (1989; 1997), Martin Orkin (1987), Jyotsna Singh (1989; 1996), Gauri Viswanathan (1987;1990) and others has begun to illuminate its neo-colonial afterlife. But it is by no means clear at what point that afterlife can be said to have ended. The high period of neo-colonial Shakespeare was perfectly represented by the coronation-year tour of Australasia mounted by the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre under the direction of Anthony Quayle. The play given most prominence in this mission to the furthest outposts of British influence was, appropriately enough Othello; and in a programme note that sought to physic postwar disillusion with a mixture of Cold-War rhetoric and visionary neo imperialism, Quayle summoned the white dominions to a New Elizabethan cause. He was disarmingly frank about the key role assigned to Shakespeare in the cultural hegemony that (under the benign presidency of the British Council) was to take the place of Empire: The most remarkable characteristic of the Elizabethan age was its surging and expansive vitality. The inhabitants of a small island in the North Sea became suddenly and proudly aware of their nationhood and of their destiny, and with the energy born of that awareness they flung themselves into every possible adventure, mental, physical, and aesthetic; they fought, they built, they governed, they wrote, they explored... We who live three and a half centuries later, are the inheritors of a greatly expanded, but at the same time much more cramping world. We belong to a weary and cynical age in which exploration of any kind is the privilege of the specialist, and enterprise of any kind is increasingly shackled... the old Elizabethan zest is almost gone, but the old Elizabethan dangers remain looming greater and with more deadly import than Philip's Armada. Our heads today are so bowed with the stubborn effort to maintain our individual and national way of life that we can hardly raise them to glimpse... our place in History. Yet History has challenged us. This very year a young and gallant Queen will be crowned in Westminster... Inevitably we are the New Elizabethans, and inevitably the two epochs will one day be weighed one against the other. May ours not be the less glorious. But what are we to do, we twentieth century Elizabethans? Can we only look back regretfully to those twenty fabulous years of 1580-1600, when our nation was in the very May-day of its youth and vigour, when every horizon was unbounded?... The impulse which drove the old Elizabethans to expand outwards was one of intense nationalism: the impulse we new Elizabethans must achieve is of practical internationalism; our must not only be an outward voyage, but a drawing and binding together of what is already so far-flung... In this adventure of unification, the theatre has a great part to play, and especially the theatre of William Shakespeare - a man whose words and whose characters have become a very part of our subconscious lives, a man whose writing is so potent that it would be hard to say whether he interpreted more than moulded the English character... While the English tongue is spoken on this earth his works will stand, a mysterious and ennobling human document. ... And I find it fitting that our theatre's contribution to Her Majesty's coronation should be this visit to her farthest Dominions. ... (I hope) that you, our audience, may have some idea of the ... ardent hope which we

all share that this visit and these plays may make their contribution to the flowering of the New Elizabethan Age. (Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Tour Programme, 1953) In 1997 Quayle's successors in the shape of Adrian Noble's Royal Shakespeare Company are mounting another antipodean (relating to Australia or New Zealand) tour. Now, however, the images of imperial authority are confined to the courtly fantasies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The programme includes a full-page colour portrait of the RSC's own Faery King, in the person of the Prince of Wales, whose accompanying epistle urges the enchantments of an 'elegant and witty production', which I and my children have much enjoyed. In addition to this moving assertion of Royal Family Values, a message from the British High Commission' to promote what is euphemistically described as 'the modern and evolving relationship between Britain and New Zealand'. But in the wider publicity for the *Dream*, these relics of the imperial order have been much less conspicuous than the sponsorship of commercial backers such as the multinational Allied Domecq, and its local co-sponsors, Optus Communications and the (recently privatised) commercial radio-station, Newstalk ZB. The tour is managed by a company best known for its outdoor opera spectaculars, and the RSC is sold as 'the world's best known theatre company' in publicity that pays as much attention to their season on Broadway and their success in the Tony Awards as to their Stratford and London work. Noble's programme note, which concentrates on the commercial prowess of the RSC ('selling in excess of 1.25 million tickets for more than 2,000 performances annually') identifies Australia and New Zealand as no more than stopping points in an 'international touring programme'. In so far as it marks a partial displacement of the old centre, this is post-imperial Shakespeare of a sort, I suppose; but it can hardly be said to disturb the structures of cultural dependency for which Shakespeare has for so long been both signifier and instrument. Indeed, the sponsorship of Allied Domecq is a reminder of the missionary zeal of an earlier advocate of the spiritualizing alliance between Shakespeare and the market, Henry Clay Folger, President of Standard Oil and founder of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC. In Folger's funeral sermon, the Revd S. Parkes Cadman conjured up an extraordinary vision of Shakespeare and Folger as angelic heralds of a new imperium erected on the twin foundations of capital and culture: Perhaps you may think I am presumptuous if I should tell you what I have imagined ... (that) Will Shakespeare took Henry Clay Folger by the hand, and led him up to the blessed Christ. ... If Shakespeare is not there, who is there, after the blessed Apostles themselves? ... (Henry Folger's) dust will repose in the marble temple that will rise in Washington. His spiritual presence will overshadow it as the years come and go. The golden gates of another Renaissance will open. A new America will come, just as providential in the order of succession as that of Washington or Lincoln; an America which shall do on a wholesale scale what he did individually, which shall take the gifts of the market place and lay them without regard to cost or labour upon the altar of a more spiritualized existence for men and for nations. (Cadman et al. 1931: 18-19) It is worth keeping Cadman's prophecy in mind, I think, when contemplating what the advertisement for one of the conference seminars described, in a blandly inclusive phrase, as 'our postcolonial condition'. Anyone practising Shakespeare now is, one might argue, a denizen of the world that Folger helped to build - one that is only dubiously 'post-colonial', and scarcely 'post-imperial' at all. For those of us who dwell on the margins of the new imperial order it is, I think, important to resist the totalising implications of any claim to a common post-coloniality. Indeed, it is apparent that (as subaltern voices have increasingly insisted) there is not one 'postcolonial condition' but many: that of former colonisers differs in significant ways from that of the formerly colonised; that of Third- World societies from that of 'Fourth World' indigenes who have become minorities in their own countries; that of diasporic peoples from that of the metropolitans with whom they uneasily cohabit; and within these broad divisions there are innumerable differences determined by local combinations of class, gender, and culture. This essay necessarily comes out of my own highly particular experience as a pakeha (European) teacher of both Shakespeare and post-colonial literature in that equivocally postcolonial space known as New Zealand/Aotearoa. In it I want to argue for the importance of the local in critical practice, while at the same time suggesting that those of us who (as the Americans say) 'do Shakespeare' at the margins of Folger's world have a common interest in interrogating the designs of metropolitan criticism. 'Not wishing' to say anything derogatory', as Fluther Good remarks in Sean O'Casey's dramatised meditation on the meanings of nation, history, and 'home', 'I think it's all a question of location' (O'Casey 1957; 138).

If current theory has made us familiar with the idea that reading is always done from somewhere, it is I think equally important to reorganise that writing is always addressed to someone, and that whom you address conditions what you can say. This is, I think, what lies behind Martin Orkin's insistence that *Shakespeare Against Apartheid* was aimed specifically at 'South African students' encountering Shakespeare for the first time (Orkin 1987: 9) - just as it underlies Ania Loomba's identification of female Indian undergraduates as the primary audience for a book that consciously seeks to identify ways in which the texts can intersect with the students' 'own reality' (Loomba 1989: 11, 23, 34, 38). Yet the key chapter of Orkin's book appeared first in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, whilst *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama* was published by Manchester University Press as part of the Dollimore / Sinfield Cultural Politics series - facts that highlight the ambiguous predicament of writing from the margin in a globalised academic market. The discomfort created by the question of audience is nicely registered in the Afterword to David Johnson's recent *Shakespeare and South Africa*, where he records his awareness of 'at least four distinct audiences' for a book whose arguments were addressed 'in the first instance' to a metropolitan audience like that at which its Oxford publishers clearly aim, but whose most important 'imagined' constituency was always the South African students, 'many of whom were Xhosa speaking', who he ruefully admits are 'unlikely' ever to buy or read it (Johnson 1996: 213 - 14). Where the auspices of Loomba's book proclaim an affiliation with British cultural materialism, and Orkin cites both cultural materialists and new historicists in the list of metropolitan critics whose work has helped to map 'the future of Shakespeare studies in South Africa' (Orkin 1987: 11), Johnson's local allegiances make him properly sceptical of easy assumptions about the translatability of metropolitan theory to post-colonial contexts. Not that he, or anyone else, would underestimate the liberating effect of recent historicist work for Shakespearean on the margin. It has helped us to understand the complex ways in which Shakespeare's writing was entangled from the beginning with the projects of nation-building, Empire and colonisation; and by its uncovering of the processes through which Shakespeare was simultaneously invented as the 'National Bard' and promoted as a repository of 'universal' human values, it has shown how the canon became an instrument of imperial authority as important and powerful in its way as the Bible and the gun. In this way, it announced the possibility of a Renaissance that we could fashion to our own purposes, instead of being passively fashioned by it - a Renaissance in which the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries could be significantly relocated.

In the excitement generated by the sense of participating in a common project to re-plant Shakespeare in a historical narrative that can help to define our own sense of place, it is easy to forget, however, that the origins of the project lie elsewhere, and that its British and American practitioners address historical needs that are distinct from (though connected to) our own. Thus the British cultural materialist project was inseparable from the New Left's attempt to think its way out from under the shadow of the Empire in its final Thatcherian decadence. Greenblattian new historicism by contrast, has partly to be understood as the latest stage in a takeover bid, designed to institutionalise that shift in the centre of cultural authority from Britain to the United States, whose advent was announced in Cadman's sermon. Because the primary 'market' for which Shakespeareans on the margins must produce lies elsewhere, success can seem to depend on our speaking in an accent that is familiar to metropolitan consumers; and while it is certainly impossible (even supposing such provincialism were desirable) to insulate ourselves from this pressure, we need to be alert to the dangers of ventriloquizing the voice of metropolitan orthodoxies whose ambitions are arguably no less hegemonic than those they seek to replace. Of course, anxieties about location can sometimes produce grotesque exhibitions of self-consciousness: in a recent issue of the Australian journal *Southern Review*, for example, the author of a piece rather bafflingly entitled 'The Anti-Imperialist Approaches to Chaucer, devotes more space to analysing the semiotic implications of photograph of herself in her Anglo-Indian grandmother's sari than to her nominal subject, strategies for reading Chaucer in what she circumspectly calls 'the changing reality that is the context of "Australia": The dispersal of this narrative across my own body, made emphatic by a dark- coloured sari, draped across my own white skin, make feminist (that is, political and conflictual) agency out of the sexualised, racialised, embodied self I am constructing here. (Mead 1994: 413) Deconstruction in this instance, oddly echoing the breathless tone of fashion-writing, becomes a mode of narcissism. But the questions out of which such apologetics arise are not in themselves foolish. I would like to approach them through some reflections on Shakespeare in the South Pacific.

In 1992 the Summer Shakespeare at Auckland University provoked a small storm of controversy. Co-directed by a young Samoan director and playwright, Justine Simeï- Barton, and a well-known palagi poet and avant-garde theatre practitioner, Alan Brunton, it was a production of *Romeo and Juliet* transposed to nineteenth-century Samoa during the period of Civil War between rival branches of the ruling Malietoa family. Hostility to the production came less from conservative Shakespeareans in the university, than from certain sections of the Samoan community, among them the chief Leifi Maua Puti Faleauto, editor of the *Samoa Sun*, who read the production as 'suggesting incest' in the family of the Head of State of Western Samoa: 'It's so horrible, you know that people can die for thinkgs like this'. Simeï-Barton defended the production as an assertion of immigrant confidence, even of cultural sovereignty over the totems of palagi superiority: 'They should be really proud that we are venturing the last bastion of Western society ... we're breaking that barrier'. But for Leifi, Shakespeare could only figure as an intrusive outsider, an extravagant and wheeling stranger who could have no honest business in the Pacific, let alone in a place whose name translates as 'the Sacred Centre': Look at what it says in the Bible as an example: it says you must not add anything or take anything away ... by taking away anything it will take away all your honour, so by adding things, personally I feel that it would be wrong, because the younger generation they feel this could be their history. (Holmes' programme, NZ TVI, 13 Feb. 1992) The argument raises in a conveniently crude form a number of familiar questions regarding the place of Shakespeare in the so-called 'post-colonial' world. For Simeï- Barton, Shakespeare's play offered a vantage point for critiquing the values of her own society; for the Elder, the application of this alien fable could only result in the falsification of sacred truths - telling lies about the gods and heroes. For Simeï-Barton, as her programme note made clear, Shakespeare was infinitely translatable because he dealt in universals - versions of the *Romeo and Juliet* story existed 'in all cultures'. For the Elder, such translation could only lead to the bastardisation of 'true' Samoan culture - though it is eloquent of the complex and deeply ironized cultural history we share that he should have used Hebrew scripture to prove his point; and as Alan Brunton's programme note insisted, Shakespeare had been part of Pacific history since the early nineteenth century at least - for as long as that other Book whose authority was invoked to expel him.

Indeed, so far as the Anglophone Pacific is concerned, Shakespeare was there at the very beginning: included in the small library of mainly scientific and technical books that completed with other essential gear for accommodation in the cramped spaces of Captain Cook's *Endeavour* was a copy of the collected works of William Shakespeare. Beyond this tantalizing detail, historians have nothing to tell us: exactly who insisted on including this text and why, who read it and when, how they read it and where, and in what ways their reading was inflected by the locations in which it occurred, we can only conjecture. But it reveals a great deal, of course, about the prestige that had accrued to Shakespeare's writing since Ben Jonson had somewhat optimistically presented him, in verses attached to the 1623 Folio, as the harbinger of a new literary imperium to whom not merely 'insolent Greece' and Haughty Rome', but 'all ... Europe would defer. It also serves as a reminder of the way in which Jonson's hyperbolic imperial metaphors had, by the second half of the eighteenth century, begun to assume the appearance of fact. As it happens, Shakespeare had begun to move out along the arteries of Empire even in his own lifetime: the first production of *Hamlet* of which we have any record took place on the deck of an East India Co. ship anchored off what is now Sierra Leone in 1607-08. But between Captain Keeling's *Hamlet*, performed for the entertainment of some foreign merchants, and the stocking of the *Endeavour* library, Shakespeare had undergone a significant transformation. In 1607/08 *Hamlet* was still so much a work of popular theatre that the records do not even bother to specify the name of the dramatist: it was simply the sort of thing which the captain though would serve 'to keep my men from idleness or sleep' in the glaring mid-day sun - at most a means of performing Englishness in a disturbingly alien place, like the weirdly displaced Accession Day pageant with which the beleaguered agents of that same company had chosen to display their sense of national difference in Bantam three years before. By the time of Cook's first voyage, 160 years later, Shakespeare's writing enjoyed a very different status: it had become literature, and travelled now not merely as a prestigious written text, but as essential equipment, part of an educated man's apparatus for understanding the world, and an important talisman of the superior English culture of which he was the emissary. It seems entirely appropriate, therefore, that Cook's departure should have coincided with another key moment in the history of imperial consciousness: he set sail on the virtual eve of the David Garrick's Shakespeare Jubilee - the great patriotic pageant which formally initiated the cult of Shakespeare as the National Bard, thereby ensuring that his birthday would thenceforth be celebrated on the feastday of England's patron Saint George.

By a strange chance, then, the foundation of 'Shakespeare' as an imperial institution exactly coincides with what is sometimes thought of as the foundational moment in the history of 'New Zealand'. And that coincidence can serve as a useful metaphor for the way in which, for better or for worse, Shakespeare has been not merely part of our history, but part of the cultural apparatus by which we have learned to know that history and our place in it - for the colonisers an essential beacon of location; for the colonised, arguably, an instrument of displacement and dispossession. In the late 1960s, when I began my teaching career in Auckland, the place of Shakespeare in our syllabus appeared quite unproblematic. M.K. Joseph had recently published his *A Pound of Saffron*, a campus novel whose plot turns on the tragic exploitation of racial casting in a production of *Antony and Cleopatra* by a machiavellian British academic; but New Zealand readers seemed more interested in reading this as a roman a clef satirising members of the Auckland English Department, than as a comment on the cultural politics of South Pacific Shakespeare. Despite the strenuous efforts of other writer-academics like Bill Pearson and C.K. Stead to bring about a historical and geographical reorientation of 'English' to a specifically New Zealand context, the Department's official position was effectively defined by what would nowadays be called a 'mission statement', undertaking to introduce students to the whole sweep of English literature from *Beowulf* to the present day, 'with Shakespeare as its centre'. That no-one would now be able to use such a phrase without embarrassment is a measure of the displacement of old verities that has occurred, not merely as result of widespread changes in the discipline itself, but also as part of the local process of national self-definition that has transformed the cultural landscape of New Zealand. Yet the question of Shakespeare's local significance was not really brought home to me until the early 1980s, when I found myself having to offer a course of lectures on *Othello* for the first time. With that play I inherited a text that caused me serious problems: this was M.R. Ridley's Arden edition, whose bizarre discriminations of colour and 'contour' appeared to make it quite unsuited for class room use - except, as Martin Orkin would later demonstrate, in apartheid South Africa. In 1982 however, the British literary establishment appeared strangely unembarrassed by Ridley's effusions. When, after an unsatisfactory correspondence with the unrepentant publishers, I wrote to the *Times Literary Supplement* calling for an academic boycott of the edition, that journal refused even

to acknowledge my letters. The Arden general editor, meanwhile, honestly perplexed by the strength of my feelings, enquired whether I could not simply explain away Ridley's racist solecisms as 'an historical curiosity'; he insisted that Ridley's introduction had never caused him any difficulties as London University, but generously conceded that: 'teaching where you do, you are no doubt more sensitive to these matters than I should be'. For a long time I was baffled by the anachronistic confusion of this response: what sort of London did this man inhabit? It certainly couldn't be anything like Salman Rushdie's *Elbowendeeowen*, 'proper London, yaar!' I slowly came to recognize, however, that a significant truth was reflected in that 'teaching where you do', one that involved not simply our very different estimates of the relative importance of two paragraphs in a rather lengthy essay, but also very different ways of reading the play itself - different ways, that is to say, of discriminating between the 'central' and the marginal, ways that were themselves inflected by our own positions on a particular cultural map. To read *Othello* in New Zealand - especially in the wake of the 1981 Springbok tour which had brought the country to the brink of civil war over the 'historical curiosity' of apartheid and its vexed relation to our own colonial history - was to read a subtly different text. The issue of location highlighted by the Arden editor's incomprehension were raised again in a more systematic fashion by Ngugi wa Thiong'o's 1984 Robb Lectures on 'The Politics of Language in African Literature' - the remarkable series that would later be published as *Decolonising the Mind*. There Ngugi traced the history of his own revolt against the supposed 'centrality and universality of the English tradition', beginning with his struggle to transform the Nairobi English Department into an Afrocentric Department of Literature. Shakespeare, inevitably, was at the heart of this struggle; and Ngugi recalled how as a student he had spent innumerable seminars 'detecting ... the moral significance in every paragraph, in every word, even in Shakespeare's commas and fullstops'. Ngugi argued that the effect of presenting such writers as 'mindless geniuses whose only consistent quality was a sense of compassion' was not merely to pass off the local as the universal, but precisely to obscure their real interest and significance as artists immersed in the historical particularities of their own societies: These writers, who had the sharpest and most penetrating observations on European bourgeois culture, were often taught as if their only concern was with the universal themes of love, fear, birth, and death. Sometimes their greatness was presented as one more English gift to the world alongside the bible and the needle. William Shakespeare and Jesus Christ had brought light to

darkest Africa. There was a teacher in our school who used to say that Shakespeare and Jesus Christ used very simple English, until someone pointed out that Jesus spoke Hebrew. (Ngugi 1986: 91) The issues raised by Ngugi and his colleagues when they struggled to displace the ideological centrality of the European canon, have since been debated in all those former territories of Empire where the old cultural mappings have become increasingly discredited: John Higgins' questions in a recent issue of *The Southern African Review of Books* about the desirability of 'replacing the Anglo- or Eurocentric canon with an Afrocentric one', echo Ania Loomba's reflections on the paradox of her own writing about texts 'whose very presence in (Indian) classrooms is questionable', which in turn resonate with the current cultural studies debate in the Australian Academy. But Ngugi did not propose discarding the Western canon - his own fiction, after all, has reworked material from Shakespeare and Conrad - but changing the terms on which it was read in a way that would acknowledge both the historical and geographical particularities of its production and its entanglement in local, African history. Similar claims were implicit in a play that came out of Makerere University at the same time as Ngugi was fighting the canon-war at Nairobi. Murray Carlin's *Not Now Sweet, Desdemona* (1969), which imagines a production of *Othello* with a black West Indian and a white South African woman in the lead roles, grew out of a quarrel with criticism's systematic occlusion of the racial dimension in Shakespeare's tragedy. Through his own 'Othello' character, Carlin urges the need for an Afrocentric reading of the Moor - one that explicitly locates the play's moment of writing in relation to the building of Fort Jesus in Mombasa and the establishment of European empire in East Africa; this, he insists, is 'the first play of the Age of Imperialism' - one that 'is about colour and nothing but colour'. Yet, for all its historicizing gestures, Carlin's work falls short of 'decolonizing' Shakespeare in terms that Ngugi would accept, since it accepts the premise of a mysteriously 'universal' Shakespeare, who 'knew everything': 'William Shakespeare' - genius that he was - understood and foresaw all the problems of [the Imperial] Age'. A barely less explicit universalism provided the rationale for the intensely local reading that underpinned Janet Suzman's celebrated production of *Othello* at Johannesburg's Market Theatre in 1987. For Suzman (who would hardly dispute Dr Johnson's view of Shakespeare's characters as 'the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find'), the play 'shows us a cross-section of most societies', and in the process 'addresses the notion of apartheid 400 years before the epithet was coined'. Suzman's enthusiasm is easily mocked, but it is possible, I think, to detect a certain uneasy congruence between it and the position adopted by Martin Orkin in *Shakespeare Against Apartheid* when he insists (in spite of his own professed historicism) that *Othello* 'as it always has done, continues to oppose racism'. There were excellent tactical reasons, of course, why Orkin should have wanted to challenge the appropriative readings of Shakespearean texts imposed by a racist education system; and the equivocal cultural niche occupied by Shakespeare in the apartheid state is illustrated by Nadine Gordimer's novel *My Son's Story*. At the centre of its narrative is the activist schoolteacher, Sonny, for whom Shakespeare is a 'source of transcendence' and a privileged location of meaning outside the imprisoning definitions of the state. Believing as he does that 'with an understanding of Shakespeare there comes a release from the gullibility that makes you pray to the great shopkeeper who runs the world, and would sell you to cheap illusion, Sonny treasures the Bard both as a high-cultural bulwark against the bourgeois aspirations of the coloured community from which he comes, and as a humane corrective to the 'crudely reductive' sloganizing of the activist world: "Equality"; he went to Shakespeare for a definition with more authority than those given on makeshift platforms in the veld'. Through Shakespeare he can offer his son (whom he has named 'Will' in homage to his liberator) 'the freedom, at least, of great art'. For Will, however, who serves as Gordimer's narrator, Shakespeare, aligned as he is with the authority of the father, represents not freedom but constraint. The Bard's patriarchal role in the symbolical topography of their home is carefully delineated: 'Our house is where we are, our furniture, our things, his complete Shakespeare'; and the given name that stamps Will with his writer's destiny feels 'like a curse'. 'I'm supposed to take it as my fate, he tells his mother, 'I'm to be something you and he doesn't really want to give up? Not even for the revolution? Will signals his resistance to this inheritance by organising his narrative around an elaborate pattern of Shakespearean quotations and allusions. Culled from Sonny's battered copy of the Complete Works, these serve partly as ironic reflections of Shakespeare's totemic role in the father's house. But, in decorating Sonny's life with superficially apposite quotations from *Othello*, *Lear*, and *As You Like It*, Will also takes a malicious pleasure in exploiting the uncomfortable gap between these reminders of his father's old habit of pedantry' and the experiences to which they are applied. Faced

with the loss of his favourite daughter, for example, Sonny becomes an absurdly diminished Lear: Best thou had'st not been born, than not t'have pleased me better... Oh schoolmaster taunted by the tags of passion he didn't understand when he read them in the little son-of- sorrow house ... Beat at this gate that let thy folly in (ibid.:252) Even more suggestively in the novel's South African context, Sonny's affair with a white woman is made into a parodic replay of Othello. 'The cause was the lover, the lover the cause,' Will writes 'Oh thou weed: who art so lovely faire, and smell'st so sweet that the senses ache at thee, Would thou had'st never been born' (ibid.:223-4) Beyond Will's conscious manipulations, however, it's possible to discern an underlying pattern in which Shakespeare continues to serve as an unchallenged master text. Form *My Son's Story*, like Gordimer's earlier novel of Oedipal fixation, *Burger's Daughter*, to which it is in some sense a pendant - is itself constructed as a partial reworking of Hamlet. This larger structural irony is hardly surprising, since Gordimer, whose own criticism has consistently sought to negotiate a space for high culture within the imperatives of social and political 'responsibility', is hardly about to jettison Shakespeare as an imprisoning relic of empire, or an instrument of colonised false consciousness. The real centre of *My Son's Story* lies in the metanarrative that traces Will's own emergence as a writer, and in the process reconciles him to his roles as both biological and literary 'son'. *My Son's Story* ends in a conflagration - the burning of the home whose claim upon him Will has defiantly acknowledged to the white mob (This is my father's house), though he is 'glad to see it go'; and as he visits the fire-bombed shell with Sonny, he records 'Flock of papery cinders ... drifting, floating about use - beds, clothing - his books?' yet the burning of these books does not signify any absolute destruction, only a phoenix-like metamorphosis. For it is precisely at this point that Will breaks off his narrative to announce himself as the maker of his own book; and even though, as he wryly admits. 'It's not Shakespeare', he nevertheless claims his vocation with a last Shakespearean flourish: 'I have that within that passeth show'. This assertion has a politics to it: what Will claims to have within him is nothing less than history, the suppressed, hidden history of a rotten state, whose story (like Horatio now, rather than Hamlet) he will remain to tell: I'm going to be the one to record, someday, what ... it really was to live a life determined by the struggle to be free ... I am a writer and this is my first book'. On this level then, *My Son's Story*, both is and is not Shakespeare: a pastiche of Hamlet / Lear / Othello and something much closer to home: It's an old story - ours. My father's and mine. Love, love/hate are the most common and universal of experiences. But no two are alike, each is a fingerprint of life. That's the miracle that makes literature and links it with creation itself in the biological sense. (Ibid.: 275) What Shakespeare has come to stand for is what Gordimer has called the writer's 'essential gesture' - the integrity Chekhov demanded: 'to describe a situation so truthfully ... that the reader can no longer avoid it' (Gordimer 1988: 299). Nevertheless *My Son's Story* is certainly aware of the constricting power of culturally dominant narratives, and the ability of the Shakespeare who 'knew everything' to give us a present that seems always already known - illustrated, for example, in the routine deployment of Othello as an explanatory template for the O.J. Simpson case. In Tayeb Salih's Sudanese fable, *Season of Migration to the North*, a novel from the early phase of African decolonization, Othello appears to function solely as an instrument of destructive cultural conditioning, part of the baggage of Empire in the protagonist's secret library - that 'mausoleum' of European culture which the narrator, in another symbolic book-burning, plans to incinerate towards the end of the novel: At the break of dawn tongues of fire will devour these lies'. In what he mistakenly construes as an act of counter-appropriation, the expatriate Mustapha Sa'eed had assumed the role of Othello, exploiting its exoticism in a strategy of racial revenge upon white women. But the Choice, we have been made to see, was never really his own: on trial for the murder of his English wife, Mustapha finds himself the prisoner of a script he is unable to discard, for all the desperate insistence of his protests: 'I am no Othello. Othello was a lie! Ironically enough, Mustapha Sa'eed's escape from this narrative prison will come only in the form of an apparent suicide - an action that obliquely asks to be read (like Othello's own) as a final concession to the imperial fiction that has shaped him.

Yet Tayeb Salih's delicately poised novel is hardly unconscious of the irony that makes a knowledge of Othello an essential instrument for its own understanding. Its narrator looks forward to a time when the colonisers leave, when The railways, ships, hospitals, factories, and schools will be ours and we'll speak their language without either a sense of guilt or a sense of gratitude. Once again we shall be as we were - ordinary people - and if we are lies we shall be lies of our own making. But the novel exposes the naivety of this notion of return to a pristine world, uncontaminated by the fictions of others. Mustapha Sa'eed's books are not in the end burnt: 'Another fire would not have done any good'. The elaborate Arab-African-English palimpsest of Katarzyna Klein's cover-illustration for the paperback edition of *Season* neatly emblemizes the irredeemably hybrid condition of the world that Tayeb Sa'eed contemplates. In this it bears an interesting resemblance to the jacket design for a more recent novel whose reinscriptions of Shakespearean narrative exemplify a very different take on post-imperial hybridity - Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995). Christians, Portuguese, and Jews; Chinese tiles promoting godless views; pushy ladies, skirts-not-saris, Spanish shenanigans, Moorish crowns' sighs the eponymous narrator-protagonist contemplating the mingle-mangle of his own story, 'Can this really be India? Bharatmata, Hindustan-hamara, is this the place? Yes, he insists, 'this too is an Indian yarn ... everything in its place'. To say Indian yarn, for Rushdie, is to say tangled skein, and to invoke the properties of palimpsest is only to acknowledge the necessary dislocations of the imaginary homeland which the narrator's mother calls 'Palimpsestine', described as a 'Place where worlds collide, flow in and out of one another, and washofy away'. Palimpsestine, as these shamelessly mixed metaphors suggest, is born from a metamorphic 'sea of stories' - fictions that help to shape this hybrid world but are themselves dissolved and reshaped within it; and among the more prominent fictions that flow into the autobiographical narrative of Moraes Zogoiby (Known as Moor), are a number of Shakespeare plays, Hamlet, The Merchant of Venice, Macbeth, and once again, of course, that ur-narrative of Moorish otherness, Othello. Moraes's overbearing and manipulative mother takes advantage of his nickname in a series of paintings that include a self-portrait of entitled 'To Die upon a Kiss, where she appears as 'murdered Desdemona flung across her bed', while Moraes recognises himself

in the 'stabbed Othello falling towards her in suicidal remorse as I breathed my last. In the echo of this expiring sigh, Shakespeare's tragedy once again threatens to become a narrative template, determining Moor's destiny, much as it shaped the fate of Mustapha Sa'eed. Moraes's story, however, though it moves towards a form of narrative suicide in the announcement of his own death, actually escapes this predestined closure by anticipating a future of miraculous translations and recuperations, as it assimilates Moor's history to a whole series of well-travelled myths of return - King Arthur, Barbarossa, Finn MacCool and Rip Van Winkle. If Shakespeare's Moor has any lingering presence at the end of this expatriate fiction, it is as that briefly triumphant figure of hybridity, the extravagant and wheeling stranger' whose travellers' tales worked their entrancing spell upon his metropolitan audience. Moraes's loyalist great-grandmother, Epifania, had seen her world as the passive artefact of Empire: 'What are we but Empire's children? The British have given us everything? - Civilisation, law, order, too much; and Rushdie is slyly aware of the role assigned to Shakespeare in the cultural programming of imperial education. Moraes acknowledges his own vulnerability to that project when he repudiates the accusation that he and his kind belong to the very comprador intelligentsia envisaged by the pioneer of Indian education, Macaulay, as 'interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern'. But for Rushdie, apostle of the hybrid, the mongrel and liminal magic of 'translated people', the role of go-between is more devious and more ambiguous than Macaulay could ever have imagined: and something, he insists, is gained in the translation. 'How stories travel', reflects Rushdie's Moor as he starts to spin his Indian yarn, 'what mouths they end up in'; and for Rushdie, Shakespeare's stories, whatever the motive for bringing them to India, have become Indian fables. But there are reasons to be cautious about such hybridity. In Derek Walcott's *A Branch of the Blue Nile*, where a group of West Indians rehearse Antony and Cleopatra, a disillusioned actor voices a profound ambivalence about what it means for Shakespeare to 'end up' in her West Indian mouth: 'I wanted to please Shakespeare as much as Jesus', she says, having given up the part of Cleopatra. But they were right, the stage isn't my place... I stepped from it down to the congregation ... that's where an ambitious black woman belongs either grinning and dancing and screaming how she has

soul, or clapping and preaching and going gaga for Jesus... .. not up there contending with the great queens Causes the Caroni isn't a branch of the river Nile and Trinidad isn't Egypt, except at Carnival so the world sniggers when I speak her lines ... What do you think? You think that I don't miss her, the way a jug needs water? That my tongue feels parched sometimes, just to repeat her lines? How do you think it feels to carry her corpse inside my body the way a woman can carry a stillborn child inside her and still know it... My body was invaded by that queen Her gaze made everywhere a desert. When I got up in the morning, when I walked to work, I found myself walking in pentameter... .. I heard my blood Whispering like the Nile, its branches, Instead of traffic. ... Egypt was my death. (Walcott 1986: 284 - 5) A similar ambivalence can be detected, I think, in a fascinating but curiously fractured play performed by Auckland's Theatre at Large in 1994: *Manawa Taua/Savage Hearts* employed a pastiche of idioms and conventions, including music hall routines, melodrama, Victorian Shakespeare, and Maori performance arts influenced improvisational theatre, to create a fantastical version of Shakespeare's translation to colonial New Zealand. Stunning as *Manawa Tawa* was in performance, its surviving texts reveal a great deal about the contradictions in the cultural politics of Shakespearean appropriation. As its double title suggested, the play was conceived by Christian Penny, co-director of the company, as a self-consciously bicultural project: Penny, himself part-Maori, but fundamentally pakeha in his cultural affiliations, had envisaged a 'cross-cultural nineteenth-century love-story', using *Othello* as a kind of template, whose effect would be to challenge what he saw as the dangerously separatist rhetoric of contemporary racial politics. For this he commissioned the dramatist David Geary, whose bulky script was worshipped and extensively cut before being rewritten by the Maori playwright Willie Davis, whose job was 'to get the Maori side right'. Davis's draft was then itself completely transformed in rehearsal - through improvisational sessions with bicultural cast under the direction of Penny and his co-director opened up which left the two playwrights at odds with the directors and with each other, and the cast itself divided along broadly ethnic lines. In the end these divisions seem to have been resolved only by an extraordinary agreement to suppress the play at the end of its highly successful run, so that it would neither be published nor made available for further performance. At the heart of the dispute lay a deep disagreement about the kinds of stories it was appropriate to tell about our history - a disagreement in which Shakespeare's ur-narrative of miscegenation was profoundly implicated. *Manawa Taua* is plotted around the brilliantly theatrical fable of a nineteenth century Maori chief who, on visiting Queen Victoria to seek redress for land grievances, is promised help provided he agrees to return to New Zealand with a troupe of Shakespearean actors who are planning a tour of the colonies (starting with Scotland). More than royal caprice is involved: the play they are to perform is *Othello*, and Tupou, the rangatira, is to be cast as the Moor. It would seem most apt, says the Queen, 'in that *Othello* deals with the savage heart. No offence ...' Her promise, she insists 'will mean absolutely nothing, have no weight whatsoever until you perform *Othello* in New Zealand'. As a result of this casting, Tupou finds himself progressively drawn into an affair with his Desdemona, Lottie Folly, wife of the company's actor-manager (and usual *Othello*), Red Folly. What ensues is a curiously refracted replay of Shakespeare's story, leading to a predictable catastrophe in which life and performance become entirely confused: goaded by the jealous husband, who has adopted the role of Iago, Tupou strangles his lover whilst speaking *Othello*'s words. But no sooner has he performed this ventriloquized murder, than the play abruptly repudiates Lottie's 'romantic tragic Shakespearean death' in favour of an alternative comic ending. Lottie revives, and the three principles unite to punish a renegade member of their company who has busily been appropriating Maori land. In this triumph of bicultural goodwill, love, along with their production of Shakespeare's play, reigns victorious. By choosing our histories, the play appears to suggest we can choose our present. But as the ironic wit of Tupou's exchange with Victoria suggests, there are elements in *Manawa Taua* that sit rather uneasily with this soft-focus postmodernism- and they turn out to involve rather different notions of Shakespeare's place in our history.

Having sworn upon the Bible to give her protection to the Maori, Victoria secures Tupou's compliance with what she calls their 'verbal treaty' by making him swear on another 'book of great power' - more powerful, she suggests, than holy scripture itself: it is, of course, a copy of the Complete Works of Shakespeare. By linking Shakespeare's text with two other hermeneutically contentious documents - the Bible and the Treaty of Waitangi, which established imperial sovereignty by simultaneously affirming the contradictory principles of British governorship and Maori chieftainship - Manawa Taua associates it with a politics of reading that is first articulated by Tupou when he converses with Victoria about the teachings of Jesus: I like your Bible. It has good stories. Some of them are very similar to our own... But you English all read it differently. Wesleyans ... one way. Anglicans another. Methodists. Catholics. So many meanings all from one book ... Just like your Treaty. Implicit in Tupou's puzzlement is the same notion of meaning as single, essential, and given, rather than multiple and constructed, which informs his shipboard argument with a member of the crew who argues that Polynesians must have arrived in New Zealand by accident: 'Even if we weren't able to navigate', he replies, 'we would've been guided by our guardian. By our spirit. - What kind of compass is that? - The one that's in our heart. - How do you read that? How do you plot it? - You don't read it, you listen to it. You don't plot it, you trust it. No wonder that Tupou should find himself repeating, as a kind of chant, Othello's essentialist assertion of identity 'I am found. / My parts, my title, and my perfect soul / Shall manifest me rightly'. On this level Manawa Taua is a play about the power of words, and about conflicting ideas of the sources of that power: one sacramental, the other instrumental. At one point in the action, shortly after her 'murder', Tupou and Lottie actually engage in a ferocious but indecisive flyting-match, hurling chunks of Shakespearean text and chants at one another. Significantly, however, this element in the play was substantially purged from the version staged at the Waterland. I have concentrated on reworkings of Shakespeare in this some-what disparate group of texts because they help to explain why it is that, even in more consciously 'post-colonial' academics, the decentering of Shakespeare has generally been more rhetorical than real. This seeming paradox can be attributed partly, of course, to factors that are structural to the profession and to the globalised intellectual market in which it operates. But, as the texts I have been discussing all illustrate, the long and complicated history of Shakespeare's entanglement with Empire has ensured that his work has become deeply constitutive of all of us for whom the world is shaped by the English language - or, in the wicked revealing phrase that adorns Saleem Sinai's tin globe in *Midnight's Children*, 'made as England'. Through four hundred years of imperializing history our Anglophone cultures have become so saturated with Shakespeare that our ways of thinking about such basic issues as nationality, gender, and racial difference are inescapably inflected by his writing. A recent issue of *The Guardian Weekly* made easy fun out of the fact that Shakespeare was still being taught at the University of Cape Town. But I would argue that the historicization of Shakespeare that has taken palace over the last two decades ought to make the study of his work in an antipodean context a more rather than less urgent priority. To cut oneself off from Shakespeare in the name of a decolonizing politics is not to liberate oneself from the tyranny of the past, but to pretend that the past does not exist. The question that needs to be resolved is not whether but how he should be taught.

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Unit 4: A Midsummer Night's Dream - I 4.0 Introduction
 4.1 Objectives 4.2 Comedy: Its origin and journey 4.2.1
 Various Kinds of Comedy: Classical Comedy 4.2.2
 Comedy of Manners 4.2.3 Comedy of Humours 4.2.4
 Comedy of Intrigue 4.2.5 The Divine Comedy 4.2.6
 Romantic Comedy: Shakespearean Comedy 4.3
 Shakespeare's Life: Formative Influences 4.3.1.
 Shakespeare's works: Different Phases of Career 4.4 A
 Mental Voyage to Elizabethan Times: Renaissance and Its
 Impact 4.4.1 Shakespearean Theatre / Stage 4.5 Audience
 4.6 Shakespeare: Criticism Down the ages 4.7 Summary
 4.8 Self-Assessment Questions

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Unit 5: A Midsummer Night's Dream II 5.0 Introduction 5.1
 Objectives 5.2 Act wise Analysis of The Play 5.3 A
 Historical Perspective 5.4 Plot: A Triumph of Construction
 5.5 What is the Play About? 5.5.1 The Theme of Love 5.5.2
 Marriage as a Comic Closure 5.5.3 The Theme of Conflict
 5.6 Analyzing the Characters 5.6.1 Theseus and Hippolyta
 5.6.3 The Lovers : Helena and Hermia and Demetrius and
 Lysander 5.7 Summing up 5.8 Self-Assessment

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Unit 6: A Midsummer Night's Dream - III 6.0 Introduction
 6.1 Objectives 6.2 The World of Fairies: Oberon and
 Titania 6.3 The Athenian Workmen and Bottom 6.4 The
 Play: Is It Not -a Dream? 6.5 The Issue of Exclusion 6.5.1
 Marginals/Subalterns 6.5.2 Patriarchy, Shakespeare and
 Global Girlhood 6.6

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The Tempest-I 1.1 Introduction 1.2 Objectives 1.3 Shakespeare at a Glance 1.3.1 Early Years 1.3.2 Arrival at London and Shakespeare's Theatrical Career 1.3.3 As an Actor and Playwright 1.3.4 His Last Years 1.4 Shakespeare's Publications 1.4.1 Comedies 1.4.2 History Plays 1.4.3 Tragedies 1.4.4 Last Collaborations 1.5 Literary Qualities of Shakespeare's Plays 1.5.1 Shakespeare's Characters 1.5.2 Shakespeare's Attitudes 1.5.3 Shakespeare's Stagecraft 1.5.4 Shakespeare's Language and Writing Style 1.6 Literary Reputation 1.7 Tempest: A Critical Introduction 1.8 Major Characters 1.0

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Introduction William Shakespeare English playwright, poet and a professional man of theater, is regarded as the greatest dramatist in the history of English literature. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon." Shakespeare had a profound understanding of human nature and human behavior and was able to communicate this knowledge through the wide variety of characters he created in his plays. Elizabethan tragedy and comedy alike reached their true flowering in Shakespeare's works. Beyond his art, his rich style, and his complex plots, all of which surpass by far the work of other Elizabethan dramatists in the same field, and beyond his unrivaled projection of character, Shakespeare's compassionate understanding of the human lot has perpetuated his greatness and made him the most representative figure of English literature.

1.2 Objectives

After going through the unit, you will be able to:

- Get familiar with the Shakespeare life and his work.
- Examine Shakespeare's use of language, stage craft and character.
- Evaluate Shakespeare as a great dramatist of the Elizabethan age.
- Develop an understanding of The Tempest which is considered to be one of the finest plays by Shakespeare.

1.3 Shakespeare at a Glance

Shakespeare composed his plays during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, who ruled England from 1558 to 1603, and during the early part of the reign of her closest relative, James VI of Scotland, who took England's throne as James I after Elizabeth's death in 1603. During this period England saw an outpouring of poetry and drama, led by Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Christopher Marlowe, that remains unsurpassed in English literary history.

1.3.1 Early Years

William Shakespeare was the son of John Shakespeare, a successful glover and alderman originally from Snitterfield, and Mary Arden, the daughter of an affluent landowning farmer. He was born in Stratford-upon-Avon and baptized on 26 April 1564. His actual birthdate is unknown, but is traditionally observed on 23 April, St George's Day. This date, which can be traced back to an eighteenth-century scholar's mistake, has proved appealing because Shakespeare died on 23 April 1616. He was the third child of eight and the eldest surviving son. Although no attendance records for the period survive, most biographers agree that Shakespeare was educated at the King's New School in Stratford, a free school chartered in 1553, about a quarter of a mile from his home. Grammar schools varied in quality during the Elizabethan era, but the curriculum was dictated by law throughout England, and the school would have provided an intensive education in Latin grammar and the classics. At the age of 18, Shakespeare married the 26-year-old Anne Hathaway. Six months after the marriage, she gave birth to a daughter, Susanna, who was baptized on 26 May 1583. Twins, son Hamnet and daughter Judith, followed almost two years later and were baptized on 2

February 1585. Hamnet died of unknown causes at the age of 11 and was buried on 11 August 1596. After the birth of the twins, there are few historical traces of Shakespeare until he is mentioned as part of the London theatre scene in 1592. Because of this gap, scholars refer to the years between 1585 and 1592 as Shakespeare's "lost years". Biographers attempting to account for this period have reported many apocryphal stories. Nicholas Rowe, Shakespeare's first biographer, recounted a Stratford legend that Shakespeare fled the town for London to escape prosecution for deer poaching. Another eighteenth-century story has Shakespeare starting his theatrical career minding the horses of theatre patrons in London. John Aubrey reported that Shakespeare had been a country schoolmaster.

1.3.2 Arrival at London and Shakespeare's Theatrical Career

It is not known exactly when Shakespeare began writing, but contemporary allusions and records of performances show that several of his plays were on the London stage by 1592. He was well enough known in London by then to be attacked in print by the playwright Robert Greene: "...there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tiger's heart wrapped in a Player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes factotum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a country." Scholars differ on the exact meaning of these words, but most agree that Greene is accusing Shakespeare of reaching above his rank in trying to match the university-educated writers, such as Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Nashe and Greene himself. The phrase parodying the line "Oh, tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's hide" from Shakespeare's *Henry VI, part 3*, along with the pun "Shake-scene", identifies Shakespeare as Greene's target. Greene's attack is the first recorded mention of Shakespeare's career in the theatre. Biographers suggest that his career may have begun any time from the mid-1580s to just before Greene's remarks. From 1594, Shakespeare's plays were performed only by the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a company owned by a group of players, including Shakespeare that soon became the leading playing company in London. After the death of Queen Elizabeth in 1603, the company was awarded a royal patent by the new king, James I, and changed its name to the King's Men. In 1599, a partnership of company members built their own theatre on the south bank of the Thames, which they called the Globe. In 1608, the partnership also took over the Blackfriars indoor theatre. Records of Shakespeare's property purchases and investments indicate that the company made him a wealthy man. In 1597, he bought the second-largest house in Stratford, New Place, and in 1605, he invested in a share of the parish tithes in Stratford. Some of Shakespeare's plays were published in quarto editions from 1594. By 1598, his name had become a selling point and began to appear on the title

pages. Shakespeare continued to act in his own and other plays after his success as a playwright. The 1616 edition of Ben Jonson's Works names him on the cast lists for *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and *Sejanus, His Fall* (1603). The absence of his name from the 1605 cast list for Jonson's *Volpone* is taken by some scholars as a sign that his acting career was nearing its end. The First Folio of 1623, however, lists Shakespeare as one of "the Principal Actors in all these Plays", some of which were first staged after *Volpone*, although we cannot know for certain what roles he played. In 1610, John Davies of Hereford wrote that "good Will" played "kingly" roles. In 1709, Rowe passed down a tradition that Shakespeare played the ghost of Hamlet's father. Later traditions maintain that he also played Adam in *As You Like It* and the Chorus in *Henry V*, though scholars doubt the sources of the information. Shakespeare's poetry rather than his plays reached print first: *Venus and Adonis* in 1593 and *The Rape of Lucrece* in 1594. These two fashionably erotic narrative poems were probably written to earn money as the theaters were closed from the summer of 1592 to the spring of 1594 because of plague, and Shakespeare's normal source of income was thus denied him. Even so, the two poems, along with the Sonnets, established Shakespeare's reputation as a gifted and popular poet. Shakespeare dedicated the two poems to Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton. Scholars disagree on whether the dedications are evidence of a close relationship between Shakespeare and Southampton. Literary dedications were designed to gain financial support from wealthy men interested in fostering the arts, and it is probable that Southampton rewarded Shakespeare for his two poems. Both poems became best-sellers—*The Rape of Lucrece* appearing in eight editions by 1632, *Venus and Adonis* in a remarkable 16 editions by 1636—and both were widely quoted and often imitated. The Sonnets were not published until 1609, but as early as 1598, a contemporary, Francis Meres, praised Shakespeare as a "mellifluous and honey-tongued" poet equal to the Roman Ovid, praising in particular his "sugared sonnets" that were circulating "among his private friends." The 154 sonnets describe the devotion of a character, often identified as the poet himself, to a young man whose beauty and virtue he praises and to a mysterious and faithless dark lady with whom the poet is infatuated. The sonnets are prized for their exploration of love in all its aspects. Sonnet 18, which begins "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day," ranks among the most famous love poems of all time.

1.3.3 Actor and Playwright Shakespeare's reputation today

is, however, based primarily on the 38 plays that he wrote, modified, or collaborated on. Records of Shakespeare's plays begin to appear in 1594, when the theaters reopened with the passing of the plague that had closed them for 21 months. In December of 1594 his play *The Comedy of Errors* was performed in London during

the Christmas revels at Gray's Inn, one of the London law schools. In March of the following year he received payment for two plays that had been performed during the Christmas holidays at the court of Queen Elizabeth I by his theatrical company, known as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. The receipt for payment, which he signed along with two fellow actors, reveals that he had by this time achieved a prominent place in the company. He was already probably a so-called sharer, a position entitling him to a percentage of the company's profits rather than merely a salary as an actor and a playwright. In time the profits of this company and its two theaters, the Globe Theatre, which opened in 1599, and the Blackfriars, which the company took over in 1608, enabled Shakespeare to become a wealthy man. Shakespeare wrote nearly all of his plays from 1590 to 1611, when he retired to New Place. A series of history plays and joyful comedies appeared throughout the 1590s, ending with *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. At the same time as he was writing comedy, he also wrote nine history plays, treating the reigns of England's medieval kings and exploring realities of power still relevant today. The great tragedies—including *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*—were written during the first decade of the 1600s. All focus on a basically decent individual who brings about his own downfall through a tragic flaw. Scholars have theorized about the reasons behind this change in Shakespeare's vision, and the switch from a focus on social aspects of human activity to the rending experience of the individual. But no one knows whether events in his own life or changes in England's circumstances triggered the shift, or whether it was just an aesthetic decision. Shakespeare's only son, Hamnet, had died in 1596 at the age of 11, his father died in 1601, and England's popular monarch, Elizabeth I, died in 1603, so it is not unreasonable to think that the change in Shakespeare's genre and tone reflects some change in his own view of life prompted by these events. In his last years working as a playwright, however, Shakespeare wrote a number of plays that are often called romances or tragicomedies, plays in which the tragic facts of human existence are fully acknowledged but where reassuring patterns of reconciliation and harmony can be seen finally to shape the action. Shakespeare's plays were performed at the courts of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I more frequently than those of any other dramatist of that time. Shakespeare risked losing royal favor only once, in 1599, when his company performed "the play of the deposing and killing of King Richard II" at the request of a group of conspirators against Elizabeth. In the subsequent inquiry, Shakespeare's company was absolved of any knowing participation in the conspiracy. Although Shakespeare's plays enjoyed great popularity with the public, most people did not consider them literature. Plays were merely popular entertainments, not unlike the movies today.

1.3.4 Last Years After about 1608,

Shakespeare began to write fewer plays. For most of his working life he wrote at least two plays a year; by 1608 he had slowed usually to one a year, even though the acting company continued to enjoy great success. In 1608, the King's Men, as his company was called after King James took the throne, began to perform at Blackfriars, an indoor theater that charged higher prices and drew a more sophisticated audience than the outdoor Globe. An indoor theater presented possibilities in staging and scenery that the Globe did not permit, and these can be recognized in the late plays. In 1613, a great fire destroyed the Globe Theatre during a performance of *Henry VIII*. Although the Globe was quickly rebuilt, Shakespeare's association with it—and probably with the company—had ended. Around the time of the fire, Shakespeare retired to Stratford, where he had established his family and become a prominent citizen. Shakespeare's daughter Susanna had married John Hall, a doctor with a thriving practice in Stratford, in 1607. His younger daughter, Judith, married a Stratford winemaker, Thomas Quiney, in 1616. Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616—the month and day traditionally assigned to his birth— and was buried in Stratford's Holy Trinity Church. He had made his will the previous month, "in perfect health and memory." The cause of his death is not known, though a report from the Holy Trinity's vicar in the 1660s claims that he "died of a fever ... contracted after a night of drinking with Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, friends and fellow writers." Shakespeare left the bulk of his estate to his daughter Susanna and the sum of 300 pounds to his daughter Judith. The only specific provision for his wife was their "second-best bed with the furniture" although customary practice allowed a widow one-third of the estate. Shakespeare also left money for "the poor of Stratford," and remembered the three surviving original members of his acting company, Richard Burbage, John Heminges, and Henry Condell, with small grants to buy memorial rings. Shakespeare's wife, Anne, died on August 6, 1623. She lived long enough to see a monument to her husband erected in Holy Trinity Church, but she died just before the publication of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, the more lasting monument to his memory. Soon after her death, Susanna and John Hall moved into New Place, where they lived until their deaths, his in 1635 and hers in 1649. Their daughter, Elizabeth Hall, died childless in 1670. Judith Quiney had three sons, but none lived long enough to produce heirs, and she died in 1662. Thus, by 1670, the line of Shakespeare's descendants had reached its end. 1.4

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Unit 2: The Tempest-II 2.0 Introduction 2.1 Objectives 2.2 The Tempest: Analysis of some of the Important Scenes 2.2.1 The Tempest Act I, Scene I 2.2.2 The Tempest Act I, Scene ii 2.2.3 The Tempest Act II, Scene iii 2.2.4 The Tempest Act II, Scene iv 2.2.5 The Tempest Act III, Scene v 2.2.6 The Tempest Act III, Scene vi 2.2.7 The Tempest Act III, Scene vii 2.2.8 The Tempest Act IV, Scene I 2.2.9 The Tempest Act V, Scene i 2.3 Theme of the Play 2.3.1 The Illusion of Justice 2.3.2 The Difficulty of Distinguishing "Men" from "Monsters" 2.3.3 The Allure of Ruling a Colony 2.4 Motifs of the Play 2.4.1 Masters and Servants 2.4.2 Water and Drowning 2.4.3 Mysterious Noises 2.5 Symbols in the Play 2.5.1 The Tempest 2.5.2 The Game of Chess 2.5.3 Prospero's Books 2.0

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Unit 3: The Tempest- III 3.0 Introduction 3.1 Objectives 3.2 Character Analysis of Major Characters: 3.2.1 Prospero 3.2.2 Caliban 3.2.3 Miranda 3.2.4 Gonzalo 3.2.5 Ariel 3.2.6 King Alonso of Naples 3.2.7 Ferdinand 3.2.8 Sebastian and Antonio 3.3 Dramatic Structure 3.3.1 Post Colonial Interpretation 3.3.2 Feminist Interpretation 3.4 Summing Up 3.0

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Unit 4: A Midsummer Night's Dream - I 4.0 Introduction
4.1 Objectives 4.2 Comedy: Its origin and journey 4.2.1
Various Kinds of Comedy: Classical Comedy 4.2.2
Comedy of Manners 4.2.3 Comedy of Humours 4.2.4
Comedy of Intrigue 4.2.5 The Divine Comedy 4.2.6
Romantic Comedy: Shakespearean Comedy 4.3
Shakespeare's Life: Formative Influences 4.3.1.
Shakespeare's works: Different Phases of Career 4.4 A
Mental Voyage to Elizabethan Times: Renaissance and Its
Impact 4.4.1 Shakespearean Theatre / Stage 4.5 Audience
4.6 Shakespeare: Criticism Down the ages 4.7

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Introduction As is obvious, to recreate oneself is one of our necessities since time immemorial. Today, we are living in a world facilitated by hi-tech gadgetries as C.Ds, D.V.Ds, ipads, android phones, cinema, internet etc. to cater our taste buds for entertainment. Did you ever think that before the invention of these gadgets how did people recreate themselves? Going back to history we find that besides listening to great orators and old wives tales, people were introduced to a very different form of art, the 'Drama'. Beginning of Drama in England is around eighth century when Saxon Kings ruled in various kingdoms into which the land was then divided, and print media was nowhere in existence. The church thought of play acting as a means of instruction to impart the important lessons for life and religion to the illiterate villagers in an interesting manner so that they could chew upon the moral or religious principles and be entertained simultaneously. These dramatized versions of episodes from the Bible were called Miracle plays and Morality plays. This effort of clergy made the teachings of Bible more accessible to the common people. As more characters were introduced and the performances became elaborate they shifted from church to churchyard and so into streets. In cause of time, developing from morality plays and Interludes, drama established itself at the royal court and in the households of nobility and the characters took a shift from merely moral types to actual persons. Another influence was the Greek drama. The tragedies of Aeschylus and Seneca, the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus, had been composed centuries earlier. Their works were regarded by scholars as the supreme models of drama. The learned Aristotle had framed rules of dramatic construction, and those came to be called Aristotle's Unities. All men like to be amused, to have fun and to see wonderful things. Drama in the broader perspective provides the glimpse of life. Audience correlate their life and its experiences with that of the actors in the drama, at times being purgated or purified, having released such emotions which could else had been heavy on them. Thus, it aims to be reformative or corrective. In this unit, we will enjoy reading a comedy crudely defined as a play with a happy ending. The comedy that we will read is A Mid Summer Night's Dream by one of the greatest playwright William Shakespeare.

4.1 Objectives After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand comedy and its various types.
- Differentiate between the classical and romantic comedy.
- Appreciate the life of Shakespeare and its formative influences.
- Understand world of Shakespeare's comedies.
- Analyze different phases of Shakespeare's Career tracing his evolution as a dramatist.

4.2 Comedy:

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Self-Assessment Questions 1. 'A writer is the product of his age' to what an extent is this true in case of Shakespeare? 2. Prepare a write up on the contemporary writers of Shakespeare. In what ways are Shakespeare's plays different from theirs? 3. Does the modern stage bear any similarity to the stage in Elizabethan times? Discuss.

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Unit 5: A Mid Summer Night's Dream II 5.0 Introduction 5.1 Objectives 5.2 Act wise Analysis of The Play 5.3 A Historical Perspective 5.4 Plot: A Triumph of Construction 5.5 What is the Play About? 5.5.1 The Theme of Love 5.5.2 Marriage as a Comic Closure 5.5.3 The Theme of Conflict 5.6 Analyzing the Characters 5.6.1 Theseus and Hippolyta 5.6.3 The Lovers : Helena and Hermia and Demetrius and Lysander 5.7 Summing up 5.0

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Summing Up In this unit you got familiarized with: • The narrative of the play. • Shakespeare's art of plot construction and characterization. • Shakespeare's handling of theme of love. You now know how skillfully Shakespeare weaves together the elements that serve the palate of his audience comprised of almost all the sections of society. The story of Theseus and Hippolyta, of Helena and Hermia, of Demetrius and Lysander and the reference to Athenian workmen cater to the aristocracy, the middle class and the poor men respectively. To this is added the invisible world of fairies and dreams. It goes to the credit of Shakespeare that he brings together the ancient, medieval and the modern world. The conflict ensues between the upholders of the traditional conventions and those resisting them. The romantic world of lovers and the realistic world of the rude mechanicals are seen together bringing out their sharp contrast. 5.8 Self Assessment Questions 1.

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How does Shakespeare weave together the three distinct worlds - that of court, streets and dreams. 2. Write a note on how the theme of love is treated in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 3. Compare and contrast Helena and Hermia. 4. Demetrius and Lysander are two typical lovers. Discuss. 5. What role do Theseus and Hippolyta play in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 6.

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What do you mean by plot? How is it different from a story? 7. How do you know that the play was written to be staged during wedding festivities? Find out the textual references. 8. Gather information about the three distinctly projected classes Shakespeare refers to namely the aristocracy, the commoners and fairies. 9. Which of the following does Oberon want that Titania should refuse to give him? o Her attendant, an Indian Prince. o Her magic Wand o Her maid in waiting o Her Love

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Unit 6: A Mid Summer Night's Dream - III 6.0 Introduction
6.1 Objectives 6.2 The World of Fairies: Oberon and Titania 6.3 The Athenian Workmen and Bottom 6.4 The Play: Is It Not -a Dream? 6.5 The Issue of Exclusion 6.5.1 Marginals/Subalterns 6.5.2 Patriarchy, Shakespeare and Global Girlhood 6.6

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The Issue of Exclusion There is a common understanding that Elizabethan literature focuses upon the aristocracy and forwards the ideology of the upper classes. Shakespeare's days too have been criticized by Post colonial critics for endorsing the discourse of colonialism. Crosby in his analysis concludes that Shakespeare failed to catch the restlessness, uneasiness and anxiety of the subaltern which figure prominently in his contemporary writers. Shakespeare has often been denigrated as anti-democratic and contemptuous of the crowd. That he was an unfailing supporter of the Elizabethan social hierarchy, however, reveals only the half truth. In fact, while writing plays, Shakespeare was governed only by certain factors – marketability, taste and choice of the audience, stage ability, patronage, and political as well as economic constraints. Even a cursory glance at Shakespeare's plays would suggest that he was writing for a most heterogeneous kind of audience comprising both the vulgar 'and the refined'. In *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, besides the fairy world, the three layered social hierarchy he introduces is as follows:

- Theseus, the Duke of Athens and Hippolyta form the first social stratum.
- Lysander, Demetrius, Egeus, Helena, Hermia, the noblemen and women of the Duke's Court.
- Plebians like Bottom, Quince, Flute, Starveling, Tom Snout, Smug etc.

Evidently, characters in the third category form the lower class or the excluded class. Their subordination is implicit in the class they belong to; thus Bottom is a weaver; Flute is a bellow mender with the falsetto voice; Quince is a carpenter and Starveling is a tailor. Puck refers to their inferior rank by calling them 'a crew of patches, rude mechanicals/ that work for bread'. They are 'hempen home spuns' and are outside the established structures of political representation. Economically deprived, they form the class of marginals. Bottom's following speech brings to surface the deep cleavage between the high and the low classes: In any case, let Thisbe have clean linen, and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And most dear actors, eat no onion or garlic (11.ii.35-9) The dialogues of the rustics reflect the constrictions of the class. Frightening the ladies, forcing them shriek, presenting a lion among ladies are practices which invoke punishment. Incorporated in the text are the measures through which aristocracy maintains its stronghold. The dominant section as is revealed in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* uses not only religion, tradition and culture but also the political and bureaucratic powers and if nothing works also indulges in violence to perpetuate its dominant position. Bottom's rebellious gestures appear subversive in intent and are seen as challenging the power of the aristocracy. Barbar, however adds another dimension to Bottom's challenges. In *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*, he notices the conflict between the two

aesthetics – the archaic, amateur, folk theatre and the mature Elizabethan theatre. Referring to the theatre of Elizabethan times, he evinces in his study how the festive or folk elements in Shakespeare's plays were appropriated and absorbed by the mature theatre, 'Shakespeare's theatre was taking over on professional and everyday basis functions which until his time had largely been performed by amateurs on holidays his comedy presents holiday magic as imagination, games as expressive gestures' J.D. Palmer finds in Bottom's famous protest to the Duke, 'an artist's anxiety to be well understood'. However, studied from the point of view of Exclusion, the protest offers a problematization of the question of representation of subalterns. Subalterns are pushed to the margins and are denied recognition. Recognition is a question of social status. Theseus' interruption opens a conflictual space and reveals Court's hegemonic ends: Pyramus: O, wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss. Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me! Theseus: The Wall, Me thinks, being sensible, should curse again. Pyramus: No in truth, sir he should not 'Deceiving me' is Thisbe's cue You shall see it will fall pat I as told you. (V.I.174-81) 6.5.1

Marginals/Subalterns Studied from the point of view of the theory of subalternity, Bottom's challenge appears as his bid to wrest initiative and settle scores with the Duke. Again, studied from the point of view of Exclusion theory, various conventions and techniques of traditional drama such as use of dreams, mixing of human and non-human world, use of masks etc open up channels of inclusion in the larger society. Queen's infatuation in dream for a lower category person i.e. Bottom suggests a breakdown of categories. Victor Turner's Theory of Communitas (The Ritual Process : 1969) too seems to suggest that ass's head that Bottom wears is not merely a comic attribute. It suggests lower class's rising aspirations to break the hierarchy of the class. Shakespeare's picture of Elizabethan society evidently represents social, economic and cultural chasm between the two groups-elites and non-elites. By depicting the protest and resistance of the subaltern class, Shakespeare hints at the fissures, fractures and 'rupture' of social bonds. It is quite interesting to note that the implicit suggestion of resistance in mechanical's amateur theatrical in A Mid Summer Night's Dream, said to have been written between 1590-96 can be traced to the popular uprisings taking place in Elizabethan times. Underscoring an automatic assumption of an equation between crises and rebellion, such uprisings offer invaluable insights into the subtle dynamics of power. Uprisings, in fact, are seen as attempts to generate opportunities for the socially excluded. In his famous study, Theodore B. Leinwand links Titania's lament and the artisans' presence with the 'anti- enclosure riot of distinctly violent proportions generally referred to as the Oxford shire rising of 1596'. Incidentally, the leaders of this uprising were all artisans,

the main being Bartholomew Stere, a carpenter and Richard Bradshaw, a miller. Sharp Buchanan (1980) too refers to forty food riots in west of England during 1586-1631. Brian Manner, another Shakespearean scholar refers to several such disturbances in 1595 alone, one being initiated by a silk weaver. With such a scenario, it is but natural for a dramatist to insert such social and cultural signs of unusual economic distress. Seen in this context, it is also not without reason why Shakespeare picked up Bottom, the weaver as the leader to play such an important role in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*. In short, deconstructing Shakespeare's play in the context of narratives of exclusion subalternity helps in understanding the hegemonic grammar of social and political order.

6.5.2 Patriarchy, Shakespeare and the Global Girlhood:

Women, especially in Shakespeare's comedies do take a central stage- there is no doubt about it. Though Hippolyta, Hermia, Helena and Queen cannot be equated with Shakespeare's heroines in other plays in terms of fully grown characters, yet they play – significant roles in *A Mid Summer Night's Dream*. Hermia and Helena openly defy the existing patriarchal rulings and dare to disregard the father's advice in matrimonial matters. As a typical Elizabethan father, Egeus is privileged with double fold rights - he can restrain Hermia, his daughter from marrying a man 'he' disapproves and again forcing her into an alliance which 'he' favours: As she is mine, I may dispose of her; Which shall be either to this gentleman, Or to her death, according to our law Immediately provided in that case. (I. i. 42-45) Theseus' advice to Hermia "To you, your father should be as a God" (I.i. 47) throws to the wind, "renaissance precepts of companionate marriage." Again Theseus' reprimand exposes the general attitude of the age. The father is one: that composed your beauties, yea, and one To whom you are but as a form in wax (I.i 48-49) It is his prerogative, "To leave the figure, or disfigure it" (I. 151). Evidently, here is strong suggestion that patriarchal postulations will not spare Hermia's individual resolution – she will have to die or she will remain cloistered rest of her life "chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon" (I.i.73). Elizabethan society bears similarity to our society in that here girls are assigned that much liberty as the patriarchy feels justified to, not more. However, signs of rebellion do exist and when Lysander proposed elopement, "If thou lov'st me then/Steal forth thy father's house tomorrow night" (I.i.163-64). Hermia readily agrees to go to a place where "Athenian law/cannot pursue (i.i.462-63)". However, she sticks to preserve her chastity and virginity, ideals so important in Elizabethan age. Helena's dilemma illustrates another form of patriarchal repression. She casts off her feminine conventions without upholding her dignity, "I am your spaniel; and Demetrius, The more you beat me, I will fawn on you" (II.ii 202-03). It is she who is victimized even by Puck – actually she seems to suffer from persecution mania. In the relationship between Oberon

and Titania, you can read signs of struggles regarding political supremacy as well as sexual subordination. Oberon's displeasure at Titania's excessive fondness for a 'changeling boy' (II.i. 120) appears to be an expression of 'masculine anxiety about the uses of patriarchal power over women' specially, 'over women's sexuality.' Elizabethan society as depicted by Shakespeare bears an analogy to the Indian society in the sense that men's infidelity is deliberately undermined by the patriarchy where as women's infidelity is not tolerated upon. 6.6

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Summing Up In this unit you have got familiarized with the following: • The play is not merely a dream. It discusses some of the issues which stirred the people of Elizabeth's times. • The mechanicals no doubt add to the entertainment value of the play, however interpreted in the light of theories of Exclusion and marginality, they represent a class which has been kept out of the mainstream through a design. • Bottom and mechanicals' bid to perform the play of Pyramus and Thisbe can be interpreted in terms of creative people's aspiration to ape the methods of the professional actors. 6.7 Self-Assessment Questions 1.

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What popular beliefs are connected with fairies in A Mid Summer Night's Dream? Make a list of them. 2. What absurdities of stage-management occur in the mechanics' play? 3. Is the play only a Dream or nothing else? Discuss and substantiate your answer with examples. 4.

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A Mid Summer Night's Dream. Questions 1. Write a note on the significance of the title with special reference to the world Dream in A Mid Summer Night's Dream. 2. Does the Pyramus and Thisbe story have any relevance to the main story, or is it simply a comical interlude? 3. Is the play merely a Dream? What other issues are raised by Shakespeare? 4. The mechanicals are a source of mockery through the entire play? Is Shakespeare making a class commentary here? 5. Discuss how Shakespeare deals with gender issues in the play.

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Titus Andronicus, Love's Labour's Lost, The Two Gentlemen of Verona,

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Tragedies Shakespeare's tragedies are among the most powerful studies of human nature in all literature and appropriately stand as the greatest achievements of his dramatic artistry. Attention understandably has focused on his unforgettable tragic characters, such as Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth. Yet the plays also explore and extend the very nature of tragedy itself by discovering within it a structure that derives meaning precisely from its refusal to offer consolation or compensation for the suffering it traces

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<p>ignored chronology and telescoped the events of years to fit his own dramatic time scheme. Above all, he used the power of his imagination and language to mold vivid and memorable characters out of the historical figures he found in his sources. The overall theme of the history plays is the importance of a stable political order, but also the heavy moral and emotional price that often must be paid for it. Shakespeare dramatized the great social upheaval that followed Henry IV's usurpation of the throne until the first Tudor king, Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, restored peace and stability. In addition to chronicling the often violent careers of England's great kings, Shakespeare's history plays explore the extreme pressures of public life, the moral conflicts that kings and queens uniquely face, and the potential tragedy of monarchy. Although Shakespeare</p>				
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32/36	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	78% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
<p>Shakespeare's Style Shakespeare's first plays were written in the conventional style of the day.</p>				
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<p>It portrays the conspiracy against the Roman dictator, Julius Caesar, his assassination and</p>				
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<p>It portrays the conspiracy against the Roman dictator, Julius Caesar, his assassination and</p>				
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35/36	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
<p>Objectives After going through this unit you will be able to • understand</p>				
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Objectives After going through this unit you will be able
to-understand

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